¿CAMPO PARA LA/OS JÓVENES? EXPLORING CAMPESINA/O YOUTH SUBJECTIVITIES IN CONTEMPORARY COLOMBIA.

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Abstract

The fate of small-scale agrarian production, livelihoods, economies and cultures and their transformations under capitalism is an ongoing and global question. Instead of focusing on agriculture, this dissertation focuses on the young adult agriculturalists (18-35 years old) as the subject under transformation. Based in the frameworks of agrarian studies, political ecology and feminist theory, and situated in the Andean region and river basin of Sumapaz, Colombia, this dissertation is a feminist political ecology analysis of agrarian livelihoods, exploring how campesina/o identity is constructed and how the decisions of continuing or not with small-scale agrarian or campesina/o livelihoods are taken and mediated by the lived experiences of gender and generation. It also examines how the current importance and influence of environmental issues and rural development projects and policies play roles in young campesina/o subjectivities. Using qualitative methods based on semi-structured interviews, farm tours and policy and social media analysis, this work finds gendered situations to be attentive to, such as the mandatory military service and war labor that young campesinos can rarely escape and which is portrayed as a constraint by those young campesinos who wish to pursue an agrarian livelihood. It also finds a drifting difference between the neoliberal frameworks of some policies for rural women and the emerging Popular and Campesino Feminism which draws from Marxist-feminist perspectives. This research also finds that rural entrepreneurial projects and networks imply performing a neoliberal subjectivity which some youth are comfortable with as it seems to offer social mobility. Lastly, looking into the influence of environmental issues in campesina/o subjectivities this work questions the use of native rituality by institutions and organizations and its impact on emotions and finds new gendered and generational socio-environmental conflicts, offering new perspectives about the socioenvironmental state.
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EXPLORING CAMPESINA/O YOUTH SUBJECTIVITIES IN CONTEMPORARY COLOMBIA.

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Figure 1. Map of the Sumapaz region, Colombia
Introduction

The first time I went to Cabrera I must have been fifteen or sixteen, it must have been around 1998. I clearly remember stopping in the central square and seeing the Caja Agraria\textsuperscript{1} shot up and destroyed as well as other houses hit by bullets, a remnant from the toma (siege) of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) of the town\textsuperscript{2}. What was I doing there? We were heading to the Suma-paz nature reserve, a patch of forest owned by several families from Bogotá, among them my family. Cabrera is the municipality where this nature reserve is situated in its rural area.

In my visits during that time to Suma-paz I also met Jaime Jara. He was a man in his 50s, from the region. As I reconstruct it today, the men of the Suma-paz reserve had a special relation with Jara. On one hand, there were discussions about the selective logging of the region’s forests in which he participated as a logger. This had been the economic activity from which he raised a family. He extracted fine tropical Andean woods such as old Lauraceas (e.g. \textit{Nectandra globosa}, \textit{Nectandra laurel}), oaks, and other hard woods of a tropical Andean forest from approximately 1000-2500 meters above sea level\textsuperscript{3}. On the other hand there was a deep admiration and respect listening to Jara’s childhood stories. He had lived during what in Colombia we call \textit{La Violencia} –“The Violence” with a capital V and a pronoun– an era clearly historically established beginning in 1948 when the Liberal Party leader and presidential candidate Jorge Eliecer Gaitán was assassinated in Bogotá. The death of this popular leader triggered a conflict between the Liberal and the Conservative parties which had its cruelest episodes in the countryside where

\textsuperscript{1} State bank for agrarian credits.
\textsuperscript{2} \url{http://www.eltiempo.com/archivo/documento/MAM-635761}
\textsuperscript{3} These include: \textit{Weinmannia} sp., \textit{Pouteria} sp., \textit{Hieronima} sp., \textit{Vochysia} sp., \textit{Meliosma} sp., \textit{Prunus} sp.
families from one side or the other inflicted the most absurd annihilation on the other. Jara was from a Liberal peasant family and suffered the persecutions from the Conservative governments and the bombings, even with Napalm, done during the presidency (dictatorship) of General Gustavo Rojas Pinilla in the early 1950s. Families like his’ were forcibly displaced from the region of east Tolima, crossing the forests of Cabrera to the Páramo of Sumapaz, traversing it until they colonized the Orinoco basin region. This was an exodus I read about through his handwritten notebooks when I was sixteen and began getting acquainted with the region of Sumapaz. I had to write an essay for high-school and (somehow) I had in my hands this historical work, Jara’s handwritten notebooks.

My memory fails, but as I reconstruct this story, it was one of the elder men of our Sumapaz reserve collective who made the link between Jara and me so I could access his notebooks. Jara had only studied up to fifth grade, disrupted among the war of La Violencia, yet he had handwritten approximately five school notebooks with the testimony of his childhood, a testimony of survival, of resistance to oppression, of inherited social injustice, of the realities of being an Andean peasant seeking for land and a dignified livelihood based on small-scale agrarian production and natural resource extraction. These were not the terms he used in his writings but rather the ones I choose for an academic audience of this dissertation. It was his initiative to write. Mario Calderón, a member of our Suma-paz collective who was assassinated by paramilitary forces in 1997 due to his human rights defense work, had helped him structure his narrative and organize his thoughts to deliver his writings.

Jara was assassinated in 1999, arguably by the FARC guerrilla, supposedly for collaborating with the army. A whole life marked and destined by an absurd war. Yet as his sons highlighted in the launching of his memories as the published book *Cuadernos de La Violencia,*
memorias de infancia en Villarrica y Sumapaz (“Notebooks of La Violencia, memories of childhood in Villarica and Sumapaz”) (Jara Gómez 2017), almost 20 years after his death, he never embraced violence. A person who had witnessed as a child the most devastating and crude forms of violence had decided not to use it in his life. His sons remember a peaceful, gentle father, who would solve differences through dialogue, not using violence.

What does Jara’s story have to do with a dissertation about young peasantry, gender and environment? It is the story of the genesis of my research interests and of the ways I understand the relations between history, economy, politics and environment as well as the roles of the researcher. Not only as external topics to be studied as abstract, conceptual things which can be passed on to generations and discussed in a far-away classroom, far from where it is all happening. It is also how I understand the ways that personal histories shape us and the constant question of positionality from the researcher when choosing what merits study and dedication. Constantly questioning how our life experiences also help knit relations, actions and shape concepts. Since I read Jara’s notebooks, I understood that the conservation of forests could not be disentangled from the historical, political and economic circumstances of those who live in them. Conservation cannot be an imposed land use. To last, conservation must be humble to the histories of those on whom it depends as a livelihood space and to whom it makes part of their territory, where they have a sense of belonging and identity.

I also consider my relation to the Sumapaz region as one marked by the family and social context of urban conservationists who in the 1990s decided to create a nature reserve in one of the most biodiverse ecosystems on Earth⁴: the tropical Andean forests (Gentry 1982, Myers et al.

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⁴The concept of biodiversity is a fascination for conservation biologists, ecologists and conservationists more widely and signifies where there is greater variety of species and lifeforms occurring without human interference and more density per area occur. There are several ways to measure this and exercises abound in the conservation literature. Colombia in general and some of its ecosystems specifically, appear in most –if not all– of the metrics. However,
2000, Llambí et al. 2019) but also one of the regions where the armed conflict in Colombia between state forces and guerrillas occurred since the 1950s. The peace dialogues between the Colombian government under Juan Manuel Santos and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) beginning in 2012 gave Colombians a hope that this conflict could end. The unfolding of this, after the signature of the peace agreements in August 2016, have been complicated. The initial idea of this research began during that hopeful time. Its development was marked by the unfolding events as will be seen throughout this document.

I must therefore also relate the histories and conceptual influences both of conservation and of armed conflict. This research is a geographical analysis because the ecosystem (Andean forest and páramo5) cannot be disentangled from the human history taking place in it, against it, because of it. Materiality (e.g. of the forest and its components like hard woods, water sources and fauna), the place and its topographic details that define water courses, forced migrations, and bombings; the people who have lived or passed through this territory in different moments; the intentions of land use (agrarian production, conservation, etc.) and the diversity of interests on this territory, are all elements that a geographical analysis can put together to describe its temporary fates and to propose what can become of them (the people and the place). A personal experience and an academic analysis propose this geographical view.

My first influences of the relations between conservation and socio-economic-political history lie in the work of the Suma-paz Nature Reserve Association. Financed by the enthusiasm and funding of the post Rio 1992 World Convention on Biological Diversity, Colombia had a

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5 Páramo is a high mountain tropical ecosystem, of alpine life forms, widely considered as a main producer of water. In Colombia it ranges approximately from 2800-4000 meters above sea level varying along the three Andean ranges of Colombia.
boom of environmental NGOs, private and communal conservation work and research framed by the “sustainable development” concept as a new truth. These new paradigms and its on-the-ground projects were financed by international cooperation through international and national environmental NGOs and recently created funds for conservation work such as Ecofondo which financed some of the Suma-paz Association projects.

The Suma-paz Association, composed primarily of social sciences and humanities professionals from Bogota or other urban origins, led a project in the 1990s called Poblamiento, conflicto y ecología. Cabrera 1950-1990 (“Settling, conflict and ecology. Cabrera 1950-1990”), and produced a publication about this project: Poblamiento y cambio de paisaje en Sumapaz (“Settling and landscape change in Sumapaz”)6. The project was also supported by the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History (ICANH). “The researchers approached the influence of migratory currents in the páramo and cloud forest, trying to identify cultural elements and practices in the uses of land and natural resources from which these communities depended.” (Reserva Natural Suma-paz 1998, 8-9). What I want to highlight is how the conception and work of the Suma-paz reserve influenced my views of conservation and history since my adolescence.

The starting point and primary field site for this research was planned to be the region of Sumapaz. It is delimited as a river basin in Colombia, but divided among municipalities, urban localities (20th Locality of Bogotá), departments, and land planning designations such as the Sumapaz National Natural Park and the Peasant Reserve Zone (ZRC) of Cabrera.

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However, as my fieldwork unfolded, I took the decision of expanding my research area due to the uncertainties of the armed conflict. This will be explained further in the research design section of this introduction. Therefore, some of my data transcends this region and jumps in scale to other Andean regions of Colombia with similar ecosystemic and socio-economic histories, or seeks more national scale questions about policies for peasantry, youth, agrarian production, rurality and gender and conservation issues.

With these personal, social and spatial influences situated, I present my conceptual framework, my research questions, the methods I used and the structure of this resulting document in the rest of this introduction.
About language, terms in Spanish, and things lost in translation

I decided to use some terms in Spanish that do not have a direct translation in English because they are geographical in the sense that they are specific to a place, to situated cultures, and in this way, feed a notion of territory as it is understood in the Colombian Andes where this research takes place. To begin, the decision to use the terms *campesina, campesino* and *campesinado* in this dissertation and not the common translations of peasant/farmer and peasantry is not exclusive of this dissertation written by a Colombian native speaker of Spanish for an anglophone audience, nor is it an arbitrary decision. This trend can be found in recent scholarship about the Colombian campesinado in social science, and from anglophone scholars and activists who find the term “peasant” inappropriate in its meaning in English to refer to the Colombian population of their research. Gwen Burnyeat (2013, 3) proposes:

> The term *campesino* can be translated as peasant or rural farmer, but the author dislikes these options, firstly because they sound potentially derogatory, and secondly because *campesino* is a whole cultural category in Colombia and other parts of Latin America that is not accurately conveyed by peasant or small-scale farmer.

Christopher Courtheyn (2018, 482) in his work about race and resistance in the case of Colombia’s Peace Community and Campesino University explains:

> I prefer the Spanish term ‘campesino’ to its typical English translation as ‘peasant’ to avoid the latter’s pejorative baggage –however misguided– linked with Marx and Engel’s (1978) belittling portrayal of peasants as “not revolutionary, but… reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history.”

Additionally, I propose to consider a gender inclusive language in Spanish, where the appropriate term would be *campesinas* and *campesinos* due to the use of gender in nouns in Spanish. I will be using “campesina/os” to avoid length and campesinado as the collective noun for this rural population. I will use “campesinas y campesinos” when it is explicitly mentioned as
such in diverse texts and inputs used in this research, or the gendered term when referring either to campesina women or campesino men.

Similarly, *el campo* in Spanish means both the countryside and space. El campo as countryside is charged by imaginaries according to the subject. As space, campo can fit as a question of political space, participative space, economic opportunities, among many uses of space. Therefore ¿*Campo para los jóvenes*? is a word game meaning both “the countryside for the young” as an open question and “spaces for the young” also as a question with multiple interpretations.

*Vereda* in Colombia refers to a sort of rural neighborhood. It can be delimited by a small river basin (*microcuenca*), a common access road or other physical landscape characteristics. It can be composed of private properties but also of other land tenure situations such as: *posesiones*—which are lands colonized, transformed for agrarian production and resource extraction (wood) but are not legally fully recognized as private property—public lands, indigenous territories, protected areas, among others and in a landscape mosaic. Each vereda usually has its own elementary school and a basic organizational structure a *Junta de Acción Comunal*. Loosely translated as “Board of Community Action”, a Junta de Acción Comunal (JAC) is a grassroots organizational structure in Colombia, divided by urban neighborhoods or rural veredas, relating directly with municipal administrations. It is used for various representational purposes: municipal and other state funds, participatory schemes, cultural activities, aqueduct management, local decisions in issues such as roads and common use spaces and resources or the primary school.

*Páramo* is a high mountain tropical ecosystem, a peatland, widely considered as a main producer of water where main cities and towns get their water source. In Colombia it ranges
approximately from 2800-4000 meters above sea level varying along the three Andean ranges of Colombia. The cultural adaptations to this ecosystem can be described in several ways. I will just say that the predominant agrarian production developed for the Colombian páramos include cattle and sheep grazing, potato and some cereals – especially wheat – production. There is currently a strong socio-environmental conflict around the land uses of paramo, some claiming its exclusive use for ecosystem protection for water production, climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation, while others claim an ancestral agrarian use and culture associated to this ecosystem and the socio-ecological adaptations 7.

Finally, another key term that I use in Spanish is formación which will be further developed in the last two chapters. The meaning in Spanish, not only in Colombia, does not only refer to training, but has implicit the intention of shaping, of molding, giving form. In this case, the shaping or forming of economic and political subjectivity.

Other words in Spanish and language expressions of Colombia will be explained throughout the text. For more precise translations and descriptions, please refer to the glossary (Appendix 1) of this dissertation.

**Conceptual frame**

An initial premise in this dissertation is that the use of concepts is a question of scale of analysis. It is possible to look at the individual and her or his construction of self and from there seek the

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7 “Within the tropical regions of Mexico, Central and South America, Africa, Malesia including New Guinea, and Hawaii, there is a vegetation type that occurs between the upper limit of continuous, closed-canopy forest (i.e., forest line or timberline) and the upper limit of plant life (i.e., snow line) that is characterized by tussock grasses, large rosette plants, shrubs with evergreen, coriaceous and sclerophyllous leaves, and cushion plants. This vegetation type is scattered along the crests of the highest mountain ranges or on isolated mountaintops between about 3000 meters (m) and 5000 m.” Definition found in: [http://www.mobot.org/mobot/research/paramo_ecosystem/introduction.shtml](http://www.mobot.org/mobot/research/paramo_ecosystem/introduction.shtml)
influences, or to abstract the individual and seek social patterns with economic and political influences that create collective identities and common experiences and claims that are also reflected individually. Both are valid and complementary views. This dissertation uses these different scales of analysis and several conceptual lenses seeking to propose a multiscale analysis to build its arguments. I put in dialogue three distinct academic fields to approach these different scales and seek explanations to individual and collective identities and subjectivities: agrarian studies, feminist studies and political ecology. The main conceptual frames that form the pillars of this study begin with a macro perspective of the agrarian question as a broad economic issue about labor and production; subjectivity as a philosophical approach where one can situate the construction of social categories such as gender and youth; and the environment as a term that needs unpacking for its situated definitions, perceptions and unfolding. I continue with more specific concepts derived from the relation of these conceptual pillars. For instance, *peasantry* or *campesinado* is a derived concept which has origins both in agrarian question and in subjectivity. *Environmentality* is also a derived concept which I delimit in this case from its origins in definitions of what “the environmental” encompasses in specific situations and in subject formation. The concepts can also be understood as levels of observation. 1) Generationally and gender-ly defined labor; 2) Gendered and generationally situated people navigating rural/agrarian subjectivities influenced by socio/economic/political contexts; 3) individuals, personal histories, aspirations in the grid of rural/agrarian/environmental settings and social backgrounds, seeking and living their identity and livelihood constructions. These conceptual trajectories frame my research questions, which I introduce in this section. However, I am aware that there are theoretical tensions in using a diversity of analytical scales and aiming to put in conversation different schools of thought. For instance, from an orthodox Marxist perspective it can appear
that the use of terms from liberalism and neoliberalism which emphasizes the individual as a capitalist product, its individual “needs” and “assets”, forgets about the importance of the structural inequalities and exploitations that a capitalism regime generates and that need to be named and challenged. I am not the first to consider that exploring individual subjectivities contributes to a wider analysis of capitalism in the aim of questioning it and exposing its dangers and disasters when our moral values lie in social and environmental justice. My research interest in this dissertation is not to define the abstract notions of the state, economic systems or the environment but rather to observe how these are lived by individuals, particular individuals who are gendered, aged, culturally and territorially situated, which is an angle that abstract analyses miss out. Situatedness is key in geographical and feminist work. These are the reasons why I drift apart from a merely Marxist analysis and introduce other epistemologies.

The angle of analysis that observes how individuals are subjected to power can be traced to the works of Michel Foucault (2008). From his philosophical work, more than defining the instances of power, one is meant to observe how these function. In this sense, the individual is seen as a site where power operates by shaping conduct and mentality. Recent scholarship has been attentive to name and describe ways on how power operates through people subjecting them through the ways that they conceptualize their selves and their lives and aspirations in different contexts (e.g. Ball 2016, Scharff 2016). More importantly for this research, from transnational feminism (Mohanty 2003), the observation of how capitalism “writes its script” on the bodies and lives of Third World women, is a key conceptual frame to focus on the individuals and not in the abstract system. These situated observations offer more grounded, precise descriptions and can also contribute to a more abstract definition of how an economic or political system operates.
The overall objective of this research is to approach how the experiences of life in *el campo* are mediated by the lived experiences of gender and generation, and how this influences what youth understand as a campesina/o identity. Also, how in the temporal context of this research (early 21st century), environmental issues (perceptions, discourses, events, policies) influence campesina/o identity and livelihood constructions and possibilities in Colombia’s central Andes region.

I propose to advance agrarian studies debates on the fate of the peasantry under capitalism connecting them to the concepts of gender and environment developed particularly since the beginning of the 21st century (Akram-Lodhi 2010 a,b, Bernstein 2004, Cassidy et al. 2019, Fairbairn et al. 2014, McLaughlin 1998, McMichael 2006, 2009). Intellectually, this project is about “greening”, rejuvenating and gendering the agrarian question. The main thesis of this dissertation is that although the transformation of agrarian territories and its people are influenced—if not determined—by macroeconomic factors in the early 21st century, as in the 20th and 19th, we cannot fully understand how decisions of staying, leaving, or seeking intermediary options are taken, if we do not examine how the experiences in *el campo* are mediated by the lived experiences of gender and generation. The ways people construct and reconfigure their livelihood aspirations and possibilities, as well as a sense of belonging to territories, is mediated by the gendered and aged configurations, references and influences they have. This is why I pay special attention to gendered constructions in *el campo* and focus and delimit my observation on an age range. Youth and gender are cross-cutting categorizations that aid in identifying subject formation issues. Also, how in the 21st century, the importance of the environment—with its diverse meanings—is an aspect worth observing on how it also influences the possibilities of campesina/o livelihoods. This contributes to examine environmental subjectivity and also about
how the environment is present in political and economic projects, on what has been called the environmental state (Camargo and Ojeda 2017) or the socioenvironmental state (Nightingale 2018).

Subjectivity, subject formation and identity I understand as transversal concepts to explore in what ways gender, youth and other identity markers are relevant in el campo, and for what matters. Using these concepts implies drifting from a Marxist-feminist approach that centers the analysis on social reproduction, care work and gendered labor analysis. These insights are not totally scrapped but are de-centered from the discussion, not prioritized as guiding concepts and terminologies but can be visible only as they come up in the testimonies of individuals. I choose not to use Marxist terms such as “means of existence”, but those that can be of more common usage in other scholarships (e.g. development studies), and sources such as legal and technical language or the one used in institutional and organizational webpages such as “assets”, “aspirations”, “choices” or “livelihoods” because these are the terms I am putting Marxist theory in conversation with. I do not consider that “social reproduction” and “means of existence” encompass all that is present in an individual’s life, not even in their economic life, which is to me more complex in its relations and unfoldings. This is something that I show in chapter two and six when I expose extracts of young campesina/os testimonies. This does not mean that a Marxist analysis cannot be made out of these testimonies, it means that more analysis from other angles are possible too, and these are the ones that I prioritize in this dissertation. Also because I am engaging with the diversity of scholarship that has influenced feminist geography and political ecology.

Livelihood I find as an inclusive concept. I situate as a notion that encompasses both the broad and the derived concepts. It allows to examine how those I interviewed construct and
navigate their possibilities of education, mobility, work, and social networks, and how the concepts previously mentioned help to examine the current outcomes of what they are living.

Among these inquiries I also situate my own lived experiences and relations with some of these concepts and how the observation and questioning of these issues transforms my relation with a place and the people living there.

**Agrarian Question in the 21st century: gendering rejuvenating, and greening it.**

From a Marxist perspective, the fate of the peasantry under capitalism has been widely debated (e.g. Marx 1967, Lenin 1920, Kautsky 1974, Chayanov 1966): Do they succumb and become rural or urban, overexploited and underpaid labor? Do they struggle to become capitalists under uneven power relations? Do they subsist by overexploiting themselves and their families? How have they survived both capitalist and communist regimes? Who are the peasantry as a socio-economic category and do they identify with the label and for what matters? Who uses—and for what ends—the label peasantry?

Linking the peasantry to its relation with the agrarian question lineages implies going back to Marx’s analysis of the fate of the peasantry (at least of the European peasantry of the 1800s). In a traditionally Marxist approach to the agrarian question, there are three main possibilities for the peasantry: 1) peasants are gradually dispossessed of their land and become wage-laborers (urban or rural) as they are not capable of coping with the production demands of the capitalist market; 2) but when they are capable of playing within the capitalist market they become a rural middle class “thus completing the transition to a fully capitalist mode of production” (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010a, 183); or 3) they can unite their work forces and land to create a collective production and a social structure of a commune which is an example of a hybrid form emerging where capitalism is used but where neither people or land succumb to its
forces of privatization. The first two options imply that the peasantry disappears in capitalism, dissolved in its forces with no choice but to become a rural (or urban) proletarian or a capitalist rural bourgeoisie. This Marxist approach centers the peasantry in relation to its labor relations in capitalism but it misses other senses of its composition as socio-cultural actors.

Wolf (1966) began a more anthropological tradition of defining the peasantry. Yet his analyses tended to homogenize and reduce the peasant subject as a male, married, productive subject, exploited by capitalism, and with himself as an exploiter of the rest of his family:

The outsider sees the peasant primarily as a source of labor and goods with which to increase his fund of power. But the peasant is at once an economic agent and the head of a household. (13)

It has been estimated, for example, that in our society a man can save annually $6000-$8000 in payments for economic services if he gets married, rather than paying for their performance by specialists at prices current in the open market. Within the family, such labors of love are performed readily, without the need for cost accounting. (14)

Other more anthropological views of the peasantry include Thompson (1991) and James Scott (1976) who reviewed the moral economy and highlight social relations, customs, tradition, and religion as some of the angles from which the peasantry can be described.

My object of analysis was the mentalité, or, as I would prefer, the political culture, the expectations, traditions, and, indeed, superstitions of the working populations most frequently involved in actions in the market (Thompson 1991, 260).

The lack of gender and generational perspective of these types of 20th century analyses of the peasantry is what a nuanced approach from other perspectives bring. These can be seen by gendered approaches to agrarian economic dynamics (Deere and Leon 1982, 2001, 2003; Farah 1996, 2008, 2009, 2013; Farah and Perez 2003, Diaz Suaza 2002, Razavi 2002, 2009, Sañudo Pazos, 2015) to postmodernist, postcolonial, feminist perspectives that reconceptualize the subject (of peasantry in this case) by thinking about new, displaced or decentered positions within the paradigm, attempting “to rearticulate the relationships between subjects and discursive
practices” (Hall 1996, 2). In this way, defining peasantry includes seeking its definition with those who use it as an identity marker, highlighting when, where, to what extent it is used, for what it is mobilized, and also seeking its redefinition in theorizations of capitalist relations in the early 21st century where environmental aspects give new tones to a traditional theoretical analysis (the agrarian question) and provide new analytical frameworks. This theoretical perspective enters conversations set in the last two decades by agrarian studies scholars such as Agrawal (2005), McMichael (2006), Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010b), or O’Laughlin’s (2009) where peasantry issues and agrarian economic dynamics are beginning to be intersected with ecological and gender issues including to further examine the “combined and uneven effects of neoliberal globalization” (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b, 264). This implies displacing the subject of the peasantry of the initial agrarian question to contemporary approaches due to new intersecting paradigms and emerging scholarship perspectives that propose interdisciplinary approaches to recurrent problems. For example, agrarian scholars have now recognized that the core issues of the agrarian question: production, accumulation and politics have gender dynamics (O’Laughlin 2009, Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b) and that a failure to address the gender dimensions in them, “renders any understanding of the agrarian question, at best, as highly partial and, at worst, as wrong” (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b, 268). Similarly, not investigating and including the ecological dynamics and relationships of production and accumulation, tells only a partial vision on the relationships between agrarian and social change in contemporary rural settings. This takes us to the following two angles of analysis that this dissertation offers to expand the notion of peasantry or campesinado with a 21st century regard: gender and youth.
Gendering the agrarian question.

Gender in agrarian settings can be analyzed in different ways. I was attentive to gendered differences in types of labor and relations to agrarian production and environmental issues but careful not to suggest preconceived conclusions of observed dynamics in the field site. Razavi (2002), Mohanty (2003) and Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010b) suggest that neoliberalism has profited from the exploitation particularly of Third World women so the gendered burden of agrarian labor cannot be overlooked. Mohanty explains that there are causal links between marginalized social locations and experiences and the ability of human agents to explain and analyze features of capitalist society...[therefore] within a tightly integrated capitalist system, the particular standpoint of poor indigenous, and Third World/South women provides the most inclusive viewing of systemic power” (2003, 231-2).

Also, how we can observe the micropolitics of anti-capitalist struggles to illuminate the macropolitics of global restructuring (233) and therefore the importance of “contextualized feminist project to expose and make visible the various overlapping forms if subjugation of women’s lives” (236). I take views from gender and more specifically women in agrarian studies, critiques to rural development that ask about how women and gender are conceptualized in agrarian and rural policies, and media instead of using Marxist-feminist literature on care work and gendered labor regimes in agrarian contexts. I choose to explore more of the post-structural and postcolonial feminist views since my aim is to explore the individual experiences of being young in el campo. In the situated and historical context of the ethnographic field I worked in, this includes observing the presence and discourses of institutions, organizations and their influences in individual’s lives, as well as the narratives –external or personal– about environmental issues or the expectations of peace-building.
With conceptual tools such as intersectional theory, I disentangle what it means to be young and gendered in el campo with its multiple angles and sites of oppression, as well as multiple negotiation possibilities (in the family, in social spaces). This differs from views of class and gender for instance coming from Marxist-feminism and the role of the “material” in their “theorizations of various forms of social difference, oppression, and knowledge” (Carpenter 2012, 20). I do not extend on Marxist-feminist approaches because I do not consider I can thoroughly engage in a “radical and revolutionary reorganization of the social relations of production” (Carpenter 2012, 25) with a dissertation. This does not mean that the cases I bring here of campesina/o testimonies do not serve for a more dialectical analysis of the “relations of domination and exploitation that characterize [their] everyday lives” (Carpenter 2012, 22). When I chose to examine the “assets” that young campesina/os identify for their livelihoods, or the ways institutions and organization inform and influence their possibilities, or to analyze rural policies and legal documents, and on how campesinas conceptualize feminism when they find it useful for their struggles and political strategies, such as the case of Feminismo Campesino y Popular (FCP in this document, Popular and Campesina Feminism), I am choosing a different analytical path from a Marxist praxis. However, as Sarah Carpenter, a Marxist-feminist scholar argues “analytical tools help us see different political possibilities through the ways in which those tools describe and explain our daily lives” (2012, 25). I do not consider one analytical tool erases another option of analysis, but rather complements and expands the possibilities of analysis.

Gender in the agrarian settings of this work is also portrayed in FCP as a personal and grassroots political understanding of oppressions in el campo cultures and is presented in chapter five. This means exploring how gender is constructed and lived through everyday experiences
and what it means to be campesina when they choose to use this identifier. In this case, it answers a call to “polyvocality and more localized mini-narratives to give voice to the multiple realities that arise from diverse social locations” (Mann and Huffman 2005, 65). This analytical path implies taking a distance from other perspectives such as Marxist feminism which works from discursive essentialisms of class, and avoid territorial specificity. The need to observe historical specificity without deny the usefulness of generalizations in some cases, or of collective categories, has been argued by Mohanty (2003). It is also highlighted in analysis of some of the trajectories of feminist thought (Mann and Huffman 2005, 68) who observe how “historical specificity can also provide a more accurate analysis of political agency” when observing how Spivak (1987 in Mann and Huffman 2005, 67) proposes that “ontological commitments to historical agents, such as working-class or third-world women, must be seen as structurally negotiable.” It also suggests that “acknowledging difference in theory and in everyday practice has the potentiality to enhance, rather than to divide, a movement” (Mann and Huffman 2005, 76). For me, the “ontological commitments” and everyday experiences are not only about the people being studied but about the researcher herself. This is why I am attentive to the researcher as a gendered, classed, racialized subject and what implications this has for fieldwork in agrarian settings. Vignettes, reflections and the section on positionality (chapter 3, part 2) will focus more on these aspects but they will be seen along the dissertation.

**Rejuvenating the agrarian question.**

I am risking “young” as a previous identity marker, also accepting it as a biased and predetermined category, enforced with the legal age of adulthood (18 years) in Colombia and a subjective, culturally determined fluid limit of when people pass from being a “young adult” to an adult with no other adjectives or particular policy attention due to age (e.g. up to 28 years in
Law 1622). The relevance of that category in my work relates to the other issues I am observing: agrarian and environmental dynamics and how those dynamics might be mobilizing the identity of young adults (e.g. for access to credits or not, as post-conflict development project subjects, for scholarships, jobs, social media abilities and skills, or possibilities of contracted labor and types of labor, reproduction issues). As an age limit to frame my study I am using 35 years based on different sources\(^8\) but it was not a strict boundary when seeking campesina/o interviewees. For interviews I was flexible to include people a couple of years over 35 because their willingness and insights of their previous years of life would still provide useful insights for the other aspects of this study. Youth as a generational marker also serves to highlight population dynamics and relate them to agrarian issues\(^9\).

To feminist and postcolonial perspectives, “peasantry” can be argued to be an imposed category. A label used by academics, policy makers and strategically mobilized for development projects and agrarian policies that does not necessarily disentangle differences among those categorized as peasants, nor does it name oppressions, discriminations and differences among a population mass. These perspectives call on us to use other lenses that are not classed, categorized or binary as urban/rural, rich/poor, laborer/entrepreneur, women/men. These other scales of analysis call for more nuanced constructions, based on personally lived experiences that shape the self-representation –or not– of being in this category, why and in what situations.

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\(^8\)Some of the sources that define ‘young adult’ as 18-35 years include: Law 1622 of 2013, 5\(^{th}\) Article defines Young (Joven). \textit{Toda persona entre 14 y 28 años cumplidos en proceso de consolidación de su autonomía intelectual, física, moral, económica, social y cultural que hace parte de una comunidad política y en ese sentido ejerce su ciudadanía;} Colombian Law 1780 of 2016; https://www.uua.org/young-adults

\(^9\)For instance, in one of the case study sites: the municipality and Peasant Reserve Zone (ZRC) of Cabrera, the demographic information\(^9\) shows that in the age range from 20-34 years there is a notorious decrease in the population. From 559 individuals in ages 15-19, population decreases to 369 (ages 20-24), and then to 299 (ages 25-29).
However, I do risk using these two analytical categories youth and gender as essential parts of the subject formation I am focusing on.

An active observation of the external influences on rural and campesina/o youth such as NGOs, networks, social media, available (yet not always accessible) technology, is a historical observation and aids in the comprehension of how ontologies are formed, or what they are composed of.

**Greening the agrarian question.**

If the agrarian question is about the incursion of capitalism in subsistence production and the commodification of food, the transformations of labor values, livelihood aspirations and possibilities and land rights related struggles, then there is an environmental question that needs to be examined in relation to the incursion of capitalism in the management of nature and land as well as the commodification of its elements (e.g. privatization of water use, carbon markets, values of biodiversity), its relation to types of agrarian production, land use and value struggles. Examining how capitalism is embedded in the tensions between agrarian production and environmental issues, begins by reviewing the initial agrarian question inquiries, the impacts of capitalism on agrarian production and producers’ livelihoods, and how environmental deterioration is related to all this.

Environmental issues inform the agrarian question in the early 21st century. The discussions that political ecology brought to agrarian studies during the late 20th century (Blaikie 1985, Blaikie and Brookfield 1987, Grossman 1984, Hecht 1985, Peluso 1992, Watts 2000) suggest that agrarian issues cannot be disentangled from environmental discussions since the material basis on which agriculture depends is based on the core of environmental issues: water,
soil, seeds and climate (change), commonly broadly included in the term “nature.” Also, both environment and agrarian production are situated in land with all its constitutive issues (e.g. use, access, rights over, cover, transformation). In this sense, a contemporary view of agrarian issues must examine where and how environmental issues intersect and how nature and “the environment” are conceptualized in agrarian settings and by agrarian societies. This study is careful in examining where, how and by whom environmental issues are made apparent and how they are approached by those basing their livelihoods on agrarian production and living in agrarian scenarios.

With these broad questions that situate the question of small-scale agrarian production, the fate of its laborers under capitalism and relate it to environmental issues, I frame the initial research questions: *How are nature and the environment conceptualized in agrarian settings and by agrarian people (in this case young campesina/os)? In what ways are the conceptualizations of nature and the environment part of young campesina/o identity?*

Policies and politics are differentiated in the question as they belong to different socio-political processes. Not all politics become policies. Some politics are meant for other arenas of power. In this case it can be a micropolitical scale of a *Junta de Acción Comunal*¹⁰ (JAC) or power within family dynamics. Bebbington (2015) gives a useful discussion of how *la política* is conceived differently in Latin America than it is for Anglophone academics and other contexts and why I can use policy/politics in my research question. “[M]ost of what passes as politics in political ecology is in some regard a struggle over the definition of policy at scales that run from

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¹⁰ A grassroots organizational structure in Colombia, divided by neighborhoods, urban or rural (*veredas*), relating directly with municipal administrations. *JAC* is the acronym of *Junta de Acción Comunal* loosely translated as “Board of Community Action”. It is a local organizational structure for each vereda that corresponds to the basic rural neighborhood for various representational purposes (for state funds, participatory schemes, cultural activities, local decisions in issues such as roads and common use spaces and resources, primary school).
community authority to international organization… Seen this way, it begins to make sense that Spanish uses the same word for policy and politics.” (Bebbington 2015, 199). Another of the environmental politics as an analytical concept framed by political ecologists suggests as a core question of political ecology: “In what ways and for what reasons do people mobilize politically around nature and natural resources?” (Perreault et al. 2015, 12)

About the intersections of agrarian and environmental issues, I will just situate for introductory purposes how political ecology according to Michael Watts (2015, 32) brought new insights to agrarian studies by

Drawing inspiration from new research on the political economy of peasant societies… and the role of the state in post-colonial development, a generation of political ecologists were shaped by a renewed interest in political economy of development writ large, and in agrarian political economy, of the so-called agrarian question in the Third World, in particular… Central to political ecology was not systems ecology as such but political economy, and how it shaped or even produced the environments which were, or were not, managed by different sorts of “land managers”.

Takin’ this into consideration, there is a permeable boundary on where agrarian issues end and where environmental ones begin, especially if the site is one with predominantly agrarian production and its inhabitants are agrarian producers but where there are also interests around the mobilization of environmental issues by the same or other actors.

Environmentality to “green” the agrarian question
Although there is extensive literature on environment, and disciplines dedicated to it such as environmental studies, I do not define “environment” but take as a starting point the way it emerges as a concept in the interviews and other sources used in this study such as legal and technical documents. This returns us to the previously mentioned concept of environmentality (Agrawal, 2005) and is aligned with the approaches to nature and environment in political ecology. The same goes for the concept of nature not as a given, or a predetermined definition, but from a political ecology analysis that prioritizes the ways in which “nature” is related to ideas
and notions such as “natural resources”, asking how they are constructed and where they are mobilized. Perceptions, both from individual experiences and from socio-cultural constructions, influenced by external dynamics such as media, global trends, politics, policies, embodiments of the nature “expert” (e.g. biologist, conservationist, activist), among others give richer and more context-based definitions of what environment is in a given context. Besides a focus on environmental subjects which I have previously mentioned, environmentality is also about regulatory communities, governmentalized localities, and environmental government. The concept is also useful to explore from another angle: How are environmental issues conceptualized in agrarian scenarios by campesina/os; how do these conceptualizations of ‘the environment’ influence campesina/o identity and how do they influence the types of agrarian production, labor and livelihoods that young campesina/os access?

Agrawal (2005, 3) argues “New environmental subject positions emerge as a result of involvement in struggles over resources and in relation to new institutions and changing calculations of self-interest and notions of the self.” This argument serves to examine not only struggles over natural resources as belonging to the realm of the environmental but also as the realm of the agrarian. This is why campesina/o identity formation in the early 21st century should be examined by asking for the environmental and agrarian realms of struggle over resources, including access to land and control over land and resources. I suggest that there is a similar tendency with agrarian issues and the making of agrarian subjects, a kind of “agromentality” – or rather– there are certain rural scenarios where environmental subjectivity cannot be untied from agrarian subjectivity.

By influence of Bina Agarwal’s seminal work on feminist environmentalism (1992), Agrawal’s environmentality is also attentive to gendered angles which have also been previously
mentioned. Agarwal had already stated that “women’s and men’s relationship with nature needs to be understood as rooted in their material reality, in their specific forms of interaction with the environment” (1992, 126). She situates feminist environmentalism as a framework that address two fronts: the feminist front which challenges and transforms “both notions about gender and the actual division of work and resources between genders” (127); and the environmental front which challenges and transforms “not only notions about the relationship between people and nature, but also the actual methods of appropriation of nature’s resources by a few” (127).

Taking Feminist Environmentalism as a lens to approach the relation between gender and environmental subject formation, Agrawal (2005, 212) suggests:

- feminist environmentalists are committed to investigating how economic processed, social practices, and political relations are instrumental in producing gender-related inequalities…
- feminist environmentalists are committed to examining gender-environment connections in a more materialist and contingent fashion…
- feminist environmentalists agree that gendered relationships in households, within communities, and around the environment are historically and contextually variable and socially and politically complex…
- feminist environmentalists seek to insert material, political-economic, and cultural processes into their analyses of gender and environment.

With this lens in mind, I explore the hypothesis that the involvement with conservation issues (as a partial conceptualization of environmental issues) is being used and managed by women because of traditional inaccessibility to the agrarian economy dominated by men in my case studies (e.g. Andean bear in tree-tomato production territory in Cabrera). I explore the argument that environmental issues are more relegated or taken by women when the doors to traditional agrarian production in these sites have been traditionally closed due to gendered roles of labor and power over economic means and transactions with the market. This traditional discrimination is now generating unexpected new subjectivities which are differentiating the approach and relation to “the environment” that women and men develop in these agrarian
scenarios. However, as is argued in chapter seven “Environment”, it is also generating new socio-environmental conflicts with gendered angles.

**Subjectivity, subject formation and identity**

A careful reflection and use of subjectivity through a feminist lens implies to begin not with rigid identity categories (e.g. women, peasant) but to let the research participants show how they mobilize identity labels and perform identities in different spaces in order to negotiate different issues. Attention to how and when this happens is more relevant as a social science and feminist analysis that explores subjectivity as a crucial part of political mobilizing, in this case in relation to agrarian and ecological issues. Butler argues that since the use of the category of women, will produce factionalization and that ‘identity’ as a point of departure can never hold as the solidifying ground of a feminist political movement [then] …To deconstruct the subject of feminism is not… to censure its usage, but, on the contrary, to release the term into a future of multiple significations, to emancipate it from the maternal or racist ontologies to which it has been restricted, and give it play as a site where unanticipated meanings might come to bear. (1992,16).

An influential work for political ecologists regarding the relation between subject formation and environmental issues in rural settings is Arun Agrawal’s *Enenvironmentality* (2005). Exploring the politics of identity and the production of new subjectivities for environmental protection objectives, Environmentality offers a conceptual structure that speaks to the emphasis I give to my research. Agrawal argues that political ecology should further its analysis of subject formation to explore the political asymmetries that are combined when identity categories such as gender, age/generation, uneven historical origin (e.g. colonization processes) are merged. In the case of the campesinado/peasantry, this plays on how politics are negotiated, and subjectivities found at the interface of the agrarian and the environmental. This analytical linkage
is precisely one of the contributions of this dissertation, to put in dialogue these angles of analysis and advance Agrawal’s suggestion. Based on these angles of analysis, it can be argued that this dissertation is a feminist political ecology (FPE) of agrarian livelihoods and the shaping of agromentality.

Agrawal also signals to the tendency of assuming “resisting subjects” who are “able to protect his or her consciousness from the colonizing effects of elite policies, dominant cultures, and hegemonic ideologies” (2005, 169). Expanding resistance scholarship to subaltern studies has a similar set of assumptions in Agrawal’s view:

But for scholars of resistance and subalternity, the autonomous consciousness of peasants, subalterns, and other marginalized groups endures in the face of dominant elite pressures operating in a spectrum of domains, not just in the domain of policy. It is reasonable to infer that if for these scholars the weak and the powerless can resist the panoply of instruments available to dominant groups policy by itself is even less likely to affect the consciousness of the subject. (170)

What Agrawal suggests is to escape both the tendency toward the colonization of the imagination by powerful political beliefs; and in the other the tendency toward durability of a sovereign consciousness founded on the bedrock of individual or class interest… [is] … not to account just for the persistence of a certain conception of interests among a group of people, nor just to assume the straightforward transformation of one conception of interests into another but to explore more fully the mechanisms that can account for various possible effects on people’s conceptions of their interests. (170, emphasis mine)

This argument is related to the one of Asher and Wainwright (2018) developed in part two, which seeks to unveil the assumptions that all the answers to resisting capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy lie in the subaltern, local, indigenous knowledges per se. A more careful analysis is needed about why these academic assumptions are built, by whom, and if these assumptions can fall into simplistic, binary notions of capitalist/anti-capitalist, colonial/native, without furthering an analysis of how individuals, communities, societies are permanently influenced by different situations that they have to deal with. This is where I find the importance of subjectivity
and subject formation as relevant analytical lenses to complement more general, abstract analysis about colonizing effects, dominant cultures, and hegemonic ideologies and economic systems.

It is in this sense that I use the possibility of age and generation, the peasant subject in her/his path of life as a legal adult but also a person perhaps seeking identity markers and livelihood options, offering their labor in different scenarios and conditions to explore it as a relevant mechanism that accounts as some of the effects on “people’s conceptions of their interests” (Agrawal, 2005, 170). Another suggestion of Agrawal is to consider both practice and imagination when analyzing the politics of the subject. “A more direct examination of the heterogeneous practices that policy produces, and their relationship with varying social locations, has the potential to lead analysis toward the mechanisms involved in producing differences in the way subject imagine themselves” (171). I add that it is not only policy or state power that influences this subject formation, it is also media with its persuasive strategies, the capitalist economic system through entrepreneurial strategies, and the world of NGOs with their technocracies and jargon—among other spheres of influence—that in the case of the young peasantry also affect how they imagine themselves, a desired livelihood or how they envision the state, the economy or other influencing powers on their lives.

I add to Agrawal’s cautioning message that the researcher also plays a role based on her/his expectations and ideological standpoints and her/his relation with research subjects. As researchers we are also subjects playing a subjecting role, sometimes assuming that those we interview and relate with during research are participants or that our research is closer to them, that we have closer personal and political relations with them and that we are part of their social and political world, and that we can speak for them. This is where feminist and postcolonial studies enter the scene as an important lens and pillar of the study (Morraga and Anzaldúa 1981,
As is explained in chapter three, this leads to considering the importance of the positionality of the researcher as part of the research.

I use recent conceptualizations of feminist political ecologists (e.g. Lau and Scales 2016, Sundberg 2004) about this open subject of feminism to examine how subjectivity and identity are influenced by external forces, in this case, more precisely focusing on what aspects of campesino/a identity and livelihood conditions are mobilized to respond and adapt to economic interests. This involves examining discursive formations of “lo campesino” (that which is peasant) with the adjectives that might frame it in different scenarios: young, women, green, poor, entrepreneur and its relations to different sources of influence: state policies, NGO work, international agencies, peasant organizations, self-representations or social media, just to mention the most used in this research. Sundberg (2004) suggests examining issues of subjectivity on three levels. 1) how social identities are constructed and performed in time and space; 2) how identities are constituted in local relations and in relation to external actors (conservation institutions in her 2004 work); and 3) how the researcher’s presence and her relation with research subjects/participants/collaborators, ethnography and participation as methods of observation and analysis, are also implicated in (re)configuring social identities.

Inspired by this way of examining subjectivity in feminist political ecology research, I use the concept of subjectivity across the dissertation chapters.

Chapter four “Tutela” develops in detail issues of subjectivity in the campesinado. With the exemplary case of how in the year 2018, 1,770 campesinas and campesinos filed a lawsuit (acción de tutela) to be included as campesina/os in the Colombian Population Census. The
Supreme Court of Justice received part of their petitions. Although the Court did not order the Population Census 2018 to ask who are the campesinas and campesinos, the Court did call the state’s attention in relation to specify the definition of “campesino”; count the campesinos and campesinas; identify the socioeconomic situation of the peasant population; formulate and monitor the plans, programs and public policies for the Colombian peasantry. This situation exposes some of the aspects of defining peasantry (campesinado) in the early 21st century, the calling of a group of people to the state to recognize and count in its statistics as a distinct social category. With these concepts of subjectivity, subject formation and identity in mind, a second research question is framed that intersects agrarian studies with feminist studies of the subject, subjectivity and identity: *In what ways are campesina/o identity and subject formation mobilized by campesina/os and external actors respectively.*

**Livelihood**

Finally, livelihoods is a concept that also structures this dissertation. The work of Edward Carr (2015) *Political ecology and livelihoods* suggests “occupations… social difference (gendered, age-defined livelihoods), directions (livelihood pathways, trajectories), dynamic patterns (sustainable or resilient livelihoods)” (Scoones 2009, 172 in Carr 2015, 332) as some of the ways in which the concept of livelihoods offers opportunities to better understand how people live in particular places, the choices they make in their day-to-day lives, the outcomes of those choices for their quality of life, and the sustainability of their way of life over time… livelihoods frameworks built on political ecology understandings of the nature-society relationships at the core of rural livelihoods produce more robust representations of how people live in particular places, and more

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11 “Acción de Tutela” is a mechanism described in Article 86 of the Colombian Constitution that aims to protect fundamental constitutional rights, even those not affirmed in the National Constitution, when they are infringed or threatened by the action or omission of any public authority. The court’s ruling from this action is of immediate compliance. Translation of definition found in: [http://www.reddhfic.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=144](http://www.reddhfic.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=144)
comprehensive assessments of the future sustainability and trajectories of those ways of living. (333)

Carr (2015, 335) goes on to state that livelihood approaches have had limited engagement with “ongoing agrarian transformation in many parts of the Global South” (see also Bebbington 1999, Scoones 2009). Following this call, livelihood can be approached as a dimension of campesina/o agency for example in terms of decisions and mobility as well as a starting point to pay attention to how external dynamics affect what can be framed as livelihood.

I disaggregate the concept of livelihood into some of its components beginning by approaching migration (particularly outmigration from rural settings) from individual, personal experiences drawn from the interviews of this research. I discuss migration not necessarily as a definitive outmigration from rural to urban settings, but observe the cyclical patterns that it can have, drawing from the interviews and how a “coming back” to a rural family setting, or to a rural background from where one spend the childhood is now projected in a different way. This may imply different working conditions or roles, perhaps investments in some cases, and a different sense of belonging. I also observe if there are gendered differences to the migration patterns that arise from the interviews and on how the coming back is constructed. I aim to link this livelihood approach, and more specifically the theme of migration, to the discussions of the agrarian question that suggest that a rural laborer either stays as a landless laborer or becomes a capitalist landowner, or else leaves (definitely?) to become an urban proletariat. I argue there are many nuances to the possibilities of relation with capitalism coming from a campesina/o background and that the age range and gender focus that this study uses, helps to observe how young campesina/os navigate capitalist tendencies, traditional expectations, individual aspirations, political discourses, technology, social media, other contemporary artifacts and dynamics to advance the construction of their livelihoods and in how this all helps answer:
how do generation, labor relations and gender factors influence decisions made about the desires, willingness and possibility of maintaining an agrarian-based livelihood?

Arguably, the main contribution to scholarship of this dissertation is a feminist political ecology analysis of agrarian livelihoods, which proposes to observe the subject formation of young campesina/os and some of its key influences (gendered dynamics of agrarian labor and culture, environmental issues and rural development paradigms) to understand why and how people can decide to continue with an agrarian livelihood.

Research design

Walking a tightrope describes doing a doctoral project and accomplishing an approved dissertation. In my PhD process four main factors both led and challenged the development of this research. I identify them as: Academia, Colombia, Economic viability, and Maternity/motherhood.

First, Academia beginning in the moment of PhD candidacy is about advancing academic debates, using its concepts and appropriate languages, learning its lineages, and navigating its micro-politics as a route map for a dissertation research project. This implies being permanently conscious of an audience, the utility of the product (graduating) and sporadically confronting bureaucracy (e.g. IRB requirements, visa issues, SEVIS, I-20). Academia both as a fuel and an obstacle implies rigor and coherence in following through academic debates and discussions, selecting and discovering the concepts that guide your work and writing in a coherent language a text that seems to have a voice of its own, and that contributes in a debate, a discussion or a mingle of concepts in at least one academic conversation. Academia as an obstacle means that discoveries and knowledge production can only be framed in the straightjacket of an academic
product, while “the rest” (e.g. emotions, personal difficulties, illnesses, economic constraints, long processes, beliefs, other languages) will have to be digested through other spaces: a hospital, a therapist’s office, a non-academic working space, a street protest, a WhatsApp message, a song, a hug, a beer, a cup of coffee, a tear.

Second, what I shortly name Colombia as a condition that leads and hinders my research, is both about my personal subjectivity as a native to the place where I did my research and the limitations that researching in Colombia implies. As a Colombian, I carry with my identity and social mobility the possibility of opening doors to spaces (e.g. organizational, institutional, interpersonal, verbal and cultural languages) and people that will feed my research. It also carries an accountability, responsibility, and witnessing to social processes. My personal history and social positions therefore influence my questions, and in certain ways drive and determine my methodologies. These certain ways refer to how I can access people due to the communicative skills of being a local, the lesser logistical implications of doing fieldwork (where to stay, how to arrive), but also the ways in which I decide when it is prudent not to go to place, talk to someone, or contact a source. This last way refers to the implicit fears, knowledges and ways of relating that I am part of, by being part of a society marked by a history of armed conflict, full of mistrust and suspicion. In this sense, planning times, sites and meetings may prove useless due to the ongoing development and uncertainties of a peace process and doing research with the actors and in the places involved in this process. This is not new to me as a Colombian, but it may be to a foreign academic audience and it is challenging to explain how this influences research possibilities and influences the unfolding of it. When I began the research, I wanted to be more explicit about the places and organizations I researched on. This was still during the presidency of Juan Manuel Santos (2014-2018). As I wrote the dissertation and the violence dynamics
returned to el campo (election and presidency of Ivan Duque 2018-2022) with the uncertainties of new armed forces reorganizing or emerging, and with the high and constant assassination of social leaders and environmentalists, I decided I needed to not only protect the identities of my interviewees but also of the organizations that offered interviews of their staff, and leave a more general sense of where my research develops. This is why I am not explicitly naming the organizations I worked with and I am vaguely mentioning the sites where I did fieldwork. For instance, the peace agreements and process between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla have brought diverse speculations of its ultimate benefit, who it ultimately serves, the developmental logic and national indebtedness logic it embraces, yet for many Colombians who have personally suffered the horrors of armed conflict, the peace agreements also brought new hope. Even though there were difficulties, uncertainties, and fears related to doing fieldwork in Colombia and particularly in Sumapaz, I want to bring my personal perspective that when the armed conflict between FARC and the Colombian state was militarily active, I would not have been able to develop my fieldwork. It would not have been safe to go so many times to Sumapaz, my rural field site. Neither alone nor necessarily accompanied. Many people whom I was able to interview would have been difficult to contact or perhaps would have declined the interview. Or they would not have felt safe to talk about many aspects. The intention of the peace agreements in their short and fragile existence were felt in places like Sumapaz and made possible much of the data I bring with this research. However, during my fieldwork, when the presidential elections were won by Ivan Duque who opposes the peace agreements as they were originally negotiated, the panorama in the field site changed. To exemplify this, and on what I speak of when I say Colombia as a restrictive factor, I recall that just as I was about to get my IRB approval to formally begin my PhD research, I learned that paramilitary pamphlets were
beginning to appear in some of the municipalities where I was doing preliminary fieldwork. These pamphlets and paramilitary presence usually target social leaders but they also stigmatize many social sectors and persons, searching for ways to discipline through fear and violence. When news of these pamphlets reached me, I had to take the decision of broadening my research sites and case studies. This is how I had to expand my analysis from Cabrera, to other municipalities in the Sumapaz region and broaden my analysis with other actors working with campesina/o youth on a national scale. Although I was able to go back to Cabrera for some interviews once the pamphlet issue was clearer, the reality of Colombia as a condition, shaped my research in unexpected ways.

As a Colombian there is also an ongoing question of social and political personal responsibility with the traumatic history we have lived as a nation. In this aspect, the writing of this dissertation is inspired by the dissertation of Diana Gómez, a professor I met in a public lecture of Arturo Escobar she introduced in October 2017. As she puts it:

Researchers that study violence should foster the possibility that victimized subjects, and Colombians in general, comprehend what took place in the country. This necessitates pedagogies that offer sensory references to weave together existence (P. Guerrero 2010), analyze reality, and potentiate social transformation. Pedagogies should contribute to politicizing Colombians, as well as to think and create new, appropriate, and affective-effective political strategies. (Gómez 2015, 32)

A third factor that shaped my research is Economic viability. I will not go into details about this factor since it trespasses personal information and renders me vulnerable through this public document. I refer here to the precariousness of navigating graduate school in financial terms, plus the factors of being a foreign student on a student visa and a single parent. This factor –and

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12 http://www.otravoz.co/habitantes-de-sumapaz-denuncian-amenazas-de-paramilitares/

the other ones mentioned—shape the times and places to do fieldwork. In my case it extended my previously planned fieldwork time and limited the times and distances I could travel to field sites due to economic restraints.

A fourth factor is doing a PhD as a single mother. This factor implies negotiating times for fieldwork, taking your child to fieldwork (when it feels safe) plus assuming the additional fieldwork costs of taking her as vulnerable company. It also predisposes times for focusing, reading, writing and thinking. Emotional labor takes time, and intellectual labor does too. Single-parenting is also intrinsically related to the previous factor of economic viability, particularly living and doing fieldwork in a neoliberally led country such as Colombia where health and education are highly privatized and of very unequal access among its population. Looking for ways to solve this access, plus the daily domestic and care labor competes with the daily concentration efforts that one can put to academic research with no permanent funding. These factors are not commonly exposed as part of research design, methodology and methods but from a feminist perspective they need to be named, acknowledged and explicitly embedded in research and academic knowledge production.

Methods

My methods are based on qualitative, ethnographic methodologies of social science and are also influenced by feminist inquiries. Since I am personally familiar with one of my research sites (a municipality) and I had already worked with campesina/o organizations in my master’s degree research, I already had personal and institutional contacts to begin preliminary fieldwork. I conducted thirty-four semi-structured interviews, most were recorded by audio although a few were not recorded due to the interviewees preference, to young campesina/os, institutional representatives, organizational leaders and staff, and NGO officers. Some were contacted
through email after a webpage navigation, others were reached using a snowball method through recommendations and contacts of interviewees. Eighteen were done with women and seventeen with men. A few had both men and women in a single interview such as the one with Santiago and Margarita, a couple. Twenty-three interviews were done with campesina/os and twelve with representatives of organizations or institutions. I noticed that in the cases where the interviewee preferred not to be recorded, it was always women who chose this option. I found it challenging to engage young campesinas in the interviews, some did not want to be recorded, others rejected participating. This can be interpreted in various ways. On one side I consider they had several working fronts they had to take care of (e.g. agricultural, care, domestic) and an interview to a researcher was not a priority. Another reason can be an issue of distrust on the origins and objectives of a research and the implications of being a participant, even if there is an IRB letter and protocols. Additionally, since IRB requires for my research that all participants are legal adults, I did not approach young campesina/os below eighteen years old.

Oral history inquiries drove the interviews and farm tours done with campesina/o interviewees. This method draws on the recommendations from the work of Portelli (1990, 1997) and is also inspired by the work of Molano (1989) doing oral history with campesinos on Colombia’s history. I also used participant observation when I visited rural sites and through my previous involvement with the Cabrera Peasant Reserve Zone (Ruiz Reyes 2015). This allowed me to observe and analyze how young people engage in this initiative, the social relationships and aspects involved (e.g., gendered differences, age differences) and aspects such as level of formal education, relation with other organizational structures. This participant observation method also draws on the ‘go-along’ as ethnographic research tool (Kusenbach 2003) which proposes that it helps to explore 1) environmental perception, 2) spatial practices, 3) biographies,
4) social architecture, and 5) social realms. This was particularly true when visiting farms and while touring them with the interviewee, grasp these issues with my own perceptions of where their daily life takes place.

*Document analysis* was used for laws, policies, project texts, plans, newspaper articles, institutional webpage texts, minutes and proceedings of events such as conferences, in relation to rural women, campesina/o youth, development and environmental projects and the future of the Colombian countryside. I subject them to an analysis of language, content, extent, imagery, audience and type and weave them together with arguments and other methods used.

*Field-note taking* was an important method to record in what ways participation is different by gender and looking for causal or relational situations. I also used it to construct vignettes of my experiences in fieldwork and as a helping tool when doing audio-recorded interviews. This is accompanied by *photographs* of landscapes, signs, farm arrangements (e.g. crops, constructions) and situations. However, I avoid taking photos of people since the condition I previously named Colombia with all its history of armed conflict and the suspicion and distrust it generated are heavy reasons to avoid taking photographs of people when they are not aware of them and the uses they will have. Finally, *social media use and analysis*. I “Liked” the Facebook pages of some collectives, searched for YouTube videos, and kept contact with my interviewees through WhatsApp. This complemented the findings I had in the field and was also a source of contact for some of my interviewees.

The use of all these methods helped me navigate the contingencies and challenges of the four conditions I previously mentioned. They complemented each other in ways that provided more comprehensive approaches to each theme of the dissertation research.
Document Structure

The structure of this dissertation is divided in two parts. Part one focuses on agrarian studies and puts it in dialogue with livelihoods scholarship, gender studies and youth studies. Chapter one *La labor del campo* (Laboring in El Campo), is a theoretical chapter that situates this dissertation in the lineages in agrarian studies about the agrarian question and how it has evolved with the more recent contributions of the social sciences and humanities scholarship that I just mentioned in ongoing academic conversations. Chapter two *Esa fue la vida que escogió* (That is the Life She Chose) is focused on personal stories of young campesina/os. It sets the argument of looking at the agrarian question in the early 21st century from the livelihoods of young campesina/o through the testimonies of these individuals exploring their rural labor experiences and personal migrations in search of livelihood options. The testimonies were initially sought in the Sumapaz region but were later complemented by the *educandos*[^14] (students or learners) of an agroecology school affiliated to La Via Campesina where campesina/o youth from different regions of the country arrived for their formación or traineeship. The connecting thread is common generational and socio-economic backgrounds rather than regional similarities. The methods used in this chapter are basically oral histories through interviews, farm tours and participant observation. The chapter closes with a reflection of *el campo* as a gendered possibility reviewing agrarian question literature, with agrarian, gender and youth studies literature (Agarwal 1990, 1992, Cornwall 2002, Razavi 2002, 2009, White 2012, Cassidy et al. 2019). The arguments are put in conversation and discussed through the cases seen during the chapter and contribute with a gender dimension to traditional debates of the agrarian question as well as a discussion of

[^14]: This is the term used by the agroecology school staff and how the students are trained to see themselves, therefore I prefer using this term when referring to the students/trainees of this school. This is not a common term in an educational space. Its literal translation is something like: the one who is receiving education, or the one who is being educated, “learner” would be its closest translation.
generational and age dimensions of rural outmigration. I suggest that in many cases young campesinos (particularly men in my data) do return to el campo because it offers “lesser of two evils” opportunities than the city in terms not only of labor but in livelihood opportunities. This is not the case for young campesinas. I do not have data to argue for better opportunities in the city, but I do have data that suggest that they have a harder time organizing a dignified livelihood in el campo because of the multiple types of labor they are expected to perform: agrarian, domestic, care, and even “green”, “sustainable” or organic production. A particular type of labor that young campesino men are usually forced to serve is military labor. I argue that this is due to intersectional conditions of socio-economic class inequalities and that this forced labor is portrayed as a parenthesis in their life aspirations. It is also a source of sexual violence for campesinas and other feminized bodies in el campo and reinforces patriarchal and violent masculinities in el campo. The last part focuses on the livelihood assets and aspirations identified through these oral histories and how mobility, understood in different ways, is an important asset for campesina/o youth in ways that are not usually acknowledged in academic literature.

Part two is dedicated to examining subjectivity, subject formation and identity in young campesina/os and other rural youth. Its first chapter (chapter three of the dissertation) presents the theoretical paths around these concepts and how they are related from feminist studies to the researcher’s positionality or what I name “Finding One’s Paths”. The chapter begins with the work of feminist philosophers such as Judith Butler, Linda Alcolff and Gayatri Spivak in situating philosophical questions about subjectivity, identity and performativ agency in research. It then introduces how I situate and understand my positionality based on the discussions from a diversity of feminist scholars. I then discuss the theorizing of identity and subjectivity from the broad philosophical questions to their uses in feminist geography and
feminist political ecology and current Colombian scholarship to approach issues of gender in agrarian studies or to interpret Campesina and Popular Feminism (FCP for its acronym in Spanish) as one of the findings in my interviews with members of campesina/o organizations, among other themes. It also approaches questions brought by J. Butler about new subjects “after the ravages of war” which is a relevant reflection in the Colombian context. The conceptual presentations of this chapter are the foundations of the chapters that follow that can be read as sets of cases.

Chapter four *Tutela* or Making Lo Campesino Count: Campesinado as Political Subject and Bearer of Rights, opens the set of case study chapters presenting the legal protection instrument (called *acción de tutela* in Spanish) that more than a thousand campesina/os and organizations signed to demand the Colombian state to include the category “campesino” in the national population census of 2018. This chapter approaches the question about why a collectivity would want to be legible to the state. I argue that historically, the campesinado has been profiled, oppressed and persecuted by the state, and that the tutela demanding their visibility is a strategy to seek state protection. The chapter also presents how the History and Anthropology Institute of Colombia (ICANH) presented the case of how the campesinado could be defined and censused in this process.

The following chapter (five), *Women or Rural women and campesinas: Institutional and feminist perceptions on their needs and subjectivities*, presents different way in which they are portrayed from institutions such as the Ministry of Agriculture and from campesina/o organizations. It presents the trajectories of policies for rural women, and the technocratic paths that the policies have taken. I present document analysis of these policies and observe their influence from certain development narratives. This is put in contrast with the ways in which
Campesina and Popular Feminism portrays the needs and political agendas of rural women and campesinas.

Chapter six, *Youth, or Rural Youth, Economic and Political Subjectivities: Youth as investment sites* presents the formación or subject-formation influenced by development agencies and how it favors certain subjectivities that align with a neoliberal economic logic of the entrepreneur. I observe how even with the same influences, I identify gendered differences on how the youth I interviewed present their economic project and perform this economic subjectivity. The findings of this chapter feed the discussion of livelihood aspirations, mobility as a livelihood asset and what this means for the rural youth who access these organizational structures. There is also an identity difference on how they narrate their origins and how they do not identify as campesina/os, but as rural youth, plus gendered differences on how they present their entrepreneurship.

Chapter seven, *Environment or Cultivating Youth’s Environmental Subjectivities*, is a political ecology analysis of different interpretations and findings around nature and the environment that I found, and how they relate with campesina/o and rural youth identity and livelihood aspirations in el campo. Initially I discuss the use and effect of rituality, its fetishizing of indigenous beliefs, artifacts and representatives in events and projects and how they are meant to be understood as “environmental”. Found in agroecology schools, NGOs, and institutions, the use of rituality for environmental events can trigger emotional commitments and references, generating a sense of belonging and a responsibility of action towards nature. However, from a political ecology perspective it must be analyzed with its configurations of power. This is where the concepts of governmentality and environmentality offer analytical lenses that propose to see these uses of rituality as disciplining acts that shape how the state and the environment are meant
to be understood. These observations feed the recent conceptualizations and discussions of emotions in political ecology analysis (Sultana 2015), the socioenvironmental state (Nightingale 2018), the recent call for political ecologies of the state (Camargo and Ojeda 2017). These discussions are furthered with the cases of the Andean bear and the possibilities of new gendered socio-environmental conflicts about what to protect and who has the power to protect it; and also by observations of how campesinas relate to National Parks, both opposing them and their restrictive land uses and working for them to solve livelihood situations.

The conclusion centers on the future of ¿Campo para la/os jovenes? With its initial formulation as a double-meaning question asking both for “countryside” as in el campo where the campesina/o youth has “space” (which can also use the word campo in its meaning in Spanish); space for developing livelihood possibilities, political participation space, space to defend and create a meaning of territory and belonging. It also proposes policy recommendations based on the conceptual frameworks and analysis offered by this dissertation.
It was the third time that I approached Ingrid’s house in hope of interviewing her. She had worked in an Andean Bear project with CAR and I wished to interview her specifically about the gendered labor in institutional environmental projects. She was about my age (36) or some years older. Last time I went to her house she was not feeling well plus she had her family visiting but anyway she rapidly showed me her project files, the video she had done on her own with camera-trap snaps and other images of Cabrera. The camera-traps had been brought by the regional environmental authority CAR for the project and she was in charge of their administration.

As usual, this time I was also greeted by her husband, José. I asked him from the road if Ingrid was there. He welcomed me to their plot and guided me uphill from the tomato-fruit tree orchard – heavily smelling of fertilizers, and barren clay soil– to their house. Ingrid was busy cooking with other female members of her family for her daughter’s 17th birthday.

José led us (I was with two friends: a mother and her 22 year-old daughter) to the kitchen, and to the table that served as a dining table. Ingrid and him invited us to the family gathering and its lunch. I was uneasy about what to do. I felt like I was interfering in a family gathering but at the same time, it is rude to decline an invitation to eat in el campo. My friends agreed it would be best to stay and offer some ham we had brought with us. We were seated in the small kitchen table and served in the first round together with José who stayed visiting with us. Reaching Ingrid proved challenging this time too.

The daughter arrived with her 7 months-old baby boy, and a look I interpreted of tiredness, undernourishment, solitude and a sense of being overwhelmed. She was silent, looking down, carrying her baby. The baby’s dad was not with them. She fled the scene, I don’t know if to the kitchen or a room. The baby passed by everyone’s arms. He was everyone’s joy, beginning with the young grandparents (not yet in their 40s) who carried the baby, played with him and showed him around to other family members.

As we ate a delicious sancocho de gallina criolla, José told us that the daughter had been finishing high school, but then… “that is the life she chose” (esa fue la vida que escogió)… Ingrid and the other women: her mother, sisters and nieces stayed in the kitchen, ate in the kitchen while the men stayed outside by a small improvised grill where a part of the lunch was cooking.

After eating and visiting for a while, I was able to go to the kitchen to take our empty dishes. There, the women were talking about experiences of giving birth in Fusagasugá and the bad treatment and service they received, plus the journey from Cabrera to Fusa, two hours away.

The daughter and baby needed a drive back home so I offered to take them. Since I was driving they could use the ride to take a crib and a baby’s bath tub. I was happy to be able to thank them for the lunch plus saving the young mother from a motorcycle ride with a baby in a bumpy dirt road in these mountains.

She didn’t talk much during the ride but we were able to know she had met the baby’s father on Facebook, he was 21 and was not from the region. The ride was a tough, bumpy, dirt road uphill, about 30 minutes from her parents’– longer than I had expected. We left her in a small wooden house, surrounded by maize and pastures for cows. Nobody came to receive her, the baby and the stuff. We helped her with the crib and bath tub. She gave us a shy thank you and went in the house.

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15 Proper names are changed to protect interviewees identities.
16 Hen soup with different types of carbohydrates: potatoes, plantain, yuca (manioc) and cilantro. A traditional Colombian dish.
17 Capital of the Province of Sumapaz with a population of approximately 140,000.
Chapter One: Theoretical Considerations.

La labor del campo\(^{18}\) (Laboring el campo).

Theoretical Basis: Origins and Ongoing Conversations

A special issue on *Generational transmission of smallholder farms in late capitalism* in the Canadian Journal of Development Studies (2019 vo.40 N.2) appeared during the time of this research and dissertation writing. The introduction of that special issue is about farm succession and generational issues intersecting with gender in contemporary late capitalist agrarian scenarios (Cassidy et al., 2019). This shows the global relevance of the relationship between agrarian studies, gender, and youth studies in addressing the dynamics surrounding agriculture in the 21\(^{st}\) century and those who will be producing it. Cassidy et al. (2019), present the problem as: “Smallholder farmers, and those who promote smallholder farming futures, everywhere confront the question of where the next generation of farmers will come from, and whether there is a future for smallholder farming” (221). This dissertation draws from similar lines of questioning but intersects this discussion with how environmental issues and narratives also influence these dynamics, focusing on contemporary campesina/o small-holding agrarian societies of the Colombian Andes. This first chapter sets the stage by presenting a literature review of the central preceding and current academic trajectories which have analyzed the possibilities of small-scale agrarian production under capitalism. It highlights some of the main scholarly debates around the agrarian question and some related trajectories in agrarian studies. I propose to advance those academic debates and other emerging theoretical discussions by adding three categories of

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\(^{18}\) Mentioned in the introduction, I use some terms in Spanish such as ‘el campo’ to capture cultural meaning which does not translate well enough in the translation, ‘the countryside.’ Note that the word campesino or campesina, which is usually translated as peasant, farmer or agriculturalist, derives from the word campo, as subjects from ‘el campo.’
analysis: class, gender and generation, using *class* in its socio-economic dimension as developed by Marxism based on *labor* and labor relations, *gender* focusing on gender relations in a specific cultural context, and generational relations focused on *youth* (18-35 years). My arguments are based on knitting together these relational categories of analysis (with the means of production, with the social constructions), or relating these factors, to begin answering the research objectives of this dissertation presented in the introduction. I then introduce the concept of *livelihood* in order to examine how the aforementioned research categories can condition or influence agrarian livelihoods in the making. This serves as a theoretical exposition for the testimonies in the next chapter, which give an idea of how the relationships between the categories of analysis are navigated by individuals, and help us to understand and advance the question of how capitalist relations impact livelihood options for young *campesinos*. This leads not only to switching the object of study from agriculture—as an object changed by capitalism—to the *subjects who produce* that agriculture, but also leads us to unpacking who these subjects are. It also situates an understanding of what factors influence the decisions of young adults of *campesino* origin to continue constructing a small-scale agrarian-based livelihood or not.

In the decades of the 1980s and 1990s, a fruitful development of scholarship about subjectivity began. In agrarian studies this has fostered an examination of the gendered, generational, racial, and cultural differences which give texture to what being an agriculturalist, or a peasant, or a *campesino* means. This examination also includes when, by and for whom, or under what circumstances campesino/agriculturalist/peasant—or any related identifier—is used as an identity marker. A gendered, classed/labor-relations and aged-generational approach to *campesino* livelihoods in the making is thus, an adequate beginning for developing a discussion
on campesina/o subjectivities and an appropriate preamble for part two of this dissertation. This chapter encompasses the first side of a triad of scholarship used to address its objectives and the initial research question: how do generation, labor relations and gender factors influence decisions made about the desires, willingness and possibility of maintaining an agrarian-based livelihood? The three sides of this triad are: 1) agrarian, rural and peasant studies and introducing the concept of livelihood from political ecology and development studies; 2) subjectivity and identity issues of the peasantry (campesinado) influenced by feminist geography and postcolonial and feminist studies, and 3) the construction of “environmental” issues, policies, and imaginaries from a political ecology perspective. In this sense, intellectually this project “greens” and “genders” the initial agrarian question of what has been called the fate of the peasantry under capitalist economic relations, situating the agrarian question in a current context and updating its relevance to address a variety of issues that encompass this research. This goes hand in hand with current debates about the agrarian question formulated by Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010b), in particular the contemporary agrarian questions they proposed about class forces (AQ1), gender (AQ6) and ecology (AQ7), and the intersection of class, generation and gender proposed by Cassidy et al. (2019). I consider this literature (agrarian studies) and the lenses of analysis (environmental and social categories) to offer a comprehensive and wide-reaching scope addressing the influences of capitalist relations on individual lives with everyday decisions, routines, and longer-term life aspirations and expectations.

The Origins: The Reduction of the Peasantry to Agriculturalists, and its Implications for Agrarian Societies

A considerable portion of the scholarship of agrarian, rural, and peasant studies is based on the conceptual lineage Marxism or relates and responds to the Marxist thesis on the agrarian
question (Lenin 1966; Byres 1977; de Janvry 1981; Kautsky 1988; Brass 1990; Byres 1991; Bernstein 1996; McMichael 1997; Akram Lodhi 1998; Bernstein 2004; Fairbairn et al. 2004; Bernstein 2006; O’Laughlin 2009; Akram Lodhi & Kay 2010; Cassidy et al. 2019). This means that in Marxism it is understood that the situations of agrarian societies based on the influence and impact of the arrival, emergence, and consolidation of capitalist economic relations in agrarian societies. It also includes analysis of the changes in social relations based on the changing values (e.g. moral, monetary) of labor and of production in relation to previous economic systems. A Marxist analysis of rural and agrarian societies implies a look at labor relations and types of production, and how this constitutes, establishes or changes class relations. The reasons and types of production can go from self-sufficiency, barter, and communal reasons, to commodification. To approach class relations, we have to define class, and the ways in which it is influential or determinant of social relations and in this case, the way it impacts individual choices, restrictions and aspirations.

When Kautsky (1974, 1988)19 wrote *The Agrarian Question* in the last years of the 19th century, he was writing it for a European audience in a specific historic and social context. What he proposed as the agrarian question was how Marx’s deductions about the evolution to socialism, by the proletariat taking over the industrial means of production, could not be simply transposed to the realm of agriculture. The question for Kautsky was not if small or big exploitation was more productive or what the best equation in a communist regime was in terms of area of productive unit and number of people laboring in it. Nor was Marx’s aim to look at agriculture as a problem in itself, but rather, it was examined as part of the complex mechanism of social production (1974, 6). Kautsky suggested that although agriculture has the same end

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19I am using two editions of The Agrarian Question. One in Spanish, 1974, SigloVeintiun Editores - Mexico, and the 1988 Zwan Publications edition in English. This is why I do not cite Kautsky as much as I paraphrase him.
(objective) as industry, it has its own laws. What he proposed (for a socialist audience and with the assumption of a common objective of aiming for a political-economic revolution) was that in order to study the agrarian question with Marx’s method, it was necessary to amplify the study to a series of questions (1988, 12):

1. What are the transformations of agriculture within the capitalist regime of production?
2. How does capital take power over agriculture, transform it, and destroy old forms of production and property?
3. How does capitalism create the need for new forms of production and property?

Only once these agrarian questions are approached—said Kautsky—will we be able to know if Marx’s theory is applicable for agriculture and then if small property must reduce land to soil, one of the most important means of production, which reduces the meaning of land to a material base, and space for food production. What we must hold on to from Kautsky’s initial formulation of the agrarian question is how, with these three questions, he manages to abstract context and focus on the method through which the transformations of agriculture under capitalism must be approached. With his focus on method and process (how capitalism transforms agriculture), we are able to see in capitalism a fluidity, an amorphous process, changing and transforming itself, and through its establishment or passing, the transformation of people and their ways of life, as well as the territories (not reduced to a notion of land) that they inhabit. This clear method and thorough way of formulating the fundamental aspects is what this conceptual frame offers to be attentive to. This is—in my opinion—what marks Kautsky’s formulation of the agrarian question as a relevant approach over time and across places, where we are studying capitalism and its relation to agrarian production. I use Kautsky’s method for the agrarian question as a relevant starting point to study the ways capitalism still continues to transform agricultural production
and the livelihoods of agriculturalists (or peasants, campesinos/as, or other denominations which will be explored in the next part) in Colombia in the first decades of the 21st century.

Kautsky committed a long part of his *The Agrarian Question* (1977) to describing how the peasantry used to produce its own products and had extensive knowledge of diverse subsistence and exchange craft production activities before the arrival of capitalist relations and means of production and their conversion into “free” waged labor in a commodified economy. As multi-tasking and multi-knowledge populations, they were able to use and transform their surrounding environment into use values derived from a wide range of actions and skills: carpentry, cloth-making, masonry, and the production of medicines from natural origin and traditional observation and techniques (e.g. vegetable, mineral, animal, heat-cold management, etc.), among others. Kautsky argued that only with the rise of urban industry did the peasant become what he [*sic*] is known as in modernity: an agriculturalist\(^{20}\). With his arguments, Kautsky hinted at the notions of what later would be called “livelihood” in the sense of diversification, and into the abilities and agency of interactions and transformations of the surrounding environment as issues relevant to the agrarian question. Ignoring the multi-dimensional aspects of agrarian-rural livelihoods before capitalism and reducing the peasant to an agriculturalist produces the erosion of comprehension of rural livelihoods beyond agrarian labor relations and erodes the notions of landscape and territories where these livelihoods take place, and which also shape and give life to these spaces. As will be more fully discussed in other chapters, *el campo* is not only a site for agrarian production, it is also a site where multi-dimensional livelihoods take place and are supported (for construction materials, for medicines, for craft production, for diverse social relations). It is a cultural site. This leads us to identifying the deficiencies in

\(^{20}\) The gendered language in which Kautsky and most agrarian literature, refers to the agriculturalist, the peasant, the farmer, or agrarian worker will be highlighted and discussed throughout the dissertation.
Kautsky’s approach. The dimensions which were not clearly approached by Kautsky and that suggest new conversations and explanations which will be addressed in this chapter and throughout this dissertation are:

- How does capitalism transform the ways of life (livelihoods) of agriculturalists?
- How do ways of life differ depending on the age and gender of the agriculturalist?
- How do historic and contextual differences influence how capitalism transforms the agriculturalist and the types of agrarian production?

In the context of this chapter, seeking answers to these questions means passing from the essence of the agrarian question: how capitalism transforms agriculture as an economic activity, or what are the transformations of agriculture within the capitalist regime of production? To: in what ways does capitalism transform the agriculturalists?, changing the object of study from the economic activity to the laborers, the subjects, the actors who comprise that economic activity named agriculture, under a powerful and encompassing economic regime: capitalism. Who is the agriculturalist? is a question which will be examined in the next part of this dissertation, focusing on identity and subjectivity.

After identifying other useful lineages within the debates about the agrarian question, other sociological and anthropological views drawing on the intellectual tradition begun by Kautsky, within Marxist scholarship, are also presented, as well as alternate views which aimed to look at the family as a productive unit. Chayanov had already introduced for the Marxist European audiences of the early 20th century his “theory of peasant economy” with a discussion about the demographic aspects within households to understand the inequality among the Russian peasantry. He observed external conditions which impose constraints on peasant households in terms of their subsistence. He highlighted how peasants intensify self-exploitation as a way to respond to external pressures. His “peasant economy”: 
was an instance of a broader and generic ‘family economy’ centered on the organization of ‘family labour… [where] the imperatives of reproduction in family labour enterprises mean that labour costs (drudgery) are discounted in adverse conditions, generating peasant ‘self-exploitation’ (Bernstein 2009, 59).

Chayanov described a wide range of possibilities of external conditions and of peasant responses, and analyzed the integration of peasant households in capitalist commodity markets and the sale (and purchase) of labor power. His critics point out that his described adaptations are derived from an unchanging logic of household reproduction and modes of calculation. Therefore, his descriptions are rendered static and—according to Bernstein—lacking “significant theorization of social relations” (2009, 65). That being said, his thesis, models, and observations (once translated into English in the 1960s) helped anglophone agrarian scholars to advance understandings and discussions on the social and cultural dynamics of peasant societies, including Scott’s *Moral Economy of the Peasants* (1976) which approaches the notion of livelihoods developed in more detail starting in the 1990s. Not only was Chayanov’s peasant household meant to be ahistorical and static, it was also not gendered, nor aged (neither was Lenin’s work), and as Bernstein signals, another problem followed the Chayanovian structure:

many ‘peasant’ households are driven by (deepening) insertion in commodity relations to reproduce themselves increasingly through non-farming activities, at what point do they remain ‘peasants’ in any meaningful sense?... The question indicated of the meaning of ‘peasant-ness’ or ‘peasant-hood’, and appropriate indicators to specify (and perhaps measure) it, is not intended to invite a resurgence of the syndrome of determining and attaching the ‘right’ class (or other) labels to categories of social agents. (Bernstein 2009, 65-66)

With this, Bernstein suggests that the Marxist intention of classifying people in social classes can fall short of examining wider issues and ignores the agency that people have over their own economic decisions. This is where other social science perspectives are useful in broadening discussions around peasantry and capitalism. Views such as those proposed decades later by Thompson (1991) or Wolf (1972) are more comprehensive views of the peasantry as
knowledgeable folk who are politically, economically, and socially active actors. Kautsky’s encompassing of agrarian populations as much more than mere agriculturalists provided a foundation for expanding a Marxist conversation to debate beyond the meaning of agriculture in an economic revolution, and to become attentive to the subjects who labored in this productive area as, more than laborers, actors shaping their environment and their social relations, also with political agendas. The 20th century developments of the agrarian question, looking at peasants’ moral economy, agency, multiple knowledges (not only as agriculturalists), the tensions among subalterns, land as an asset in livelihoods—but not exclusively for agrarian production—all these edges show that the “old” agrarian question needs to be reformulated even if its initial conceptual abstraction might still prove relevant. These “new” approaches to the agrarian questions are necessary since the dialectical method and historical materialism require that material and historical inputs shape the analysis. This is the theme of the following section.

**Updating the Agrarian Question**

Capitalism as an exploitative, socially unequal, and degrading economic system is a constant concern within social sciences and in the branch of human geography in which I situate this research. For those interested in agrarian dynamics, the impacts of capitalism on how agriculture is developed and who it develops is a valid, ongoing academic conversation that is hoped to have impact on public policy, social change, and economic transformation. Agrarian scholars with this academic interest (e.g. Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b, Bernstein 2009, 2016) suggest that the recent development of capitalism does not need agriculture as a primary source of accumulation, but it does benefit from the capital-labor relations where the terms and conditions of wage labor favor exploitation and degrade the possibility of dignified livelihoods. To build their arguments, they draw from the initial conceptualization of the agrarian question in the late 19th century by
European Marxists and socialist audiences, and differentiate that initial agrarian question, updating the debate with the conceptual developments of the 20th century. Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010b) survey the current debates of the agrarian question and identify seven contemporary agrarian questions, variations or approaches “to examine agrarian change and rural transformation” (266). This dissertation uses empirical material to approach these questions by focusing on three of these variations: class (AQ1), gender (AQ6), and what the authors label “ecology” (AQ7). Fairbairn et al. (2014, 659) also identify within the new directions of agrarian political economy:

*Hybrid livelihoods and the blurring of the rural/urban dichotomy* [subtitle]

…[where] dichotomies between ‘rural’ and ‘urban’ that are conventionally deployed to define peasantries and the poor in general do not hold in the contemporary context (659)… In response to the various encroachments of capitalist development, smallholders’ agrarian livelihoods have not disappeared so much as diversified and hybridized.

They refer to “hybrid livelihoods” for cases where there is a dislodgement from agricultural commodity production plus a lack of opportunities in the non-farming economy, and “recombinant bricolage” where in contexts of de-agrarianization there is agricultural self-provisioning —if not for accumulation— at least as a way to face and navigate the uncertainties of the labor market. The authors also mention other cases which show “the complementarities between market and non-market, capitalist and non-capitalist, and multi-sited urban and rural economic activities” (660) such as Bebbington (1999) or Wolford (2010) whose work will be mentioned in this chapter to explore other angles of contemporary agrarian studies.

In its origins with the initial agrarian question literature, class was a central category of analysis to describe the peasantry since it drew from a Marxist socio-economic framework where economic class already had a compact description and definition. Categories of analysis are a preferred heuristic mechanism of the social sciences to describe and identify research subjects
and delimitate social practice for investigative purposes. However, as will be explained throughout this chapter, beyond socio-economic class, other categories of analysis provide more nuanced and situated knowledge of the circumstances and possibilities lived by those who have been commonly grouped as “the peasantry” when immersed in the capitalist system. More than a static categorization and position in an economic system, the relational, social, and cultural aspects of those who can be considered “the peasantry” provide rich understanding of how a group of people navigate an economic system, situate political identities and inhabit territories. The aim is thus to recognize their agency, understood as their intention and capacity to seek better life options, in whatever ways that can mean for each individual. Categories help to focus but also restrain possibilities for more fluid understanding. Categories imply differentiation, or boundaries, in relation to other categories. I put in contrast how, often implicitly, “the peasantry” as an economic class categorization silences the social relations which construct it as a wider socio-economic category. For instance, labor relations, gender relations, and generational relations are socially constructed and constitute what “the peasantry” is also about. Generational relations for an individual change as time goes by. Age implies changing individual and social expectations. In youth studies, “youth” is a key concept, where “youth as generation [is defined as] a social category defined, like class and gender, in relational terms” (Cassidy et al. 2019, 223). In this sense, youth has an actor-oriented approach where those under the category of “youth” are seen as actors with “constrained agency” in recognition of the power of the structural environments (ibid).

Youth studies also view youth as identity (Jones 2009), mindful that young people are not only young, they are young men or women (gendered) and also in most rural contexts ‘classed’. Youth and generation must therefore be seen as ‘intersecting’ with other important social categories (Hajdu et al. 2013; Jones 2009; Nayak and Kehily 2013; Wyn and White 1997) (Cassidy et al. 2019, 223).
These categories of analysis (gender, class, generation) are relevant for understanding peasant economies, and current agrarian livelihoods in the making. They also help to analyze other aspects emerging from the interviews that will be presented throughout the dissertation, such as the meanings of mobility, education, and land in different phases of life, and according to the gender and labor relations and experiences of each person.

**Original Categorization: Class**

The initial analysis from Marxist scholarship surrounding agriculture and its subjects is the idea that the peasantry is a socio-economic class. Bernstein reviews this work and proposes a trajectory beginning with the very basic Marxist definition of class as the social relationship of production between classes of producers (labor) and non-producers (2016, 174). He then offers an analysis of class dynamics and agrarian transformation (2016) in terms of a gendered and generational analysis providing keys to understanding the conditions and decisions which shape rural individual life histories and generalizations of rural societies. His chapter on *Class Formation in the Countryside* (Bernstein 2010), begins by asking if the peasantry (particularly in the Global South) constitute a social class. He takes Lenin’s class differentiation of the peasantry to critique how this attempt at universal agrarian class division ignores factors and determinants which impede agrarian production relationships in order to be classed uniformly. In Lenin’s class differentiation (1920), “rich” are those emerging capitalist farmers with amplified reproduction participation, capable of accumulating productive resources; “middle” peasants are those capable of simple reproduction or reproducing as capital in the same scale as production, as well as labor in the same scale as consumption; “poor” peasants are those who struggle to reproduce as capital, and therefore try to reproduce as labor force from their own crops, subject to constriction of simple reproduction (Bernstein 2016, 147-8). According to Bernstein, there is no common social relationship with capital which suggests that the peasantry can be considered a class, based on
social relations of production. He argues that along with Lenin’s three agrarian class
differentiations, there is a romantic assumption that before the entrance of capitalist relations,
agrarian [European] societies were intrinsically egalitarian and therefore were all in the second
class of median farmers. I argue that more than an idyllic past, this median class suggests an
idyllic agrarian society, timeless and placeless, which does not scrutinize internal labor relations
within the household, between genders, across generations, and in terms of who controls land
and the means of production in a family. This is closer to the broadening definition of class
beyond a binary of producers/non-producers, offered by Gidwani in the Dictionary of Human
Geography (2009, 88) “In its most persistent popular sense, class refers to a social division or
system of rank order, evident in the phrase ‘uppers, middle and lower classes’ that is associated
with position, privilege and hereditary advantage (or the lack thereof).” Although neatly
hierarchized, this definition hints at other variables such as privilege or advantage which still
require unpacking. Other sections of this chapter leading towards a livelihoods perspective will
work on these and other variables.

What I take as Bernstein’s contribution to agrarian question debates is the messiness of
class relationships and how the agrarian transitions (from pre-capitalist to capitalist economic
regimes) and outcomes cannot be foreseen to function in the same way in different scenarios
(nationally, regionally), nor can a class division be neatly categorized. However, we can find
classed expectations in individuals and social groups who wish to change their labor relations in
the capitalist system and who seek to access classed privileges such as property and capital flow
to access commodities for wellbeing or livelihood improvement in the terms they imagine for
these aspects in their own lives. The focus on livelihood will help to identify how classed
relations to capital are a reference in some people’s life decisions.
**Campo para las jóvenes? Issues for gendering the agrarian question**

A feminist geography view of class expands the reference of “… systems of social stratification based upon material relationships to property and employment…” (Wills, in McDowell and Sharp 1999, 32) to the relational character of class and the interrelations and dependencies generating axes of power relations in capitalist societies (see also Massey, 1994), and how “feminists have extended the notion of class to include the mode of reproduction, as well as production, arguing that the unpaid domestic labour performed by women in the home is another facet of class relations” (Wills, in McDowell and Sharp 1999, 32). Feminist scholars such as Shahra Razavi (2002, 2009) position the views of gendered subjects, displacing and questioning the notion of peasant as being equated to a middle-aged, male household head and sole decision-maker, and introduce a new dimension of studying rural and agrarian labor by putting emphasis on uncommodified labor —within and outside the household— questioning family structures, and also questioning the interventions meant as development or progress. These positions are approached by different academic fields such as feminist post-development studies or political ecology, which will be dealt with in the following chapters. I now turn to an introduction of gender as a category of analysis of agrarian labor and the discussions and contributions it has offered in agrarian studies. Before linking gender in agrarian studies, situating a definition of gender for this chapter offers clarity in what is being connected to agrarian and campesino issues.

Feminist geographers regard gender as:

A complex word to define, as its meaning has changed over the past two decades or so and is now highly contested… gender describes socially constructed characteristics (masculinity and femininity)… ‘gender is the social organization of sexual difference… the knowledge that establishes meaning for bodily differences’ (Scott in McDowell and Sharp 1999, 106)

…A gender order or regime … distinguishing relations of (a) power, (b) production and (c) cathexis (emotional attachment) (Connell in McDowell and Sharp 1999, 106)
… the idea of dominant and oppositional gender regimes, which are complex and variable, gives a useful and structured way of investigating the geographic diversity of gender relations… Gender, it is argued, is constructed and maintained through discourse and everyday actions… Gender seems nowadays to have escaped the constraints of the body, or more accurately the body has been redefined.” (McDowell in McDowell and Sharp 1999, 104-109).

What these different notions around “gender” offer is that situating a single definition of gender would constrain the possibilities of analysis. Rather, signaling, highlighting, and being attentive to the possibilities which can be analyzed as gender, feeds back to how gender can be understood. However, in agrarian studies, the introduction of gender has been more focused on women and the situations women face in agrarian societies, which tend to be situations of discrimination in relation to their male counterparts. Few—if any—agrarian case studies offer, for instance, a gendered view of the researcher and her/his research focus and reasons of choice. Feminist geography and feminist political ecology are more keen to offer a wider perspective of gender in agrarian issues. However, I will begin by examining the more traditional way gender has been conceptualized in agrarian studies. Other sections and chapters of this dissertation aim at expanding the notions of gender in agrarian studies.

Resuming the previously mentioned path of situating contemporary relevance of the agrarian question(s) (Bernstein 1996, 2009; Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2009, 2010a, 2010b) and unpacking its meanings and dimensions, it is important to remember that one of the analytical frameworks identified by Akram-Lodhi and Kay (2010b) in the contemporary agrarian questions is gender (AQ7). They agree with O’Laughlin (2009, 268) in how rural production, accumulation and politics are shaping and being shaped by gender relations. The authors argue that the “gendered agrarian question” is one of the missing links in contemporary agrarian debates.

Gender is a relation of production and reproduction that encompasses both cooperation and contradiction and which directly impacts upon the processes of production and class formation; non-commodified labour contributes to accumulation; and gender relations,
which unequally distribute reproductive work, shape and are shaped by the balance of class forces and the operation of the formal and informal social and political institutions that result from the balance of class forces (Akram-Lodhi and Kay 2010b, 268).

This definition of gender as a relation accepts the unequal and non-commodified labor characteristics which lead to accumulation, and this inequality impacts the processes of production. In this sense, it hints at a capitalist imposition of economically based gendered dynamics which has in its origins systematically exploited women in order to position and expand capitalist relations. This is fully explained by Selma James (1975) and Silvia Federici (2014). However important it is to see gender in capitalist relations, gender cannot be understood only in terms of economic relations. Nor can gender in agrarian studies—or any other scope of study where capitalism is concerned—be equated to women. There are other sorts of discriminations (e.g. aged, classed, racialized, able-bodied, sexual) which need to be distinguished in capitalist relations. This has been further examined by Cassidy et al. (2019) who analyze succession of farms in late capitalist counties in a manner attentive to gender and generational relations.

When conceptualizing gender in agriculture or in contemporary agrarian studies, Shahra Razavi is one of the few feminist scholars who has brought to “the political economy of agrarian change the pervasiveness of gender relations and their interconnections with broader processes of social change” (2009, 197). The main message from her work is that in any campesina/o household before looking at external labor relations one must first focus on how they are constituted internally at least in terms of gender. Her work and the work she has edited, offers a lens to look at agrarian dynamics in current times analyzing how gender operates in agrarian societies and its economic relations. Razavi et al. (2002, 4) in their seminal work *Shifting Burdens: Gender and Agrarian Change under Neoliberalism* scrutinize agrarian change
from a gender perspective, unraveling the ways in which economic and social structures, institutions, and outcomes are mediated by gender as a social relationship… bringing to light the interdependencies between the ‘unpaid’ and monetized economy of highlighting the ‘externalities’ from certain policy inputs, especially in welfare terms.

Razavi’s (2009) *Engendering the Political Economy of Agrarian Change* (2009) advances and questions how gender has been studied —or not— in agrarian studies literature in recent decades. She highlights three contentions based on the work of Agarwal (1990):

1. Although feminist research has advanced in analyzing domestic institutions (households, families) in their internal workings and connections to broader economic and political structures and processes, there have been limitations due to methodological individualism in analyzing gender relations in the household. Therefore, a feminist re-thinking of the household is needed.

2. Land rights have been given centrality and have become “the basis for global policy prescriptions for female poverty and women’s empowerment” but “women’s contractual inferiority in labour markets (broadly defined)” needs to be better understood” (198).

3. “[C]ommunity’ institutions –be they village councils, ‘traditional’ authorities, or ‘indigenous institutions and local states in processes of decentralization” have been raised “as the suitable managers of rural resources and as the more socially embedded locus of decision-making” (199) however, feminist analysis raises questions about the forms these institutions take in terms of their implications for equality in participation and benefit sharing. “Participation” needs to be scrutinized as it is becoming “an additional unpaid work burden for particular categories of people who are deemed to be more suitable stewards of the family and the environment” (199).

Although I do not consider that these three approaches encompass a full agenda in the study of gender in agrarian studies, they do offer a good starting point for linking gender and labor in
agrarian studies. These three contentions offer an initial road map for how to examine gender as an analytical framework of a contemporary agrarian question. The focus on: 1) domestic institutions; 2) contractual inferiority; and 3) the meanings and limitations of participation, will prove useful when observing the testimonies brought by this research. It is important to note that Razavi’s work seems directed to conversations about development studies when offering such distinct prescriptions to approaching gender for agrarian issues. I continue by defining more fully these three lenses of analysis for subsequent use in the empirical findings of the research in the following chapter.

1. **Households**

Highlighted for links between this research and the upcoming concept of livelihood is Agarwal’s (1990) mention of at least five factors that together shape the ‘fall-back-position’ of different household members… private ownership and control over assets, especially land; access to employment and other income-generating activities; access to common property resources; access to external social support systems such as broader kinship networks and informal credit and patronage systems; and support from the state (such as through public employment programs) and from non-governmental organizations and grassroots organizing (Agarwal 1990 in Razavi 2009, 203).

These factors—or at least some of them—will be observed in the testimonies of the campesino/as interviewed, and when related to their position within a household (e.g. head, dependent) will prove useful in understanding how individuals mobilize or seek these or other factors to improve, maintain or change livelihood situations.

2. **Labor market**

Razavi observes “Female-headed households in particular tend to have less access to hired labor (relying more on child labor) and thus have a limited ability to produce crops for the market” (2002, 11), while Kasente et al. (in Razavi 2002, 11) suggest “labor appears to be the most
binding constraint facing smallholders. The marketing of cash crops depends on the presence of hired labor and a generally higher level of self-exploitation.” Noting a case in Uganda, in terms of gendered divisions of labor for labor markets, Razavi (2002, 14) notes:

Noteworthy life cycle differences exist between men and women: men tend to engage in wage work more intensively when they are young, and wage work is seen as a way of establishing themselves financially. Women, however, resort to wage work after they have become divorced or widowed, when they are not supported by an adult male and/or have no access to land. As women have more constraints on their time, their entry into the labor market is often a distress sale. Women who enter wage work thus do so from a weaker position and often receive lower wage rates.

The reasons for seeking waged labor on top of the constraints in getting waged labor, plus the conditions it offers are aspects to be contrasted in the cases shown in the next chapter as empirical cases. We need to be attentive to how women are expected to take over caring work (caring for the young, the old, the sick), and how within a household this is rarely commodified, and in capitalist societies it is underpaid when commodified. Women can more easily access and engage in the care economy when migrating to urban settings, but usually with precarious economic and social conditions. This reinforces the notion that they enter wage labor under a weaker position and with low wages.

3. Participation

Participation is extensively considered in critical development studies (e.g. Agrawal 2001, Cleaver 1999, Cooke and Kothari 2001, Perreault 2015) in the ways it is used in democratic institutions and the “Development” agenda against poverty, for sustainable development, and as an empowering and capacity building tool for those less heard in decision-making scenarios. It is contested by critical development scholars, postcolonial scholars and political ecologists, among other fields, in the ways it becomes makeup, which does not truly approach or solve underlying social, political and economic situations.
Not equating gender=women and campesino=men

A final but equally important aspect in a gendered analysis of agrarian issues is the tendency to equate gender as women and campesino/peasant as men—usually middle or old age, heterosexual, able-bodied, head of household, conservative and often times violent and alcoholic. Tendencies cannot be highlighted as patterns, and furthermore, women have been too often ignored in agrarian studies. These are not the only angles, nor are they the only realities which shed light on agrarian realities. Broadening our scopes and identifying assumptions will help advance research agendas in agrarian scenarios. In this sense, Cornwall in Razavi et al. (2002) call on “the need to avoid the common slippage between ‘gender’ and ‘women’… The boundaries of who constitute vulnerable groups are historically specific” (15). This call based on a case study of young rural Ugandan men suggests “the voices of these young men can too easily become submerged – as those of women have tended to – in the lumpen category of ‘the poor’” (2002, 15). This issue will be particularly salient when observing the case of compulsory military service –basically exploited labor– of young (18-24 years) males of economically vulnerable backgrounds. Armed labor, be it military service—or in Colombia, labor for paramilitary and guerrilla armed forces— has been selectively, yet not exclusively, targeting young males. This is clearly a gendered labor situation which has shaped the campesino population and the decisions and livelihoods of these young men. It has also created a specific type of violence for campesinas, peasant women of different ages, and feminized bodies in how female bodies are subject to violence, particularly sexual violence, displacement and dispossession. The last two aspects are not thoroughly worked in this dissertation due to lack of empirical information but are an aspect of gender in agrarian scenarios linked to armed violence which merits attention and research. The gendered aspect of armed labor in Colombia also invites an intersectional approach where gender plus class –and often race– are generating a sort of discrimination where
young campesino men are often forced to be part of the Colombian armed conflict, reducing the possibilities of a healthier and socially positive livelihood.

**About rejuvenating the agrarian question**

Recent scholarship led or contributed to by Ben White (White, 2012; Cassidy et al., 2019) situates the importance of youth in contemporary agrarian studies. White has his own way of naming the agrarian question in the problem of not placing attention on rural youth as a crucial part of agrarian futures:

> who will own the countryside?...Will young men and women still have the option, and the necessary support, to engage in environmentally sound, small-scale, mixed farming, providing food and other needs for themselves, their own society and others in distant places? Or will they face only the choice to become poorly paid wage workers or contract farmers, in an endless landscape of monocrop food or fuel feedstock plantations, on land which used to belong to their parents, or to move to an uncertain existence in the informal sector of already crowded cities?” (2012, 16)

He suggests looking at rural young people’s mobility, how migration is not always permanent, and how cyclical, part-lifetime migration needs to be addressed in youth and rural studies (2012, 15). He also suggests “[t]here are many cogent arguments for the importance of work (alongside education) as a part of growing up, and various studies have found that young people who combine school and part-time work have much better chances in labour markets after leaving school” (2012, 12). This argument relates to the findings from the testimonies of young campesina/os in this research. A common thread throughout interviews is that the interviewees began working to some extent in their childhood, usually at 11 or 12 years old, when they acknowledge doing agrarian labor either for family or externally, or having more specific chores and responsibilities within the household. In this sense, White’s argument on why laboring before 18 years of age is important in trying to earn a livelihood and generate –rather than constrain– opportunities in adulthood.
There are other angles to a generational approach to livelihood and its intersections with the contemporary agrarian questions. Instead of looking only at youth, White also calls attention to gerontocratic dynamics to examine “intergenerational dispossession,” where “one generation’s land is sold off which ought to have been passed on to the next” (2012, 16). As will be seen in the next chapter, this is the case of three brothers who prevented their father from selling their land. Related to the issue of age and decision is gerontocracy, or the rule of elders seen by several youth and rural studies scholars (e.g. White 2012, Gurr 2017) as an obstacle that prevents youth from having better living options in rural scenarios. This can be due to cultural traditions, control of assets, patriarchal systems, moral values, or a mixture of all or some of these factors, which impact other generations and their decisions (see also Cassidy et al., 2019). I propose to add this call for a generational lens to the lenses or tools of livelihood analysis for a more nuanced analysis of the results of this research. The intergenerational situation is also approached by Cassidy et al. but for late capitalist countries, where they find “[t]he average age of farmers in late capitalist countries is increasing, with few under the age of 35” (2019, 221) and mention a typology of five distinct pathways into farming developed for case studies in Japan. I examine in this research only the “heritage pathways” of those already of campesina/o and rural origin and in a country which cannot be said to be in a late phase of capitalism. Within the heritage pathways they identify: 1) “those who move straight into farming, launching a farming career immediately after completing school, and [ 2 ] U-turners, those who have first been away to urban areas for education and career and return to their family farm lands later in life, often embracing a pluriactive farming lifestyle” (226). They acknowledge “[g]ender is a key mechanism of structural exclusion from succession in many countries. Women continue to be overlooked, not only in the family farming or smallholder discourse but also in academic
research, as few studies are available on this group in late capitalist contexts” (Cassidy et al., 229).

**Linking agrarian studies and a livelihoods approach**

Broadly speaking, James Scott, in his writings (1976, 1985, 1998, 2009) follows the Kautskian method of how capitalism seeps into agriculture but focuses not on the production process per se, but on how it is embedded in a complex mechanism of social production (this is also a Kautskian project seeking beyond the agriculturalist). His emphasis on the transformations brought about from pre-capitalist forms of production to capitalist forms of production and changing social-political relations, focus more on the micro level of social relations and everyday changes among peasants, and between peasants and capitalists. He argues for a moral lens (a sociological and anthropological one) to understand how the powerful and the powerless actors in agrarian settings suffer transformations in their social relations when a new economic logic (capitalism) is imposed or begins to seep in agrarian landscapes. In *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (1976), Scott argues that the poor, “the peasants” [no individuality, no gender, no age, just class, a critique I already introduced and that will be further developed in subsequent chapters] do not worry very much about the exploitative regimes as such (feudalism, capitalism) but on how a change in regime might bring to them new possibilities of crisis (crisis as in falling beyond the bare minimum for subsistence). Therefore, they prefer a known oppressive regime where they are able to predict and negotiate and adapt to crisis, over a new, unknown regime where even if new profits are promised, new crises might be left unspoken until they arrive and erase the bargaining possibilities of the agrarian poor. In this sense, the angle of the agrarian question offered by Scott shows how the destruction of old forms of production, social relations, and property are resisted, but not because there is a sense of anti-revolution in the peasantry but
because there is a sense of survival tactic in which the promises of capitalism seem to bring new uncertainties and vulnerabilities which they are not eager to risk. Whether the uncertainties are better or worse than those known and already experienced is not a question the peasants want or have the recourses to try. Other questions are left unsolved, including whether or not resisting capitalism is possible or about adapting and negotiating survival tactics within that economic system. What I add to the idea of survival tactics to navigate capitalism as an agriculturalist is that the tactics are gendered and generational. In this sense as I argue in the chapter focusing on youth, performing new identities such as entrepreneurial or environmental subjectivities are ways to navigate and negotiate spaces of possibility and livelihoods in contemporary agrarian settings. In a chapter six I present a similar approach with identities-in-the-making (Sundberg, 2004). With “survival tactics” we are also reminded of the realm of the concept of livelihood since the term suggests the organizing or structuring of tactics to have control over the ways one can live. How can we identify tactics in the making or in their everyday or situational establishment, development or performance? The case studies in the next chapter give a glimpse of what “tactics” might mean. When the situations of young peasantry are seen through the lens of the concept of livelihood –and not just through the agrarian question– we can appreciate more thoroughly the dimensions of decisions and have a more nuanced approach to seeing what Scott’s “tactics” are. We can also appreciate the rural population migrating dynamics not as a one-way out (those who leave will never come back, plus do not want to) but as an ongoing dynamic where people come and go just as in the city, where migrating has other connotations and judgements. In addition, this is where there are moral decisions, other variables and values summing up to the equation of what is desirable, acceptable, valued, aspired or deemed successful. About aspirations, Cassidy et al. present
research data on young rural people’s “aspirations”, or older farmers’ hopes and fears about succession, are not reliable indicators of actual futures (Chiswell 2014). Aspirations are produced “relationally” (Appadurai 2004, 67), and young people’s reported aspirations (the result of formal survey interviews or focus group discussions) tend to emerge through social acceptability filters, reflecting dominant norms about acceptable or “worthy” futures (Zipin et al. 2015, 236). When the same young people are asked what might make farming a possible option, the responses are also consistent: land and inputs must be available, there must be good market prospects for the farm’s produce, and farming must be combined with other income sources. Those young people potentially interested in farming express clear understandings of the generational and other constraints which make access to land and other resources needed for successful farming difficult or impossible, at least while still young (White 2018, 23). (Cassidy et al. 2019, 221)

Attention is needed about the notion of how one is heading to what one wanted of life, of being satisfied—or not—with how one is building an agrarian livelihood, and what aspects of agrarian life are valuable and desirable in one’s livelihood. Cassidy et al. (2019) also agree that studying youth with a life-course perspective is important in order to not assume that a young person’s out-migration is a reflection of a “permanent abandonment of rural life and agriculture; it can equally be part of a cyclical life-course trajectory” (226). This discussion also links to the concept of subjectivity in the next part of this dissertation.

Livelihood approaches help to expand interpretations of the agrarian question literature when trying to explain the fate of the peasantry under capitalism. “Fate” is part of the problem. It suggests a linear destiny, a decisive one. You either do or you don’t. You either stay or you go. You either become rich or stay poor. This section brings to the conversation the agrarian question focus with a livelihoods approach and contributes in a theoretical setting to the interviews with young campesina/os presented in the next chapter. This conversation of concepts and frameworks suggest a non-linear perspective of life decisions, migrations, relations to labor, capital and to el campo. Anthony Bebbington (1999, 2022) considers livelihoods “in terms of access to five types of ‘capital’ asset – produced, human, natural, social and cultural capital” and assets as also giving meaning to the person’s world. In Bebbington’s framework (1999) assets
are called capitals since they give “capability to be and to act… they are also the basis of agents’ power to act and to reproduce, challenge or change the rules that govern the control, us and transformation of resources” (2022, emphasis in original). For instance, certain routine activities can conform to or contest roles and responsibilities related to gender, generation, or class and serve as an act of definition. Thus, they are not only actions to sustain biophysical and economic needs “but also a social question, a question of ‘tradeoffs between economic growth, human development, social integration and environmental integrity’” (Bebbington, 1999, 2031). The testimonies shown in the next chapter address these dimensions and suggest others such as spiritual dimensions, responses to forced labor such as the mandatory military service for young men, family establishment issues and family arrangements.

Scoones (2009) offers a review of how the concept of livelihood has played a role in the agrarian and rural studies debates since the 1990s. He identifies gaps, challenges, limitations, debates, and missing questions in the conversations between academics (e.g. economists, anthropologists, political ecologists) and with other actors such as practitioners, international aid organizations for development, national governments and grassroots organizations. He identifies four dimensions which enrich and strengthen the inclusion of livelihood perspectives in rural development discussions. They are questions about knowledge, politics, scale and dynamics. He mentions four recurring failures in including livelihood perspectives in rural development analysis: 1) lack of engagement with processes of economic globalization (181), 2) “lack of attention to power and politics and the failure to link livelihoods and governance debates in development” (182), “lack of rigorous attempts to deal with long-term secular change in environmental conditions” (182), and failure to grapple with debates about long-term shifts in rural economies and wider questions about agrarian change (182). Scoones therefore suggests:
livelihood perspectives must look simultaneously at both structure and agency and the
diverse micro–macro political processes that define opportunities and constraints…
the basic argument for recursive links across scales and between structural conditions and
human action is essential… such basic analytical moves have not been central to
livelihoods analysis, with a preference often towards locality and agency, black-boxing
wider structural features (Scoones 2009, 186).

In their study about gender, livelihoods diversification and pro-poor growth in rural Vietnam,
Kabeer and Van Anh (2002, 111) unpack the concept of livelihood by making a distinction
between diversity and diversification, and the drivers of diversification between choice and
necessity. They begin by recognizing how in rural development literature it is widely recognized
that households

particularly poor households, in low-income countries rarely specialize in a single income-
earning activity, such as farming or waged labor, nor is the earning of income the sole
purpose of their efforts (Chambers 1983; Chambers and Conway 1992; Ellis 1998b). Instead, these households seek to meet their basic needs (survival), minimize risk
(security), and generate a sufficient surplus to invest in their future (accumulation) through
a variety of activities and using a variety of tangible and intangible resources. ‘Livelihood
strategies’ are the various ways households mobilize the resources at their disposal to meet
their needs. These strategies include subsistence production, self-employment, wage labor,
mutual exchange, and so on, while the resources they seek to mobilize can be material
(equipment, finance and credit, seeds, fertilizer), human (labor power, skills education), or
social (the claims, entitlements, and opportunities that arise through social networks and
collective action). (Kabeer and Van Anh 2002, 111)

Thus, diversity refers “to the various productive activities reported by households” and
diversification “to the expansion of livelihoods into off-farm activities and away from a reliance
on farming as the sole or primary means of livelihood” (Kabeer and Van Anh 2002, 111).

On livelihood diversification, Razavi suggests not to make any generalizations but to look at the
forces underpinning it and examining outcomes with factors such as location, assets, income,
opportunity, and social relations. She also highlights that the reasons for diversification should
be examined. Are they deliberate household strategies or involuntary responses to crisis? Are
they diversification for survival or diversification for accumulation? Although Razavi calls for
“more refined concepts that can better differentiate between the multiple … determinants of diversification … in a more general sense the concept of diversification is useful because it seems to capture a defining and pervasive feature of late-twentieth century-capitalism” (2002: 23). She also suggests “the context within which people pursue their livelihood strategies is shaped through various meso-level institutions” (Razavi 2002, 9).

Edward Carr identifies as one of the recurrent failings of livelihood perspectives, a limited engagement with ongoing agrarian transformation, particularly in the Global South, and argues that these recurrent failings are due to an

[U]ninterrogated scale of analysis that privileges local social, economic, political, and environmental contexts in the explanation and evaluation of livelihoods” (2015: 335).

Commonly, political ecology argues that livelihood approaches “overlook social processes especially power relations in their analyses” (336).

Carr defines “[a] political ecology approach to livelihoods analysis explains local livelihoods decisions and their sustainability through locally-specific materializations of translocal economic, political, and environmental processes and structures” (2015, 336). However, Kabeer and Van Anh consider

Gender has not featured systematically in the general literature on household livelihoods, but where it does, the emphasis has been on the constraints that women face – cultural norms; child care and household responsibilities; unequal access to education, land and capital – and hence on the low returns to their labor. Consequently, this literature tends to treat women largely as a disadvantaged group, and their participation in household livelihoods is viewed as a matter of coping or survival strategies. ... However, to be useful for policy purposes, we need to distinguish between different kinds of constraints on women’s ability to engage in livelihood strategies, their implications for women’s roles in meeting household needs, and the extent to which they represent policy failure, cultural norm, or the preferences expressed by individuals or household heads. (2002, 112)

Lastly, as an element of theory discussions both in agrarian studies and in livelihoods approaches is the aspect of land. I choose to focus on the view of land as a livelihood asset as developed by Razavi (2002: 22), who draws on the work of Walker (2000),
Land means different things to different people at different times. Land could be used as a farming resource (means of production) for food crops and/or cash crops, as shelter, as a basis for identity (community membership, citizenship), or for speculation. People will change the way they use land as circumstances change, and in different ways from one another… A subject that needs further exploration is the extent to which women’s interests in land may shift, or may already be shifting, as the social norms and legal restrictions that have structured what is considered possible are challenged and eroded.

Wendy Wolford (2010) also contributes with the question of scale on analyzing what land and production mean in different scales. She provides an analysis from historic differences on a large-scale sugar cane production scenario in Pernambuco, northern Brazil, showing that even though peasants might want land, they still might prefer waged labor. Therefore, land is an asset for livelihood strategies but not necessarily the base for peasant agrarian production in capitalism. While a settler culture and smallholder tradition in Santa Catarina, southern Brazil offers a different conceptualization of land as a political asset in capitalist regimes, in a more Kautskian way –which is careful to unpack what smallholding means (technically, politically, culturally)– Wolford argues that we cannot simply assume “the function of property follows its form, or, in other words, that the way in which property is held determines the broader social relations of production” (p. 192). This means a collective property or a state property will not assure a socialist way of production efficient under that system. Wolford suggests (though not explicitly referring to the “old” agrarian question) that we need to reframe our focus from access to land to something more like “recuperation of dignity” in order to understand the needs people have under a capitalist regime. This can help on how we propose solving the actual needs, perhaps admitting that people do want private property or to own land, even if not for fully rendering it to agrarian production, but to complement their livelihood needs.

With the above review of the ways diverse authors suggest how livelihoods should be studied in rural societies, there is an identification of aspects people have or do not have for their
livelihoods, which are considered assets and resources. We have seen various factors to take into consideration, such as economic, cultural, political and policy contexts, and categories of analysis. Other tools or perspectives go into how people decide and act. Is the preference individual or social, policy failure or assertiveness, or culturally or media influenced?

The trajectories of the agrarian question and the intersecting concepts reviewed in this theory chapter provide an initial conceptual base used to approach the testimonies gathered during this research. The following chapter comprises the empirical material which exemplifies the concepts previously seen and how they intersect. The arguments posed in this chapter can be summarized as: 1) class, gender and generation are social relations and therefore there is a need to examine how these relations are constructed and unfold in individuals and in more abstract terms in societies. In this sense, they are changing and different according to context but serve as categories of analysis for academic and policy purposes. 2) The peasantry can be considered an economic class but should also be examined in the individuality of those who compose the peasantry in the ways capitalism as an economic system changes the individual possibilities of labor relations. 3) The agrarian question is still a useful conceptual framework to observe how capitalism transforms agrarian production and relations, but a re-thinking of its relevance includes passing the object of study from the economic system to the subject of that change, the agriculturalist, and at least seeing them as gendered and aged subjects. 4) There are several ways of introducing gender perspectives in agrarian studies, and there is a call to not always focus on women as the sole meaning of gender. This chapter introduced angles of analysis for observing gender and generation in agrarian studies such as: a) studies of the household; b) women in the labor market; and c) participation and the gendered ways it gets assigned in development projects. Importantly, this chapter offers the idea that *el campo* is a gendered possibility when
one observes gender and labor relations together. Finally, livelihood is a useful concept to intersect agrarian labor, gender and generation-related relations and to observe how people construct a living in *el campo* amongst everyday decisions, opportunities and obstacles. In this case, it will serve to observe the testimonies of the following chapter with this lens (livelihood), these categories of analysis (labor/class, gender, generation) and contentions (household relations, entrance to the labor market and participation in rural development) to advance in the research question: *How do generation, labor relations and gender factors influence decisions made about the desires, willingness and possibility of maintaining an agrarian-based livelihood?*
Chapter Two: *Esa fue la vida que escogió.*

*(That is the Life She Chose).*

My purpose is to see my family doing well. Like I am the one who has to move them forward. I want to see them better, I want my little brother to be well educated, I want to give him college studies, but that he has a smoother life, that he won’t have it as hard as we did. Yeah, because truly, we’ve had it a bit rough. I have done everything here [laughs]! Of course, from 14 years working. Learning, harvesting beans, harvesting potatoes, *el campo* is very tough! I say that the toughest work is in *el campo*, and it is the least paid, the least subsidized, help is needed, everything. I am against it all. I am so against it all that every time there is a strike, I am the first one to be there, supporting the campesino, supporting that we are not stolen another cent. I see there is corruption everywhere. (Miguel, 22 years)

Miguel told me he wants to study psychology. He wants to understand why people are the way they are. When I interviewed him, he still had some months of mandatory military service to complete before he could apply to the University of Cundinamarca, the regional university accessible for the people of Sumapaz. He is the oldest of five male siblings, and finished his *bachillerato* (high school degree) while he was in the army. He likes *el campo*, but as this opening vignette evidences, he aspires to have a livelihood where he can provide financially for his family, and offer better living conditions than the ones he had to endure in his childhood. As will be seen later on in this chapter, he sees investment opportunities in activities he could develop in *el campo*, but he is also willing to pursue urban work activities in order to achieve the desired livelihood that he seeks. This ambivalence about where to be and the question of how to live off *el campo*, knowing how hard agrarian work is, is shared in most—if not all— the youth testimonies that I gathered. This chapter presents selected empirical material from this research seeking to advance the theoretical discussions based on the previously presented set of concepts and debates. Miguel’s words offer a vivid example of the concepts that will be added to the conversation throughout the chapter. Miguel aspires to have a livelihood where he can financially provide for his family; however, from his life experience in agrarian labor, he knows
how hard it is to generate a “smooth life” when agrarian labor is “the least paid, the least subsidized” (Miguel, 2018) This chapter deepens into inquiries about how the labor relations established as a minor and young adult inform us about the aspirations, possibilities, opportunities and limitations that young campesina/os have. It also proceeds with discussions on labor relations related to gender as can be observed from segments of interviews. This takes us to reflecting on how labor relations in el campo are gendered, and how this impacts the possibilities of constructing a campesina/o livelihood, depending on gender. It is very telling of this gender possibility, that being able to interview campesinas proved to be a challenge during this research. This demographic was inaccessible in many ways: due to daily chores, due to the barrier posed by male partners, due to age (under 18, not allowed in my IRB), or due to distrust of what my purpose was in being there. Some campesinas preferred that I did not record the interview, and there were few young campesinas where I did my research. Nonetheless, the few testimonies from young campesinas that I was able to get will serve for the intersectional analysis of gender and labor. The analysis offered by feminist geographers and economists linking labor, gender and livelihoods, presented in the previous chapter, will be used and knitted together with the first hand testimonies of this research. Another angle of gendered labor that will be approached is that of compulsory military service, and this will be analyzed as both a classed and exploited labor, often provided by young, campesino men and urban males in vulnerable economic conditions.

A focus on the concept and literature surrounding livelihood when examining how the young peasantry decides to out-migrate or not, or when, provides a perspective which can suggest that many do value life in el campo. They value the possibility of having small-scale agrarian production as one of their main economic activities and laboring physically in its production. However, that does not mean they will not seek out-migration opportunities to cities
(Fusa or Bogota, mainly), seasonal labor, or other forms of labor, as an option. These options can be determined by economic decisions related to bringing back funds so that they are able to invest in agrarian production, although this may not be the sole reason. I argue that campesina/o youth also seek to migrate to capitalize other assets: social, cultural, educational, and –just as urban youth do– they have the right to aspire to this type of mobility in life. I aim to show through my examination of agrarian literature, that mobility is somehow not entitled to campesina/o youth, as if mobility were a privilege that they should not have access to, or should not even consider. This is a discriminatory and simplistic view of the peasantry. The testimonies I show in this chapter and throughout this dissertation aim to show aspirations, reflections, and situations of campesina/o youth and portray –with some level of detail– how assets are pursued, how they are achieved, lost, regained, or planned for. I show gendered angles of these situations, and also show constraints that are encountered along the way. With this, I begin presenting concepts and issues that are discussed in part two of this dissertation around identity, public policy, access to rights, and negotiating, giving shape to livelihood aspirations and possibilities.

**Beginning to Labor**

The insights on how young campesina/os began their labor relations in el campo can be analyzed initially through their aged and gendered dimensions. Note the age range when these labor relations began and when –and in which ways– it is related to household and family relations. Additionally, labor and schooling are often mentioned together, either conflicting or as one dependent on the other, for example, laboring to sustain the possibilities of schooling. This initial selection refers to cases from childhood to adolescence and the transition between these two stages. It also shows the types of labor done when the youth began laboring (e.g. weeding,
harvesting), the techniques observed and learned at that time, and the rhythms and schedules of labor (8 a.m. to midday, Saturdays, vacation time).

I am the fourth of five siblings. We were taught to work since we were little, to weed onions, clean the orchard. My parents produced white onion, especially my mom. And so they would take us to the crops. I finished primary and back then, there was the belief that if you did not have enough money, you could not go to school, so we were not sent to school for bachillerato [middle and high school] but we were sent to work like employees/laborers. So you had to get up, be at 8 a.m. in the field until midday. Have lunch at midday, at 1 p.m. you had to be back working, and every day the same. Since I was 11 years old. So that. (Esperanza, single mom of two children, 35 years old)

Around when I was 12 years, I began jornaleando (day working) like that. I was finishing primary and I was beginning to go to middle school and Saturdays I would go to jornalear at neighbors’ where there was work. I would jornalear to have something to buy food in school, all that, to buy snacks, all that. So I worked on Saturdays because all other days I was in school and Saturday was the only free day to go work. (Enrique, educando in agroecology school, 26 years old).

On the farm, traditionally there was coffee, and so from the beginning I had to go to the farm to help my dad harvest coffee, and all that, the harvest. [Interviewer: Among how many did you work? Only family or also external workers?] We worked my siblings, and sometimes also there were workers for the coffee harvesting. [Interviewer: And were you paid for the day’s work?] So, my dad, yes, he would give me for my snacks. Besides that, they would buy our clothing and shoes, and food, they did give us. My mom and dad supplied our food, and that is how they taught us to work. (Enrique, educando in agroecology school, 26 years old).

I began working at 12 years. I already worked when I was 12. I was always with an aunt and some cousins that were already men. It was with them when I learned to work. [Interviewer: And what did you begin working in?] Well, when that, we planted, he planted manioc (yuca; cassava) and watermelon on one of their farms, where they were at my aunt’s. But he, there, he could take the produce but those who sold21 [sic] it to him did not sell it right to him, at the right price, they would rather sell it… when they took it to town, there they would sell it for the right price because they said that since the land was not his, he could not sell it at the right price, the just price. At those times we would spend, we would spend several – since I worked during school vacations– I could take three months working with them, with him there. We would take a month fixing the land, whatever, the fence, then he would plant. He had a planting system in which he straightened a string and planted like that. He would always plant yuca -rarely he would plant maize- almost always yuca and watermelon. (Zenon, educando in agroecology school, 21 years old)

21 Zenon said “sold”, but in context, I think he meant those who bought from his uncle, to resell in a local market, bought it from him in a very low price.
For example, I had to set aside the calves, help to rotate the cattle, rotation, what else? House chores, and like that, help them in little things, little chores. (Lila, *educanda* in agroecology school, 19 years)

The truth is we have had it a little hard. I have done everything here (laughs). Of course, from 14 years of age, working, getting to know, harvesting beans, taking out potatoes, and working in el campo is very hard. I say that the hardest work is the work of el campo, and is the least paid and least subsidized, support is needed, everything. (Miguel, 23)

“Peasants will be obliged to sell their labour seasonally (and cheaply) only if they are poor” says Boltvinik (2016 in review by Kay 2017, 215). However, what I observed is that it is mainly *if they are young*. What I mean is that youth is a first source of poverty because they have no capital, no property, no particular skills and no support (e.g. from the state) to dedicate their lives to other activities (e.g. study) or to protect their labor rights with regards to welfare issues such as public health, social security or occupational risk insurance. Therefore, young, campesina/o and poor usually come equated in a capitalist society since capital is built from exploiting labor and from primitive accumulation. When they only have labor to offer at a time when they do not have other assets to sell or offer for a capital base, the young and poor are not on the capitalist side of the equation; they are on the selling-of-labor side of the equation. Analyzing the cases seen above of how young people of campesino origin describe how they began their labor relations, I argue that these poor –or the poor peasantry class (if any)– is initially constituted by a generational majority that is either exploited, or forced to sell their cheap and unqualified labor to their parents (commonly their father) or other elders. Exploited labor is to be provided initially to the family, then to the state (military service) in the case of young male labor. For women it operates differently. They usually provide uncommodified labor initially to their family, then to their partner’s family –in the common cases of teenage pregnancy when they live with their partner– and usually continue in a cycle of unvalued, exploited or cheap labor when they migrate to urban areas, as domestic service labor to urban families, and/or as providers of childcare or
elderly care. This precarious condition is also constituted by a gendered majority of females of different ages whose labor input is not commodified when provided as family labor, but when sold as commodified labor –usually in external scenarios– the money earned an also be conveniently taken by a male head of household (father, husband, father-in-law), or an elderly head of household (mother, father, uncles/aunts). This basically means there are class differentiations and differentiated social relations of production and reproduction when seen through a gender and generational lens even within a family/household unit (Massey 1995, Razavi 2009). Therefore, youth equates poverty in these agrarian scenarios. It is important to investigate what assets they capitalize as they grow older that can change the situation of only selling their physical labor for agrarian-production or household related tasks. It is also essential to observe if and how these assets are differentiated by gender. Thus, in any campesina/o household before looking at external labor relations, we must first focus on how they are arranged internally, at least in terms of generation and gender. This observation gives key clues on what factors determines –or define– the possibility of changing classed relations not only in society in general, but first within family relations. The interviews provided in this chapter demonstrate and reference some of these family dynamics.

Although it is suggested (White 2012) that rural youth are uninterested in farming and in livelihoods in the countryside, I argue this cannot be generalized so easily as being coopted by capitalism to become urban cheap labor as a definite and categorical life decision. Taking a closer look at the livelihood constructions of youth of rural origin can shed light on how both the city and unskilled labor can be seen as a temporary situation, and that rural youth value elements of life in the countryside that the city cannot offer (e.g. no four hours daily spent crammed in public transportation, air quality, the use of money for so many things, the types of social
relationships). The testimonies in this chapter suggest that the possibility of labor in the city or as agrarian waged labor is taken as an opportunity to generate seed capital, and as a place to acquire some education, in order to acquire diverse life experiences, many related to modernity (e.g. access to technology, urban trends). Furthermore, the opportunities and possibilities of going back to el campo are gendered. Taking all of this into consideration, if we are to see the peasantry as a class, we are to dissect these class relations within family relations as generational and gendered stratifications.

**Negotiating Labor Relations**

This section shows additional labor, land, and economic relations within the household undertaken to continue pursuing agrarian production. In these cases parents are portrayed as those with land who provide some arrangement (e.g. rent, association) or possibilities for their now older children (18 years or older) to continue laboring in agrarian production. Cases of labor arrangements between siblings will also be presented. If parents are the landowners, in a traditional Marxist analysis they would be the capitalists since the land is the means of production, and they can propose the conditions for working the land. Using this same line of reasoning, if the siblings do not have the capital base of land, are we seeing the possibilities of cooperative work? These Marxist categories and possibilities seem insufficient when used to explain the intra-family labor relations established, agreed, forced, negotiated, or otherwise, between different family members according to power and possibilities in the micro-political, micro-economic and relational sphere of the family unit. This complexity is further intensified when considering that the family unit has different structures, accommodations, and mobilities some of which this research will not fully expand on. To reduce family relations to economic
relations might prove short sighted in an explanation of why certain labor arrangements are formed. Adding other categories of analysis widens the explanations about why certain labor arrangements are found within families, who these arrangements serve, for what purposes, and in what moments of the life cycles of the different family members.

The livelihoods approach presented in the previous chapter, suggests a focus on asset controllers. Land understood as an asset, usually controlled by the elders, but also where other household members have different levels of inherence and power over the asset. In the first two arrangements shown in the interview fragments below (Juanito’s, then Esperanza’s), there are also other household or family members involved. In Juanito’s case, the father provides a space for production but does not seem to be involved in the economic transactions of production, nor does he seem to charge rent. However, the fragment does not show if there are other ways through which rent is charged such as labor in other realms like construction or maintenance. The second case offers another layer of generational labor relations. Not only does the mother of the interviewee provide the land, but the interviewee – since she cannot afford to hire an employee – also relies on labor from her children and a nephew. This reminds us of two authors and arguments previously mentioned. Razavi (2002, 11) observes that “Female-headed households in particular tend to have less access to hired labor (relying more on child labor) and thus have a limited ability to produce crops for the market.” White (2012, 12) mentions how beginning to labor during childhood can be seen through a coming-of-age-lens, as “the importance of work (alongside education) as a part of growing up, and various studies have found that young people who combine school and part-time work have much better chances in labour markets after leaving school.” This is not an argument I am making to promote or support
child labor under any condition, but an observation on the reality of labor in minors as part of campesino household realities in Andean Colombia.

I’ve been here with my daddy, planting some tree tomato, since here what is mostly produced is tree tomato… Let’s say my daddy gave me a hectare of land. In that hectare 500 plants fit, so I find someone that will plant with me (plantee) and I work. He brings the plants—the associate that I get. Let’s say I have 500 but they are with my uncle. So he buys them, puts what we need of chicken manure (gallinaza), compost, coating (baños) and I only put labor. When the plants begin to produce, then it is by halves. Let’s say the plants give 10 baskets, those 10 baskets are sold for $40,000 pesos [$17 USD approx.], then it is $400,000, so each one gets $200,000 [$71 USD]. From there we only need to take out by halves for the drugs [agrochemicals]. It is $80,000 pesos in drugs, each puts $40,000.

(Juanito, male, 18 years old)

This is my parents’ farm… The plot that I work is where sumercé can see a lot of vegetation. You can appreciate the difference… Before I had all the farm to work in and I would love to continue with everything but you need money for that. So I observed what I could maintain with my labor and I stayed with that… Before I had an employee every day but the production did not compensate to pay an employee. I always had to take from my pocket to pay and I maintained that for two years more less. Since last November [8 months back from the interview] I only work with my oldest son and a nephew. So why did I decide that it was them that should work? Because my eldest son began working in Sabatina during the weekends and what would I have him do during the week? So now he has a wage and works here. My nephew is studying systems engineering and in vacations and weekends he comes and helps me. And now what I try to do is that those who come to work are students. Not campesinos that stay here on the farm and dedicate to a jornal. No. Rather chicos y chicas [boys and girls] that want to learn la labor del campo [labor in the countryside], so that is what I have been doing in the last months. So I also receive volunteers. (Esperanza, single mother of two, 35 years old)

I like planting around maize, or that plant of balú or chachafruto to take them to the market. These are the two furrows of beans that I am maintaining. Each furrow gives me more less 15 pounds and is harvested during approximately four weeks, so this one finished its vegetative cycle and the one over there follows and when that one is over, then the one there and when I finish, this one will be germinating, and this is how I scale.

(Esperanza)

El campesino has a culture and it is planting the whole plot, and that costs in planting 5 million pesos [$1,800 USD approx.] and so he invests and does not calculate well. Rather he thinks ‘I spent X amount of jornales (day wage) or I worked them myself, so I was here

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22 Sumercé is a common and popular expression used in central Andean Colombia to address someone with respect. It derives from the term A Su Merced, a colonial Spanish term meaning At Your Mercy. It is currently used to address parents, other elders or to other people to address respect (aged and/or classed, commonly).

23 Erythrina edulis
working 6 months, unweeding, fumigating, cleaning, planting, doing, removing to the orchard’ And then comes the day of the harvest, and so they say ‘I did a good price’ and so the good price is because he sold $5 million pesos [$1,800 USD approx.] in one night. But if you calculate what is in those $5 million in inputs, land’s value, water, labor, seed and all you invested, the price should be more like $7 million [$2,500 USD approx.] So you lost $2 million. The peasant does not sit down to do those calculations, and that is why they say ‘Noo! Why would I go to those organic markets and sell $100,000 pesos [$36 USD approx.] a week if I can rather pick $5 million?’ But they are not calculating that those $100 thousand weekly I only invested such and the profits were such. And say from those 100 I invested 40 and it left 60, so 6x4=24 in a month is 240, and in six months, how much is it? Wining, not losing. This is the exercise that the campesino does not do. (Esperanza)

Esperanza’s case also suggests generational labor dynamics of agrarian production (renting from her mom, labor from her children) and exemplifies other factors mentioned by Bernstein such as urban labor and labor migration. It also shows how by closely observing her father’s ways of production and production logic, Esperanza finds it inefficient—in terms of the capitalist way of production and profit—and proposes another way of producing to accumulate and sell the produce. As mentioned before, I have fewer testimonies from campesinas than from campesinos. However, Esperanza’s testimony is rich in details and sheds light to situate several of the concepts of this part, observing gender in agrarian labor and livelihood options. The following section provides segments of interviews that deepen into inquiries about how the kinds of labor relations established as a minor and as a young adult help shape the aspirations, possibilities, opportunities and limitations that young campesina/os encounter in their youth years, and the gendered angles of these situations.

**Agrarian Livelihoods, Aspirations and Gender**

[Interviewer: How do you see el campo 30 years from now?] You know? People are going to head to el campo because now I think the city is very complicated. There is the economy for renting a place, paying public services, so then there are people that adapt better to el campo and that project excelling here in el campo. Like seeding. But I see one thing that is missing, economic support for families. If there were more economic support -how can I say- people would not head out. (Santiago, 23 years)
The reasons why campesina/o youth migrate to urban spaces, when or in what situations in their life this happens, and why and when they decide to go back to el campo will be explored in this section. As mentioned in the introductory part of this chapter, I argue that narrowing the range of labor and migration decisions to economic decisions (resuming my initial agrarian question) is discriminatory as it suggests that all peasants are economically poor and therefore intellectually poor in their life interests. The concept of aspirations is useful here in exploring the reasoning behind decisions. Recall the argumentation in the previous chapter (24-25), where I present Cassidy et al. (2019) findings on how aspirations are produced relationally, can emerge and be filtered by socially acceptable standards of what are “worthy futures” and I add, carry moral values. Notwithstanding aspirations, people also have reality checks available from their experience and their social environments and their analyses of economic situations, to envision other possibilities or construct them in-the-making, as will be seen with the testimonies in this section. Santiago’s response in the interview segment above shows the ambiguity between preferring el campo over the city in many respects, yet having to choose the city due to lack of economic support or inability to thrive in el campo.

Young urban folk of economically privileged origins are not questioned in the same way on why they migrate when young, why they seek to capitalize their economy by studying, or for seeking different jobs; their mobility is not questioned. Privilege is equated with mobility, as economic poverty is equated with intellectual poverty and peasantry is equated with poverty. Therefore, peasantry is equated as a lack of interest in mobility in ways that are not determined by economic decisions. Much of the agrarian studies literature of the 20th century focuses on the economic-based decisions of peasant migration to cities and the research tends to see it as a permanent and decisive out-migration. More recent literature that I have already presented with
gendered angles of agrarian studies (Razavi 2002, Kabeer and Van Anh 2002), on livelihoods (Bebbington 1999, Carr 2015) and in youth studies (White 2012, Cassidy et al. 2019), that delve deeper into when and why (in individual terms and observations) out-migration to the city happens, and what happens next in personal histories, accepts the possibility of mobility. I resume with Miguel’s testimony (recall from the opening vignette). Although I interviewed him by his parents’ plot in the Sumapaz region, he was still in his time of mandatory military service in Bogotá. He was just spending some days off when we met for the interview.

I want to take my family forward (sacar adelante), that they have their comforts, that they have better things, because truly, we have always been very scarce of certain things, although they are necessary. One says they aren’t, but they are. So I would like to give them that, but with el campo I have a lot to relate to because I see that it is very good here. Products can be taken anywhere so I would like to help my people to plantear, that we plant, that we export, but good products. I have an amiga that is going to lend me some money. That money I hope to invest… – my mommy is very, how can I say?… – my mommy is one of those businesswomen (emprendedora), so I want to create for her a small business of laying hens (microempresa de gallinas). First that is an idea. I want to begin from below, a project of 100 hens to begin moving the hens, and since my mom already has a small business of that then she has an idea to begin there. Then I hope to include 500 tree tomato plants. That will be the base I will have here while I study and work in Bogotá. (Miguel, 23)

My purpose is to see my family doing well. Like I am the one who has to move them forward. I want to see them better, I want my little brother to be well educated, I want to give him college studies, but that he has a smoother life, that he won’t have it as hard as we did. Yeah, because truly, we’ve had it a bit rough. I have done everything here [laughs]! Of course, from 14 years working. Learning, harvesting beans, harvesting potatoes, el campo is very tough! I say that the toughest work is in el campo, and it is the least paid, the least subsidized, help is needed, everything. I am against it all. I am so against it all that every time there is a strike, I am the first one to be there, supporting the campesino, supporting that we are not stolen another cent. I see there is corruption everywhere. (Miguel, 23 years)

In the medium and long term, with my family I want to have some economy to plant (plantearles) all that part, have it planted by us, and create a small business (microempresa) to produce fruit and take it to the city… (Miguel, 23 years)

These segments show some of Miguel’s aspirations for an agrarian livelihood. There is a sense of morality in sacar adelante, a sense of responsibility in being able to provide the means for the
family to move forward. There is also an aspiration of being better off, having better life conditions by managing to situate the family’s production (e.g. eggs, tree-tomato fruit) rightly in the market. If this is achieved, the basis will be available to “move forward” in other aspects of life (e.g. paying for education and providing better living conditions). There is another aspect of agrarian production mentioned in the segment that merits scrutiny, the gendered aspect of production and the family relations involved. In the fragment with Miguel’s words, his mom is a businesswoman (*emprendedora*) with the production of eggs/laying hens, yet there is a sense that he has power over this production: she works, he invests. There is a patriarchal moral sense of being the one that moves the family forward and that brings the capital needed for the female economic possibilities which will be under his control for transaction purposes.

**Aspirations, Gender and Parenthood**

1. **The Case of Esperanza**

I was very dynamic and I wanted to do many things, I wanted to have wings and fly. So I did not like that training of being there. So I decided to go to a boarding school of nuns and I studied there until I was fifteen. At fifteen —so I left here when I was thirteen—it lasted until I was fifteen. At fifteen I left there because my sister, the one before me, the third one, had left home. My mom was in a very difficult moment and I considered that if I returned, I would fill that gap. And no, I crashed against the world because I arrived again to plant, weed, clean, without the possibility of continuing studying. I met my sons’ father and I left with him very young, I was 16 when I went to live with my sons’ father. And what did I do to sustain my family? Agriculture. So I had to *madrugar* (get up very early), do contacts to plant white onion. We lived by the Fusacatán hill over there. The father of my sons was an alcoholic so it was a very difficult situation. I began working *el campo* again, planting, weeding, planting onion, and that I did for like 3 years. Then I got pregnant of my youngest son and I went to live with him [the partner] to Veredas del Sur in Fusagasugá, where there is another culture. There, there is no agriculture like here. There, there are only citrus fruits, *guanábana* (sour-sop), because it’s warmer there. So I would say, “What am I going to do? What are we going to eat?” only mangoes, tangerines, oranges, guanabanas, terrible! So I began doing furrows, planting onion, cilantro, peas, beans, string beans, but very basic because raising two sons, I didn’t go anywhere, nobody knew me. (Esperanza, single mother of two children, 35 years)
I want to emphasize that interviewing campesinas for this research proved a challenge. As mentioned in the introduction, they were inaccessible in many ways: due to daily chores; due to the barrier posed by male partners; due to age (under 18, not allowed in my IRB); due to distrust of what I was there for; some preferred that I did not record the interviews, and, there were few young campesinas where I did my research. I found Esperanza through contacts in peasant markets. I must admit that the interview with Esperanza was one of the interviews from which I learned the most during this research. I must admit that her case is *sui generis* in my case studies. Esperanza was an exceptional woman in my research. She guided me through her plots, through her life testimony, and was generous with her time, knowledge and words. Her testimony is very rich in content. Her keen observations on production and economy, her self-taught techniques, her sense of productivity, and how her decisions were driven by practicality were all very inspiring for me. In this extract of her testimony I want to focus on several gendered aspects and gendered constraints that shaped her livelihood decisions. 1) The knowledge of how to produce onions comes from her mother; 2) Teenage pregnancy; 3) Engagement in family dynamics; 4) Alcoholism in campesino men and the effects on their female partners; 5) Deciding what to produce to feed her family. Throughout this chapter we learn more about Esperanza and her livelihood strategies.

Recalling Kabeer and Van Anh’s (2002) discussion as well as Razavi’s (2002) discussion in the previous theory chapter, we are reminded of the distinction between diversity and diversification and the drivers of diversification between choice and necessity. We remember also the idea of asking through livelihood approaches if decisions are deliberate household strategies or involuntary responses to crises. Is this diversification for survival or diversification for accumulation? Observing the constraints manifested in Esperanza’s testimony about that part
of her life from teenage years to early adulthood and having children, it can be observed that she initially (teenage years) opted for education rather than onion production as an opportunity to *fly* and use her dynamism. This implied mobility as her choice. She then faces a family situation, and she decides to go back home to help by caring for her mother. She presents this decision as a voluntary response to a crisis, which requires giving up or postponing the opportunity to gain education. Care is too often seen as a voluntary task for women, one which no other family member is willing or able to do, or because women are assumed and pressed to do it better. Plus there is the common assumption that their *care* should not be commodified as it is a moral obligation to the family member and the family in general. However, it also could having been involuntary if there were not any other family members willing or chosen to accompany her mother and assume this caring (unpaid) labor that implied the sacrifice of interrupting education for Esperanza at 15 years of age, while other siblings might have been seeking paid labor to *help*—or not. From her testimony we cannot directly derive these assumptions. Nonetheless, the reality faced is of having to assume once again the agrarian labor she had gotten away from through education. This seems to be more of an involuntary response to the family crisis, but her knowledge of onion production is a knowledge asset that she begins using to face this crisis. This brings to mind Razavi’s discussion on women in labor markets and how they tend to resort to wage labor when they are not supported by an adult male and/or do not have access to land (see previous chapter). Esperanza’s testimony supports Razavi’s argument since in the fragment there does not appear to be anyone else available to provide for them. Then comes the unfolding of events that leads to having her own family at the age of sixteen. The testimony does not provide details. It is a common story for campesinas to have children before they reach legal adult age (18 years in Colombia). It could be called a cultural tendency of the campesino patriarchal
structure; the internal dynamics of gendered relations are challenging to expose in an interview. These dynamics are part of intimate and psychological personal issues that are not easily shared with a researcher in a first interview. For instance, the segment in Esperanza’s narrative of her personal history, “I arrived again to plant, weed, clean, without the possibility of continuing studying. I met my sons’ father and I left with him very young, I was 16 when I went to live with my sons’ father” suggests that she left with her partner just a year after having returned to her mother’s household from boarding school, to take care of her. The testimony rapidly passes from “leaving with my sons’ father” to getting pregnant with the second son. We learn in this short segment about the partner’s alcoholism—another common aspect of campesino patriarchal culture—and of moving around in the region in different municipalities. Seemingly she had to jornalear to sustain her own, new family.

I was sixteen when I went to live with my sons’ father. And what did I do to sustain my family? Agriculture. So I had to madrugar (get up very early), do contacts to plant white onion … I began working el campo again.

This can be identified as a necessity driven response to a crisis: an irresponsible partner due to his alcoholism and the necessity of sustaining her children in his way of absence. Later in the opening segment of this section, she mentions how she resorts to using the temporary access she has to that land to produce food for family consumption rather than for the market. This also agrees with Razavi’s observation of how female-headed households tend to have less access to hired labor, and a limited possibility to produce crops for the market. While in Fusa, Esperanza was doing the full labor of raising two babies. She had limited time to produce, and less to have surplus production to sell at the market. She does not resort to wage labor since at least she has temporary access to land. In all, in this first fragment of Esperanza’s history we notice how the
reasons for resorting to wage work are related to carrying family situation burdens: her mother’s crisis and her own household crisis with an alcoholic partner and two babies.

Finally, in the mobility of those years—mobility that seems also more of a necessity than a choice—she arrives to lower altitude lands, a different ecosystem in tropical Andean territories, where she is not familiar with the type of production: tree orchards. Again, as a necessity driven for her own survival and the survival of her two kids, she applies her knowledge asset of agrarian production to produce what she knows how to produce: onion, cilantro, peas, beans, and string beans. This is the way she supplies and embodies a gendered role of meeting household needs.

Recall from the previous chapter, the discussion offered by Kabeer and Van Anh (2002,12) regarding the importance of advancing “the constraints that women face” by distinguishing “different kinds of constraints on women’s ability to engage in livelihood strategies, their implications for women’s roles in meeting household needs, and the extent to which they represent policy failure, cultural norms, or the preferences expressed by individuals or household heads.” We cannot separate her decisions as only answering to one possibility: policy failure, cultural norm, or the preferences expressed by individuals or household heads (see Kabeer and Van Anh 2002, 112). A lack of public health and educational services in el campo as a policy failure, can be to blame for the initial family crisis. Her early pregnancies as a lack of sexual education and access to family planning methods and public health services could be another. Cultural norms can be to blame for the situation of young women having to provide attention to their mother, thus, leaving their educational opportunities behind. Early establishment of a couple and reproduction in teenage years is also a cultural tendency, particularly in el campo in Colombia, obeying chauvinist and patriarchal dominance, power expressed through domestic violence, and often also economic control of finances. Alcoholism in campesino men is also a
cultural tendency easily observed in rural areas with men in cantinas drinking beer at different hours and in high quantities, often accompanied by games such as tejo\textsuperscript{24} and cock fighting. These spaces are very gendered geographies of the Colombian campo. The violence(s) implied (physical, economic, psychological) are not expressed in an interview or perhaps even conceptualized as such. This is partly because these aspects tend to be normalized, interiorized and portrayed as only private issues. Therefore, they lack attention as social, political and economic issues that should be related to public policy development, described and approached as structural schemes of agrarian scenarios that deserve scrutiny. Themes such as these are developed in part two of this dissertation in the chapter about institutional and feminist regards on rural women and campesina needs and subjectivities.

The decisions of resuming agrarian labor in external day labor and in home production can be portrayed as Esperanza’s personal preference. She could have migrated to the city, the town, back to her mother’s place, dragging along with her the alcoholic partner, but she chose to use her agrarian knowledge to sustain her family. In other sections of her testimony we will see how this decision of pursuing an agrarian livelihood continues in other moments of her adult life. The importance of this segment is the evidence it offers for a discussion of different angles with which to approach a gendered, aged, life of a campesina—through gendered-agrarian studies and livelihood approaches presented in the theory chapter. In this sense, Esperanza’s testimony offers insight into how decisions are made, and their implications in everyday routines, possibilities and labor.

\textsuperscript{24} Tejo or Turmequé is a popular game in the Colombian Andes among men and usually is accompanied by beer drinking, due to it being a sport sponsored by national beer companies. It is presumably a pre-Hispanic sport in origin. For a more detailed introduction to tejo see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tejo\_sport or https://www.culturarecreacionydeporte.gov.co/es/bogotonitos/recreccion/tejo
2. The Case of Santiago and Margarita

Recalling Cornwall’s call and the discussion in the previous chapter that gender should not be equated to women, a male’s testimony is also a gendered testimony. Below is a fragment of Santiago’s life history as told by him. Santiago was born in the town of Fusagasugá (Fusa for short and in colloquial use), migrated to el campo as a boy, served his compulsory military service, then went to the city, and finally came back to el campo to his father’s plot, to plant tree tomato with his partner and baby. We can find issues of child labor, urban-migration, gendered labor force for the state (compulsory military service), masculine agrarian social relations in relation to production (family-male-labor agreements), relations to land, and an instance of quitting school. Similar to Esperanza’s case, Santiago quit school, formed a family at an early age (there is not much reference to how forming a family happened), mobility and migration, and the choice to go back to an agrarian life deciding “to work the land as it should be.”

I was born in Fusagasugá and was briefly brought-up in that city until we arrived here (municipality) when I was 8-9 years… so we arrived here, we worked agriculture in general, everything that has to with agronomy, everything, I worked here until I was 17, and as soon as I turned 18, I had to give the compulsory military service (prestar el servicio militar). I was there practically for almost 2 years because although 18 months is the norm, I did not comply, I did, but I did not, I passed a selection and I had to spend 22 months, yes, almost practically 2 years. [Me: Had you finished high school?] I finished 9th grade here. I finished the 2 years of army service and spent another 2 years in Bogotá working. I worked changing oil in cars, air filters, I had to do many things to cars that I learned in Bogotá. Then came a moment where things got complicated. My father wanted to sell this farm because he was bored of working by himself since most of my brothers… my brother Miguel had finished high school but did not know what to do, if stay or go and study or stay and work because you know, anyway the land gives a lot so it is a great advantage because truly, your own land gives; it is like you are your own boss (patrón). Then it depends how you do your work and the things you want to work, well it is better you do them yourself…[talks about his brothers’ situations].. I had a ‘little’ problem (problemita), an inconvenience, so since there was no other path, I decided to come back, hmmm, and as you see now I am here beginning a new tree-tomato project and mi mujer, with her. Her, I met in Bogota, well, age, well, the normal… Hmm, I have a lot of knowledge about this because since I was 15 or younger, perhaps 12, I decided—I was very good in my studies—but there comes a time when, I was no longer interested in school, maybe not about the idea of listening to the teacher—not that because studying is very good and acquiring knowledge—but there came a time when I was very bored and
preferred working, looking at the neighbors’ crop, suggesting manures, all the process of agriculture. Suddenly, I was more interested in that and unfocused from studies and so I dedicated to work, did some exploring (me fui de paseo), then did the military service, and then came back normal, decided to work the land as it should be. Since I have so much knowledge of that, and we are beginning at zero level again, and with the tree-tomato project and some other things we can plant with the purpose of fixing, looking out for the crops and practically administrating, for instance the piece that… the legacy of our parents. So that is the advantage of you being on your own and you are there working well.
(Santiago, 23 years)

Looking at Santiago’s life history segment through the same livelihood lens used for Esperanza’s segment previously, we find that the child labor and knowledge asset of agrarian production comes from the family situation. As with Esperanza, Santiago quit school around the same school year: 9th grade. Then a public policy: compulsory military service for men, drives his first two years of legal adulthood. Whether this is a gendered constraint or an opportunity depends on the view. Focusing on Santiago’s testimony, military service is portrayed more as an involuntary act, an obligation “I had to,” that does not lead to other life issues benefitting from that forced labor, a parenthesis in life, a constraint. In contrast to Esperanza, he does not seem to have children in his teenage years. When he is twenty, he migrates to the capital city to learn new skills while laboring: “I worked changing oil in cars, air filters, I had to do many things to cars that I learned in Bogotá.” These occupations can be more out of necessity than due to deliberate decision. They offer the possibility of obtaining cash for daily economic expenses and provide skills that may later prove useful. As in Esperanza’s case, a family crisis is mentioned, and this drives the subject back to the family home and rural setting. There is a mix of explanations for this decision: “My father wanted to sell this farm because he was bored of working by himself… anyway the land gives a lot so it is a great advantage because truly, your own land gives, it is like you are your own boss (patrón)… then came back normal, decided to work the land as it should be.” And “I had a ‘little’ problem (problemita), an inconvenience, so since there was no other
path, I decided to come back, hmmm, and as you see now I am here beginning a new tree-tomato project and *mi mujer*, with her.” The last phrase, suggests coming back to el campo as a way to flee a personal situation, a decision driven by necessity but also a livelihood strategy when part of a couple and beginning a family.

In the mentioning of land as an asset that facilitates possibilities we find another difference from Esperanza’s testimony: “the land gives a lot so it is a great advantage because truly, your own land gives, it is like you are your own boss (*patrón*).” The land is not portrayed as owned, but as a legacy from the parents. This can mean several things. One of the options is that Santiago’s family owns the land, while Esperanza’s does not. Another option is that land is more easily inherited to Santiago than to Esperanza; therefore, the possibility of counting it as a livelihood asset changes. It can be a gendered view, of men inheriting land more easily than women, but I do not have more information here to make this statement. However, research on the gender asset gap with respect to ownership in Latin America has shown a substantial difference, favoring men (e.g. Deere and Leon 2003, Nobre and Hora 2017). More on this theme will be presented in the chapter in the next part about institutional and feminist regards on rural women and campesina needs and subjectivities. In the first part of the segment, Santiago portrays land as an asset that can be capitalized among the male labor force of the family and offers better opportunities for all, mentioning seeing his dad sell the land and migrate to the city. In another phrase, it is also “normal” to come back to el campo and coming back is portrayed as choice. In this case, intergenerational dispossession (see White 2012, Cassidy et al. 2019 and previous chapter) was avoided when the sons decide to defend their interest in their father’s land as a

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25 While writing this dissertation, Donny Meertens published *Elusive Justice: Women, Land Rights, and Colombia’s Transition to Peace* (2019. University of Wisconsin Press). I did not have a chance to access this publication while writing this discussion, but it might have offered relevant data and analysis about rural women’s access to land.
legacy, a right, and as a livelihood opportunity. I interviewed three brothers in this family of brothers. Santiago, Miguel and Juanito have two sisters, one is an adult and lives in Bogotá pursuing a technical degree, the other is the youngest sister and was eleven years old at the time of the interview and lives with her parents. If the older sister was involved in decisions about the land, or if the mother took part in the decision making, this cannot be grasped from Santiago´s testimony. However, his description hints and reinforces the notion of gendered relations to land.

Education will be further examined in a subsection of this chapter as a livelihood asset. In this segment of Santiago’s life, he portrays leaving school as a conscious decision, a deliberate strategy in life. He chooses agrarian labor and livelihoods over studies, which seemingly implies being in town or in the city. This also agrees with Razavi’s argument that “men tend to engage in wage work more intensively when they are young, and wage work is seen as a way of establishing themselves financially” (2002, 14, see also pg. 84 of this chapter).

I decided—I was very good in my studies—but there comes a time when, I was no longer interested in school, maybe not about the idea of listening to the teacher—not that because studying is very good and acquiring knowledge—but there came a time when I was very bored and preferred working, looking at the neighbors’ crop, suggesting manures, all the process of agriculture. Suddenly, I was more interested in that and unfocused from studies. The conscious and “normal” decision of going back to el campo and the diversifying aspects it implies is supported by this summarizing phrase:

So I dedicated to work, did some exploring (me fui de paseo), then did the military service, and then came back normal, decided to work the land as it should be. Since I have so much knowledge of that, and we are beginning at zero level again, and with the tree-tomato project and some other things we can plant with the purpose of fixing, looking out for the crops and practically administrating… the legacy of our parents. So that is the advantage of you being on your own and you are there working well.

Both fragments in Santiago’s testimony suggest that he sees opportunities in establishing agrarian production as a livelihood choice. Going back to the initial research questions, these testimonies suggest that the relationship with capitalism as an agriculturalist is gendered and
therefore transforms campesino/a lives differently according to gender. Additionally, the testimonies support the argument that el campo is a gendered possibility in terms of gendered opportunities in accessing land, or opting for agrarian labor by choice or out of necessity.

Similar to Esperanza’s absent explanation of how she met her partner and established a family, Santiago only says: “Her, I met in Bogota, well, age, well, the normal…” There is not enough material in the testimonies to explain these social relationships. However, it seems in both cases as if pregnancy came early in the relationship, and presumably, was not planned. They do not seem to deliberate decisions. They enter the realm of cultural tendencies that become “normal” and do not require much explanation. Or perhaps they are not easily described for a researcher. Nor, as a researcher, did I seek more in this area of the interviews, which in many cases were the first and only encounters with the interviewees. That being said, the next segment of the same interview offers new insight into the new family situation and gendered labor.

[Interviewer: With how many people do you work your crop?] Now there is a limited time for her, my woman, you know it is very mild what she can do, but she is of great help, but later on when it is necessary, yes, 2 or 3 people will need to be hired, although here we distribute work with our brothers in Vuelta de mano (‘turned hand’), so for example my brother helps me one day, the next day I help him, and that is how we level the Vuelta de mano. He helps me, I help him. So that will be later. It depends practically, the plants after six months of being planted is when they require more work. Now it is mild. I can inject them, fumigate them, matamalesear (apply Round-Up), control weeds, all in one day. (Santiago and Margarita, couple with baby in Cabrera)

The statement, “she is of great help,” offers a provocation for discussion of gendered roles in el campo. This is how Santiago describes his partner Margarita in relation to labor, when the couple has a baby of a few months and they are figuring out survival and livelihood strategies. Margarita was born in el campo (in a coffee-producing region), migrated to the city as a child, and is now back in el campo, learning to live there again. When I interviewed them, at 5 or 6 p.m., Margarita was busy cooking dinner, the baby was on a rug with some toys, and I was
invited to sit down at their small, improvised kitchen table to talk with Santiago. I made it clear that I wanted them both to respond, but the sound of frying plantain, the distance from the stove to the table, in addition to the dynamics of preparing dinner and tending to the baby were all examples of the kinds of subtle constraints present in the moment that make it difficult for Margarita to participate more actively. Proposing another time for the interview had already proved challenging since they both had been working on the tree-tomato orchard during the day and gave me that time as the time when they would be available for me.

“Ella es de gran ayuda” (She is of great help)... ayuda or “help” can be seen as the non-wage, non-commodified, undervalued form of labor provided by women of el campo from the time when they are girls. It can refer to women’s domestic work, care work, resource securing (e.g. fodder, water) and in this case agrarian work, that is not paid. In this way, breast-feeding a child, preparing meals, fetching water, picking fruits, cleaning the house, accompanying the mother-in-law, feeding the animals, milking the cow, are all summarized in the category of “help” in a male campesino’s testimony, when it is acknowledged.

There are other sorts of help, or uncommodified labor, acknowledged in this segment. I refer to the mano vuelta (turned hand, literally) which means exchanging labor. It is a cultural tendency in el campo where labor is rotated among siblings or family members for one and another’s crops or for the different tasks any member needs such as fixing a fence or working on a path. This can be understood as a social relations asset in a livelihoods approach. In my interviews it only appeared in interviews with men. This does not imply that there are no agreements of un-commodified labor exchange among women, or others between women and men that do not imply exploitation. This is certainly a topic that merits more research.
With the segments of Esperanza and Santiago’s life histories, we can observe the similarities of youth in el campo. The life phase described by both, passing from teenage years to early adulthood has similarities and there are gendered differences that can be observed and which were signaled and analyzed. Now I pass to a specific gendered difference which marks the lives of many young men in Colombia, in particular those of economic vulnerable backgrounds.

**Compulsory Military Service as Gendered and Classed Labor**

Recalling the section in the previous chapter *Not equating gender = women* and *campesino= men* (previous chapter), I mention Cornwall’s (in Razavi 2002, 15) discussion about “the common slippage ‘gender’ and ‘women’… The boundaries of who constitute vulnerable groups are historically specific.” In my case study, the common situation of rural men over eighteen years who have to serve compulsory military service —becoming cheap gendered, classed and aged labor in service of the state’s warfare and/or military defense projects— is evident. I propose to look at this situation with an intersectional approach as a gendered, classed and generational constraint, preventing youth from being able to develop agrarian livelihood possibilities in el campo. Intersectionality is more fully approached in part two of this dissertation. For the purpose of this section, I briefly mention that beginning with Kimberlé Crenshaw’s (1991) use of the term, the focus on social category intersections serves to highlight “the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed” (1991, 1245). “[W]hen one discourse [e.g. feminism, or class-oppression] fails to acknowledge the significance of the other, the power relations that each attempts to challenge are strengthened” (1991,1282). Black feminist thought has taken the lead in developing a comprehensive approach to intersectionality, systems of oppression and a matrix of domination. This framework is used to explain how gender is not the only social category for being oppressed
by a patriarchal, capitalist system. They call for the crucial work of evidencing intersecting forms of oppression and how oppressions work together in producing injustice (Hill Collins 1990, 18).

From this feminist regard I am not approaching the army as a unitary, masculinist form of oppression. I aim to deconstruct it and show how for young campesinos, in the moment of their lives when they have to face army recruitment, they usually do not have the economic, political and social tools to escape this forced labor. Therefore, I propose that compulsory military service in Colombia cannot be seen only as a policy that targets a specific gender performance of masculinity (the able bodied, young male as an armed body representing state force against the insurgency and illegal forces), but also a classed situation that cannot easily be escaped (by paying), which targets an economic class that tends to be racialized in Colombia. I will not explore the racial angle of this state oppression mechanism, but it certainly merits scrutiny. Young campesino men are targeted as army labor due to their physical strength and stamina, developed from their physical, agrarian labor in el campo, and because they tend to not have the resources to pay the military passbook\(^{26}\) (*libreta militar*). This approach does not discard nor deny how once in the Colombian army, many become oppressors to women, or to vulnerable populations such as the ones they come from. My case and focus is limited to the moment of their recruitment and the moment just after the completion of this “service” and how it impacts their livelihood options. In this sense, it de-essentializes men (specifically men in the army) as oppressive beings *per se*, and seeks to question how they end up being part of the oppressive structure of the army. It is of course a located perspective, one that looks at a particular reality — that of campesino youth in a specific region — and one that seeks to listen to the subaltern’s voice as a knowledgeable subject on what navigating the army system is about. This regard

\(^{26}\) For more details on this situation, see the report by the Defensoría del Pueblo (2014) *Servicio militar en Colombia: Incorporación, reclutamiento y objeción de conciencia*. Bogotá.
contributes to the emerging scholarship in Colombia using intersectionality to approach masculinities and to understand the wider oppressive systems in Colombia, a national context marked by armed violence (Neira Cruz, 2012).

Armed labor has been of interest not only to the Colombian state but for some decades also for guerrillas and paramilitary forces. Therefore, migration is sometimes the only way for young rural men of campesino origin to avoid becoming labor for war in Colombia. However, men must still arrange the safeguard of their military passbook which is a sort of laissez passer document,27 establishing if they have already served military service or which categorizes them for eventual military service according to their situation with the army. If a man is caught without this by the police, army, or any other state agency such as a migration office, he might have to pay a fine or otherwise resolve his military situation28. It is possible to not serve military service either by paying a quota of military compensation29 or by demonstrating exemption for another reason: physical ability limitations, being an only child, being affiliated as an indigenous person to an indigenous community, being married, being an orphan, or exemption due to conscientious objection30. However, using any of these reasons implies that they are following

27 This passbook is established by the military and information about it is found in their website: www.ejercito.mil.co. The passbook was established in 2017 at $111,000 COP ($40 USD approximately), but recall the legal monthly minimum wage in Colombia was $737,717 COP (Colombian peso) in 2017 – approximately $254 USD with an average exchange rate for 2017 of 2,900 COP = 1 USD – and one jornal or day wage depends on the region and can be below $20,000 COP = $6.5 USD approximately.
28 https://www.ejercito.mil.co/?idcategoria=334206&c
29 La cuota de compensación militar será liquidada así: el 60% del total de los ingresos recibidos mensualmente a la fecha de la clasificación, más el 1% del patrimonio líquido del núcleo familiar del interesado o de aquel de quien demuestre depender económicamente existentes al 31 de diciembre del año.
30 https://www.reclutamiento.mil.co/comando_reclutamiento/exentos/
bureaucratic procedures, compiling and arranging paperwork, and organizing this paperwork in legal frames and language. Furthermore, it is subject to review and approval (or denial) by military offices. Usually campesino young men cannot access these resources, nor are they suitable to receive exemption. Therefore, rural and urban young men of vulnerable economic backgrounds usually end up providing cheap military labor for at least a year when they turn 18 or before they turn 24. This possibility shapes the decisions made by young campesinos, or the steps they are forced to take for at least a period of their lives, due to this compulsory military law. The way this has marked young men’s lives is portrayed in more than one interview. We saw it in Santiago’s testimony in the previous sub-section, and we find it in his brother’s Miguel testimony too. I also include Hernando’s case, which has a different result, but also supports the argument of how navigating military bureaucracy is a challenge for campesinos.

[So, did you finish school here in this municipality?] No, I couldn’t because there were inconveniences in the route. I tried one week biking to school in town (15 km, approximately) and back, but it was too complicated, because sometimes it rained, sometimes the bike broke down, all that. I went to live in the town. But in town, I did finish 9th grade, and then I began to… well, you know, what every kid that age seeks to know, rush out. So that is when all that happened and I left school. Then, I went to a neighboring municipality, there I began 9th and 10th grade. 11th I was not able to finish but it is what I am doing now. [How is it in the army when you haven’t graduated from school?] Yeah, let’s say I am studying right now in the army. I will end up with the three necessary documents: la conducta (behavior certificate), la libreta militar (passbook) y mi bachillerato (and my high-school degree). So the idea now—I am out in April—and in June I will present ifes and depending on how I do in ifes, I will present myself to the Cundinamarca University to psychology. And I know I will pass. That’s the idea. (Miguel, 22 years)

When I was almost 18 they recruited me. They tricked me into it and I said, “look man, I am a Jehova witness and I will not do the military service.” He said, go to the contingent’s office and explain your case. So I went and said, “look, I am coming for my passbook

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31 ICFES is the popular name of the State qualifying exam for approving completion of high school studies. This corresponds to the acronym of the Colombian Institution for the Assessment of Education, which regulates this exam. It is common that people do not know the exact name of the exam, or that it refers also to a state institution, so it commonly referred to in popular language as ifes.
since I am not paying service.” “It is not if you want, it is that you have to,” I said, “you are not forcing me to carry a rifle.” He said, “go, we will call you back.” I waited by the stairs… “Mr. Sanchez!” They were all in the meeting room and said, “So you don’t want to pay your military service?” I said, “No sirs, I am baptized as a Jehova witness being a minor.” But I wanted, I did want to go. There was something inside me that did want to go. So I said, “Truly, I would go man, if it only depended on me. But I am baptized as a Jehova witness and if I go with you, I would be a traitor. Don’t you think? And if I could be a traitor to God, then I could be a traitor to you, don’t you think? I can go with you but answer me these two questions: what is a rifle for? To kill. Right? And, how many people did Jesus Christ kill when he was on Earth? Nobody! Exactly! If Jesus killed nobody, then why do we have to kill?” They remained silent. They said, “You are right.” I said, “If I go with you I am being a traitor to a pact I already have with God through baptism to do his will.” And I told them, “It’s like pledge of allegiance to the flag. When you do this, you are swearing loyalty to the patria (nation/fatherland) for 18 months of service.” I said, “So I already made this pledge with God, with my baptism. So I cannot be a traitor, brother.” And so, I must say they behaved well with me. Because those that were not apt were not treated well. [Did you get the passbook?] No, because my dad committed a mistake. He presented me when I was 16 in Bogotá in a contingent office and set a date for my appointment when I would be 18. And then, when I was 18, I was in Fusagasugá - I did not know Bogotá at that time- so in Bogotá I was already a remiso (remiss) when I presented in Fusa. So that was his mistake. I do not have my passbook yet, but it is obligatory. As a Jehova witness it is also obligatory to have it because one has to comply with national laws as normal. So I am still awaiting that passbook. (Hernando, 35, male).

Hernando’s story is told as a story of success. Truth and conscientious objection partially won over a legal obligation. As mentioned before, conscientious objection is a legal possibility; however, beyond convincing an audience with a moral truth, the result should be a passbook stating his military status. In this case we also see how navigating military institutions and bureaucracy is not a solved issue for Hernando, although not one that seems to bother him at the moment.

For Miguel, doing the military service was a traumatic experience that he told me about off recording. He tried denouncing internal corruption and faced internal threats to his life, bureaucratic obstacles and negligence. However, in this fragment he presents the documents he gets after his military service as assets that will facilitate his life afterwards. In this sense, although his military experience is perceived and lived as a constraint and a negative experience,
he does get out of it a sense of opportunity of finishing high school studies, obtaining the necessary paperwork to be able to continue with his aspiration of studying psychology. His time in the army, a time of being unable to labor in any other area, is at least a moment to focus on finishing high school while not having to worry about how to get to school. Mobility and access to school had been a constraint for him when he was with his family in the Sumapaz region. What I want to highlight in this case is that a single life experience such as having to serve in the military cannot be seen simply as an opportunity or a constraint, as mentioned in the livelihoods literature discussed earlier. Recalling Scoones (2009, see previous chapter) it is important to look simultaneously at structure and agency, the drivers of micro- and macro- political processes that define opportunities and constraints. The gendered, aged and classed source of military labor for the state which young campesinos face is due to a political factor, a nation-building project, and a recurrent policy that keeps military service obligatory in a country that has favored a budget for war, military equipment and military-armed labor force over a budget for education or health. The armed conflict in Colombia has had devastating effects in el campo and its populations for decades. This all corresponds to a macro-level political process. However, on the micro-level, for those affected by these policies, like Miguel, Santiago or Hernando, who have survived their pass through military scrutiny, there is also agency in the acts of questioning the moral grounds (Hernando’s case about loyalty to Jesus’ principles of not killing) and trying to denounce corruption (Miguel). This agency is particularly clear in the way Miguel uses the experience as an opportunity to finish high school, even if he has criticisms of the army’s functioning, from the perspective of an insider. This agency is also clear in Hernando’s situation. Almost an orphan considering his abandonment of household due to domestic violence, he manages to present his case in the army as one of conscientious objection. His identity marker was provided by his
religious experience and this generated a position with regards to what being part of the army morally implies. This is an important issue, since his religious affiliation can be seen as an asset giving meaning to his world, as mentioned by Bebbington’s (1999) discussion of livelihood assets in chapter one.

None of the three testimonies related to military service present the experience as an identity marker or a theme of appropriation. This can be related to the methodological design bias of this research. I interviewed those that have come back to an agrarian livelihood, not those of rural and campesino origin who have opted for the military or other armed forces as livelihood options. This does not mean that the armed forces (legal or illegal) are not a decisive source of livelihood and identity for many young men of campesino origin. This is certainly a topic that merits more research, in order to uncover and establish how this gendered, aged and classed source of cheap war labor for the state and for other armed forces is depleting el campo of its people and thus, possibilities of agrarian livelihood. Evidencing how the military service to the state is a constraint for individuals who do not want to be part of an armed force could help support the political movement of conscientious objection. Due to lack of research material, I do not pursue this discussion with enough detail to engage in discussion, but further theoretical insights are provided in part two of the dissertation.

Other Agrarian Livelihood Assets

Mondays I study. I am doing a course in SENA\textsuperscript{32} on management of integrated farming (\textit{granjas integrales}) so I study in the afternoons. In the morning I work on the farm, then I go and prepare the diets for the trout and I am also a technician in the orchard. They have a

\textsuperscript{32} SENA is the \textit{Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje} or National Training Service, which is a public, national level state institution. Its function is to provide professional training and formation to workers, youths and adults within the areas of industry, trade, agriculture, mining and cattle breeding. It seeks to provide technical training to employees and complementary training for adults, and to help employers and workers to establish a national learning system. For more information visit: \url{http://www.sena.edu.co/en-us/Pages/sena.aspx}
productive unit and my work there is advising, fumigating, planting. Tuesdays and
Wednesdays I am dedicated to doing the orchard with the people that come and collaborate
with me. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays I am dedicated to the organic markets.
(Esperanza)

In this section of the agrarian livelihoods discussion I present other assets mentioned both in the
literature presented in the previous chapter and in some of the testimonies. These include
education, land, health, social relations and mobility. Each will be dealt with separately and are
only meant to be brief highlights of themes that will reappear throughout the dissertation.

The opening interview fragment of this section offers different assets all in one, which
reminds us of the livelihoods discussion on diversification. As mentioned by Kabeer and Van
Anh (2002), in poor households, rarely is there one single earning activity, nor is income the sole
purpose of their efforts. This is supported by Esperanza’s testimony, in which we see that her
livelihood strategies exemplify Kabeer and Van Anh’s discussion of livelihood diversification.
Esperanza seeks to provide basic needs of survival by working in her own orchard, but she also
seeks activities to minimize risk by doing waged labor for trout production and by working in an
orchard as hired labor, in addition to generating a sufficient surplus to invest in her future by
producing for the organic markets. She has harnessed her knowledge of agroecology, not only
using in her own production but also selling it as technical knowledge outside, while she also
strengthens this skill through education in el SENA on management of integrated farming. Her
investments and resources are also reflected in the other labor agreements that she has with those
“people that come and collaborate with me.” As mentioned in the section about labor, this can
imply hired labor, child labor (her sons and nephews mentioned in another fragment) or other
sorts of “help” agreements of mutual exchange common in el campo such as minga or mano
vueltas. Esperanza reaches for a variety of resources in her livelihood strategies. Some are at her
disposal (her own production knowledge and ability to do physical work), and others she uses
her agency to create, reach out to, seek or strengthen, such as her social relations for labor
agreements with organic markets, or signing up for courses with SENA. She uses all the
strategies mentioned by Kabeer and Van Anh (2002): subsistence production, self-
employment, wage labor, mutual exchange, as well as material, social and human resources. This
fragment offers a clear example of diversity and diversification in agrarian livelihoods. As
mentioned before, the will demonstrated by Esperanza, not only during the interview but in what
she showed me of her life was outstanding. I see this also as how she has built and grew in
strength in order to figure out her survival and accumulation strategies as well as her mobility
opportunities. Recall that in her adolescence, she left school to take care of her mother and at
sixteen, established a new family with an alcoholic partner. My contact with her was through a
grassroots organization in a municipality neighboring her own where she sells products in
organic markets. My sense is that she has built social mobility that transcends her local spaces,
and she is now becoming a reference in neighboring municipalities through her work in organic
markets and agroecology, for those seeking to generate sustainable agrarian livelihoods. Her way
of approaching knowledge is varied. She is critical and cautious of new techniques, and she is
careful to experiment with them herself and closely observe processes and results. She mixes
mystics with practical knowledge, intuition with technical books, motherhood with
entrepreneurship, and she has been able to construct a varied and interesting livelihood which
she seems to enjoy, and about which she is happy to share her insights on what she is
constructing. She is an example of how policy has failed campesinas in issues such as education,
health care or access to land, yet she is also an example of how it is possible to build a campesina
livelihood out of determination, observation and creativity. She is conscious of her battles and
clear to state them, and she is also proud to show what she has built from scratch. In this sense
she echoes Kabeer and Van Anh (see previous chapter) on expressing the preferences she has and decisions that she has made individually, in spite of the cultural norms and policy failures against her in the social environment surrounding her.

1. Education

The lack of formal education opportunities is a recurrent aspect mentioned in the interviews. I have already included in other sub-sections the fragments where leaving or quitting school is mentioned. Agroecology school educanda/os (learners, trainees) have different approaches to how they perceive studying as a livelihood asset. In the training given at the Institute, there is also a political training which several of them mention by situating the usefulness of this education in their lives.

Beginning with Miguel’s case, he has not been able to pursue education in el campo. As seen before, commuting to school from his family household in la vereda proved challenging and he quit, so that possibility was lost. Below, he mentions how the city is where one can pursue education.

I think that people here, what they prefer is to finish high school and always look towards the city because it is there that they find studies—the education—and ways of heading out because I see that here, el campo, they have it very forgotten. Nor do people worry about the environment or anything else here, because of the same, because there are no incomes (ingresos), no facilities (facilidades) for studying, and since all that is lacking, people head off to the city. And also they do it because of employment. On my side, I will finish what I’m doing and will head to Bogotá. I also want to study. I would like to study psychology. Right now I am studying about it. While in the army, I pass time studying and not wasting time…(Miguel, 22 years, male)

This case is different from how Esperanza, who quit school as a teenager, but for different reasons, is able to continue with her education in el campo, seeking more technical options such as those offered by SENA, so that she can combine this opportunity with other ongoing aspects of her life. How people make sense of how education will serve them to construct a livelihood also depends on their age. Below is the case of an eighteen-year-old woman who spent more of
her childhood and adolescence in a town than on farms, and how she makes sense of her agroecology education currently:

[How do you see yourself projected in these agrarian issues?] Well, before studying what I study—because of my daddy’s work—well, I had always thought without el campo there is no city (sin el campo no hay ciudad). And always when traveling I would see those big crops and think, it must be so nice to know how to plant and harvest. Harvest the fruits that with so much effort people work. Ehmm what was the question? [How do you project yourself in some years? What would you like to be doing?] Ehmm, I think that the same as this organization, same as my daddy, same as the people of my organization. Work with communities and for the defense of the people. But I also aspire to finish engineering in agroecology. Here we get the technological diploma, but I want to finish engineering. [And of the themes that you have learned here, which interest you more for your project?] Soil sciences call my attention more. We only briefly saw it but I think it’s cool to know in what type of soil things can be planted, how to fix it, how to help. Germinating is also cool. For example, my dad was working on a project in Chocó and they gave him a seed of a hardwood tree. He didn’t know how to germinate them, me neither, and I said wow, how cool to know how to germinate them! So I asked the professor here and she said only in sand. I had thought it was with good fertile soil! (Marisol, educanda at agroecology school, 18 years)

In Marisol’s case, she is interested in many paths: soil sciences, plant reproduction, agroecology engineering, working with communities, and grassroots organizational work. These areas are all compatible, complementary knowledges and activities in el campo which can help construct a diversified livelihood. Her range of interests is very broad, which could be a result of the interdisciplinary approach of agroecology, which teaches a wide range of themes from political analysis to soil and water analysis. She is still young enough to dedicate herself to a more focused discipline or specialized work. She often mentioned her father’s work in a grassroot organization as a reference. This was one of the few cases in my interviews where an interviewee’s childhood was not directly related to working agrarian labor but instead with campesino organizational work.

These different perspectives on education and the related educational opportunities exemplify how education as a livelihood asset or as a human resource can be imagined or
mobilized, with the dimension of knowledge that it provides. Education is difficult to access for most of those interviewed, and some prefer to pursue another option or work rather than study. In general, for the case of young campesinas and campesinos in Colombia, access to formal education is still fraught with obstacles, and there is great difficulty in sustaining the livelihood arrangements required to finish a degree.

2. **Health**

In relation to health, in my cases, it only explicitly appears as a female gendered asset in the sense that health is needed to be able to sustain the possibility of physical labor. As will be seen below, Esperanza values her health, taking care of her back when choosing not to carry heavy loads.

I only work with stationary machinery. I do not use the other conventional machine they call *cacorra*. I do not use it for health reasons and because I find it very difficult when one has to carry 20L of water on one’s back. So I use the stationary… Before I would do lots of *bocachi*[^33], I would end up with horrible back and waist pains. Better said, I would break myself doing tons of *bocachi* and that wouldn’t work because all that quantity of workforce, the time you have to wait, and finally the product could only be used for a small area. Instead this I do in one day—two at most—and I can use it for a bigger area. I do the seedling myself, I don’t take care of them like many people putting them in greenhouses, in beds, with coverings, and I don’t know what else. I do them directly where they will stay.

(Esperanza)

Again, with her keen way of observing and adapting techniques, Esperanza combines with amazing coherence a way of laboring the land that includes care for her body, not overexploiting herself, and avoiding carrying heavy sacks or equipment. She seeks adaptations in her techniques that welcome organic methods and mix them with conventional ones, applying them with great attention and uses observation to record how they are useful in her production, for the land, for ecosystemic processes and for her financial and other personal needs.

[^33]: Bocachi refers to a Japanese method of composting: https://organicsoiltechnology.com/original-bocashi-recipe.html
Health did not appear as explicitly in any other case. This can be due to the fact that I carried out an extensive go-along tour (see Kusenbach, 2013 in methods section of the introduction) only with Esperanza as she showed me her way of working and her production. It can also tell us about gender constructions. Esperanza has observed that the traditional male way of working is not healthy for the body, and since she has to do physical work that is often attributed to male gender roles, she has found ways of carrying out the work so that she does not feel it is attacking her physical health in the long term. She sees her body as an instrument of labor that should be taken care of.

There are insufficient cases here to build a discussion about health as a livelihood asset, but the mention of health in one case offers questions about how approaches to health can tell us about gender constructions from the perspective of body care. For instance, health can be an issue related to femininity and masculinity, to the body as a labor tool, or to approaches to selfcare. Taking care of one’s body and seeing it as a labor resource can be one way of explaining Esperanza’s approach to selfcare. In this way it reminds us of the livelihood strategies discussion of Kabeer and Van Anh on how labor power can be seen as a human resource mobilized for self-employment, wage labor or mutual exchange, making it part of the broad set of livelihood strategies that households with low incomes tend to mobilize.

3. Land
Recall the discussion of land as a livelihood asset provided by Razavi (2002, 22, see previous chapter) about land meaning different things such as

- a farming resource (means of production) for food crops and/or cash crops, as shelter, as a basis for identity (community membership, citizenship), or for speculation… [and how]
- women’s interests in land shift as the social norms and legal restrictions that have structured what is considered possible are challenged and eroded.
Also consider Wolford’s observation that even though peasants might want land, they still might prefer waged-labor (see previous chapter). It can then be said that land is an asset for livelihood strategies but not necessarily the base for peasant agrarian production in capitalism. We need to rethink our framework for access to land to something more like “recuperation of dignity” in order to understand the needs that people have under a capitalist regime, perhaps admitting that people do want privately owned land, even if not for fully rendering it to agrarian production, but to complement their livelihood needs, securing a place to live or to retire to, or even to retain a sense of attachment to a territory in ways that might change throughout a person’s life. These insights were discussed previously when showing Santiago’s testimony and how generational dispossession was prevented by going back to use their father’s land as an asset for livelihood making under the different life situations they were all in: Miguel in military service, Santiago in parenthood, Juanito entering legal adulthood.

4. Social relations
Previously presented fragments expose diverse social relations that can be included as livelihood assets that people draw from to generate options, strengthen opportunities, lessen commodified labor and favor family, friends or other social relationships. For instance, mano vuelta, is mentioned by the siblings Santiago, Miguel, and Juanito; they exchange labor connected to each sibling’s crops or activities. There is also informal money lending (préstamos) mentioned by Miguel; his amiga will lend him money as seed funds. Others mention social relations related to housing, staying at family member’s houses when migrating to the city. Other social relations are mentioned when explaining how work was acquired through social connections, as in the case of Hernando.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, el campo is a gendered possibility also because of gendered relations. The case of Ingrid and her involvement in the Andean bear project will be
developed in the last chapter of part two when looking at environmental subjectivities. For the purpose of this section, I only need to present the rejection and denunciation she mentioned that she received from her vereda community for working for the Andean bear project. For her, working with this environmental project, on a theme that she enjoyed and learning about the cloud forest fauna in Cabrera that surrounded her all her life was a positive experience. However, the older men in the community judged the project of the regional environmental authority (CAR) as a threat since they associate the entity with the sanctions given for logging native woody species. Therefore, during JAC meetings, the older men attacked Ingrid, accusing her of bringing the enemy home, of being naïve for participating in the project, and rejecting any community participation in the Andean bear project. This exemplifies how challenging it can be for young women to seek livelihood options in a campesino community outside of traditional gender roles of household. Ingrid’s voice and roles are questioned, discredited, and rejected at the basic grassroots organizational structure level in el campo, the JAC. This rejection of young female participation in community social spaces and of females with new work roles can be a sign of gerontocracy and how older men do not want to allow women, particularly younger women as seen in this case, to bring new projects to the territory. The traditional organization space of the JAC has long established governance styles and female leadership might prove challenging in its micropolitics. There is reticence of change from the older men. This exemplifies how social relations have gendered shades and as livelihood assets they cannot be equally mobilized by women and men in el campo.

5. Mobility
Recalling White’s (2012) input on looking at mobility and migration of rural young people as not always as permanent, and also as cyclical, part-lifetime migration, we can relate it to how Miguel perceives the city as the place to access education, and he is willing to go there but this does not
imply abandoning his interest for el campo. It is also portrayed by Esperanza. While living in the municipality where she was born and raised, she uses the neighboring municipality for opportunities such as access to a high school education, SENA technical education, selling her produce in organic markets, and relating to grassroots organizations based outside of her municipality. Her livelihood is constructed from a regional mobility and her recently acquired motorcycle facilitates these possibilities.

These are all different types of mobilities: transportation, migration, and social. What I want to highlight is how we can see mobility in routine activities (e.g. where one studies, where one works and where one lives), and although access to mobility is unquestioned by many, recall how the lack of transportation from the vereda to the town where the high school is located was a mobility constraint for Santiago and Miguel, and they dropped out of school partially because of this lack of basic mobility. In this sense, a motorcycle makes a difference as a mobility asset in el campo. This should not be the only answer to daily access to education in a society that cares for educating and should provide viable, context appropriate and permanent, reliable options for individuals and communities with these situations.

Mobility is also seen in migration dynamics, including the possibility of leaving el campo for the city, and the possibility of coming back again, or not. Again, this can seem as straightforward as going back to your parents’ home when you are unemployed. Except it can be risky when as a young male you are escaping the armed forces (national army, paramilitaries or guerrilla, all, or a mixture of two of these) that want to recruit you. Or if you already joined any of these forces, then the other forces present in the region might be after you. It might cost you your life to be seen hanging out in town or in the vereda. It can also be about seasonal migration, or educational opportunities. The aspiration of mobility for the peasantry youth, and the
possibility that they are entitled to it, does not seem very present in traditional agrarian studies, which tend to see out-migration (rural to urban, always) as definite in a lifetime and societies as a unitary bloc with the same needs and behavioral patterns. It is from other frameworks (e.g. livelihoods, aspirations, development studies) that the “privilege” to different sorts of mobilities seems possible for campesina/o youth. A focus on types of mobilities for rural youth can help expand the academic and policy debates about agrarian realities, perspectives and effective and assertive support for vulnerable populations such as these.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I presented a few cases of personal testimonies to show you campesina/o youth engaged with agrarian labor in their passing from childhood to adulthood. I highlighted issues that came up in their testimonies such as aspirations, constraints they have faced (e.g. forced armed labor), and unplanned situations such as parenthood. I aimed to present these portraits being attentive to gendered differences in the experiences. Some of the issues that came up in the interviews I also briefly presented as *livelihood assets* because some are intangible resources that may only be rendered visible in specific circumstances such as social relations and connections, or health. I propose to see mobility as an asset since it can facilitate the construction of livelihood options. I assume mobility with different interpretations such as everyday mobility (e.g. how to get to school and back home); regional mobility (e.g. living in el campo but studying or working in the closest urban area); and also cyclical mobility in the sense that you can access the city for studies or temporary work with the intention of reinvesting the assets acquired elsewhere back in el campo (e.g. in the family tree orchard, to buy a motorcycle, to pay for your sibling’s education). The personal examples found in this chapter aim to broaden the agrarian studies debate, adding to the conversation concepts from traditional agrarian studies such as labor from a Marxist perspective and the question of the peasantry in a capitalist economic system, along with
gendered approaches and more recent academic regards from development studies and
geography, including the discussion of livelihoods.

There are other issues that are reflected in indirect ways in this chapter. The fact that
more men than women were interviewed is open for diverse interpretations. For instance, there
are two interviews which would have been a contrast to the ones shown here and would have
offered a good discussion of out-migration —the sisters of the male siblings Santiago, Miguel
and Juanito. From conversations with the families, I have learned that the sisters in at least two
families have settled in Bogotá. They are married, have children and only come to visit the
family on a few special occasions. This hints at how el campo is a gendered possibility and how
the mobility and out-migration discussion should also be viewed through a gendered lens. This
takes us back to the discussion presented in the introduction of this dissertation, recalling
population tendencies portrayed by DANE statistics about resident producers. There are
considerably fewer women counted as resident producers from the way the population surveys
were organized. A question that arises is how this figure could be different if those that consider
themselves campesinas and campesinos were the ones that established how to be counted. This
will be further discussed in part two of this dissertation in chapter three Making ‘lo campesino’
Count: Campesinado as a Political Subject and Bearer of Rights. The discussions there will help
approach questions that arise from the perspectives shown here: Is one a campesina/o if one
labors temporarily in the military but wants to invest in family agricultural production and in
keeping the family’s land? Do the labor relations in a capitalist economy change one’s
perception and identity of belonging to el campo? And if so, what does this mean when we say
labor relations are gendered? Part one of this dissertation approached these questions with the
categories of analysis of socio-economic class based on labor relations, gender relations in a
particular cultural context, and generational dynamics and the personal perspectives of campesina/o youth who described their campesina/o livelihoods in the making based on their personal histories. The people interviewed had in common an appreciation for life in el campo. They find diverse values in it and are willing to continue with a livelihood linked to small-scale agrarian production. They also mention the constraints they face and the assets they have and use. The next part presents other perspectives for approaching the research questions:

- *In what ways is campesina/o identity and subject formation mobilized by young campesina/os in search of viable agrarian livelihood options?*

- *How do age/generation and gender intersect in the construction and mobilization of campesina/o livelihood possibilities?*

Part two introduces the concepts of identity and subjectivity as they are initially conceptualized in feminist theory and further used in feminist geography and political ecology. These broad concepts lead to the notion of identity formation and the concept of performativity, which have been used by feminist geographers to explain how people perform identities. This is a suitable conceptual base to then explore different angles of young campesina/o identity formation through the cases presented in the consecutive chapters of part two. The first case, chapter four *Tutela*, presents the legal protection instrument presented by a group of campesina/os and their organizations to the Colombian state arguing for visibility as a political subject and their explicit inclusion in the 2018 Census with questions that can identify the campesina/o population and their needs. Chapter five presents how campesinas and rural women portray themselves through some of their organizations, how they are portrayed institutionally and the dialogues and encounters among them, analyzing how this has also shaped campesina subjectivity and its portrayal in rural and agrarian policies. Chapter six exposes rural youth in relation to economic
and political subjectivities exploring their shaping through different political and economic tendencies. Chapter seven explores the formation of environmental and peace-building subjectivities in rural youth through different institutional, organizational and educational experiences. Overall, part two of this dissertation presents more recent academic approaches to analyze the fate of the peasantry under current neoliberal scenarios, that is, gendering and greening the agrarian question.
Part Two

As I write this chapter, the Minga y Campesina has ended a 20 day blockage of the Pan-American Highway in the department of Cauca. The blockage was a manifestation of rejection of the erasures and ignorance of the new national government headed by president Iván Duque, in relation to indigenous and campesino matters. The Minga called for the presence of the president in Cauca meeting with them to stop the blockage and the president called for the stopping of the blockage of the highway before he would go to the site in Cauca. In the meantime he sent high level representatives of government such as the ministers of Interior and Agriculture to represent the government in the dialogues. After 20 days, the blockage of the highway stopped due to the decision of the indigenous organizations, and the president was set to go to the town of Caldono in Cauca to meet with the mingueros. The morning he was arriving to Caldono, the general prosecutor said in the news that there were rumors of an attack to the president. The president arrived to Caldono and arguing security reasons said he would wait for the representatives in the Culture and Recreation House of Caldono. In the meantime, the mingueros –composed of indigenous and campesino people of all ages– were waiting for him in the central plaza of Caldono to have an open dialogue, just 200 meters from the Culture and Recreation House. Neither ceded and the President left without meeting with the mingueros. Some days later –now in permanent assembly– the Minga, which unites and represents indigenous and campesino organizations, petitions for the following five central axis for discussion with the national government. 1) Recognition of the campesinado as a subject of rights; 2) the inclusion of the campesino chapter in the National Development Plan of the four year term national government; 3) revision by the government of the reasons for it not-signing of the Universal Declaration of Peasant Rights approved by United Nations; 4) security guarantees for social leaders; and 5) respect and promotion of peasant territories.

For the National Development Plan –already in process in Congress– the mingueros had already presented since October 2018 (this is April 2019) the campesino chapter which proposes eight strategic lines including: access and formalization of land rights; rights for la mujer campesina (the peasant woman); strengthening of the peasant economy; climate change, environment and campesinado; and issues related to the crops of coca, marihuana and poppy. To date, the campesino chapter named “Pact for Rural Equity and the Welfare of the Campesino Population” has not been included in the National Development Plan which organizes state budget in different levels (from municipal, to ministerial) for the four-year presidential term 2018-2022.

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34 Minga is an indigenous and campesino way of communal work where everyone works towards a goal set collectively or asked particularly by an individual, family or community that all who wish to support offer their labor. Everyone offers their labor in exchange to food and beverage for this common goal. Mingueros are those working collectively in the minga.

35 https://colombia2020.elespectador.com/pais/los-reclamos-de-los-campesinos-que-tambien-estan-en-la-minga
Chapter Three: Theoretical Paths.

Finding One’s Paths.

Situating the Concepts

In part one of this dissertation I began with an agrarian studies theoretical perspective based on Marxist theory to examine of the possibilities of the young peasantry’s (*campesinado*) to establish an agrarian livelihood in their adulthood being immersed in a capitalist economy. Part one evolved in its second chapter to the question of individual agency of the *campesina/os* to shape their agrarian livelihood possibilities based on empirical material from interviews with young campesina/os. In part two, I expand the question of agrarian livelihoods with first hand personal testimonies and institutional perspectives, exploring how identity and subject formation influence the livelihoods-in-the-making of young campesina/os. The theoretical reflections presented in this chapter are the conceptual basis to analyze the cases of the following chapters. I approach this research question initially from gendered and generational experiences but I also add issues of the historical juncture. Chapter four (*Tutela*), presents the legal protection instrument presented by a group of campesina/os and their organizations to the Colombian state. They claim visibility as a political subject (*el campesinado*/*the peasantry*) arguing for an explicit inclusion in the 2018 Census with questions that can identify the campesina/o population and their needs. Chapter five (*Claiming Political Space as Women*) presents how campesinas and rural women are portrayed by themselves through some of their organizations, how they are portrayed institutionally, and the dialogues and encounters with the Colombian state and development agencies, analyzing how this relation shapes campesina subjectivity and its portrayal in rural and agrarian policies. Also an emerging *Feminismo Campesino y Popular* (FCP, Campesina and Popular Feminism) which also provides new elements of identity and
agency. Chapter six (Youth) exposes rural youth in relation to economic and political subjectivities exploring their shaping through different political and economic tendencies as well as through development agencies. Chapter seven (Environmental and Peace-building subjectivities) explores how these themes are becoming relevant issues of Colombian agrarian livelihoods for youth and become part of campesina/o subject formation. I offer regards of environmental and peace-building subjectivities in rural youth through different institutional, organizational and agroecology schooling experiences.

Concepts here are to be understood as lenses to see something. The frame that supports those lenses are the schools of thought and theories that also facilitate their use for the development of ideas and interpretations of case studies. In this chapter and throughout its sections I show how the concepts of identity and subjectivity—and their derivative concepts (identity formation, subject formation, performativity, agency)—are useful and relevant to advance in agrarian, environmental and peasant studies, as well as in analysis of how neoliberalism is present in youth mentalities and in the ways their lives unfold or how they understand their choices and decisions. Specifically for this research in looking at how they help to understand the possibilities of campesina/o youth in developing agrarian livelihoods. I present these concepts from their origin in critical theory and cultural studies, which I only seek to unravel to the point where it is still a philosophical dissertation for a geography audience and not for a philosophy department. I begin with Elements for Positionality using feminist theory to explain my interest and location in relation to this research. I draw from Third-World feminisms, theories of development and feminist geographies. This continues with Theorizing Identity and Subjectivity with a broad and abstract presentation of the main concepts through which I will look at my cases. Judith Butler—and the cases she presents of Maruyama and Arendt—and Stuart
Hall are as far back as I go in the wider schools of thought of feminist and cultural theory. They are my starting point to the concepts of “identity”, “subjectivity”, “performativity” and “agency”, as well as its derivatives: “identity politics”, “subject formation”, and “performative agency”. Then I introduce critical discussions of these main concepts as presented by Kimberlé Crenshaw in her development of “intersectionality” and “intersectional identities,” which will be concepts revisited and used throughout the chapters to understand what young campesinas/os face. In *Situating Identity, Subjectivity and Performativity in Feminist Geography* I proceed to scale down to how anglophone geographers – and more specifically feminist anglophone geographers – have used the concepts mentioned above. Place and location as the main concerns for geographers are crucial to pass from an abstract subject to a situated subject where the constructs of identities and subjectivities are grounded through the specific location circumstances of the individuals. In this sense, the work of Nelson (1999), the influence of Scott (1998) in geography, Sundberg (2004) with “identities-in-the-making, and Sultana’s (2009) “embodied subjectivities”, are some of the examples of how the concepts are used in contemporary anglophone feminist geography. This continues with a closer use of these concepts to my work with *Intersectionality and Identity Politics in Feminist Geography, Political Ecology and Environmentalism* where I present how the work of Agrawal (2005) on “environmentality”, Valentine (2007) on how individuals accomplish identities, and Lau and Scales (2016) with “fluid subjectivities” to observe how multiple aspects of identity shape resource use, and how external categories are taken by individuals and groups and turned into lived choices. This takes me to *Environmental Subjectivities in Contemporary Colombian Social Science* where I situate my research and expose the current academic developments of this theme. I begin with Ulloa’s (2004) “ecological native” to show the institutional narratives about the relations between ethnicity and
environment. The work of Bocarejo (2009), Ojeda (2012), Ojeda and Guilland (2013), Bocarejo (2014), Del Cairo and Montenegro-Perini (2015), Camargo and Ojeda (2017) and Ojeda and Gonzalez (2018) are the main works where I identify developing and evolving arguments and observations based on the specific developments in Colombia of environmental issues, politics, economic influences and cultural aspects where my research is also situated. Together, the sections of this chapter are the starting points or road maps of the conceptual developments of part two.

**Elements for Positionality**

During this research, the writing of this dissertation –and in particular the writing of this chapter– I have questioned my positionality as an external researcher who does not identify herself as campesina but aims to study those who identify with that label in a particular context. The question keeps coming of *who am I to talk about campesinado? Why do I assume and present this discussion if I am not a campesina, and no longer young in the terms I use in this work? With what moral right or claim can I inquire about someone else’s identity?* I also ask myself as a researcher, *how am I being read by my interviewees and how is this influencing what they answer, what they perform and how is this influencing the ways I analyze and shape the results of this research? What or who gives me a legitimacy to refer to those [others] who identify themselves as campesina/os?*

The philosophical, ethical problem can be traced back in feminist theory and cultural studies to Gayatri Spivak (1996) with *Can the Subaltern Speak?* This question can be framed as a poststructuralist exercise of deconstructing schools of thought, “truths”, concepts, discourses and one’s own intellectual standings. Being aware and unlearning from one’s privilege and how one as a researcher goes about constructing “the other” as one’s subjects of study is a crucial
issue in many strands of social sciences and humanities. Her discussions are difficult to summarize but are a useful call to “active thinking”, being vigilant about fundamentalisms one can fall into, such as referring to women in general, or feminism in general, or campesinos in general in my case. She suggests “[d]efinitions are necessary in order to keep us going, to allow us to take a stand” and “they are useful in provisional and polemical ways” (54). In this sense she sets the example “I construct my definition as a woman not in terms of a woman’s putative essence but in terms of words currently in use” (54). Spivak also presents the concept of “strategic essentialism” and how it has a “strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest” (1996, 204). Feminist geographer Jennifer Hyndman (2004) offers a more practical way of understanding this concept. It refers to how strategic essentialism can be useful and engaging in transforming the prevailing discourse by making normative political commitments in crucial junctures. For Hyndman, this is about political strategies and locations to address material and epistemological violences. I understand these violences in my case studies as the structural discriminations and stigmatizations that campesina/o communities have endured in Colombia and that are presented and discussed throughout this dissertation.

Linda Alcoff’s philosophical reflection about The Problem Of Speaking For Others (1991) differentiates two ways of looking at the problem about speaking for others and speaking about others. In speaking about, there is a crisis of representation or –as the author says in post-structuralist terms– “I am participating in the construction of their subject positions” (9). She

36 Being professionally related to the natural sciences in my training as an ecologist, I dare say that the natural sciences and hard sciences are yet to explore this psychoanalytic and political perspectives of themselves as researchers, scientists, policy makers, and development workers and practitioners. The results of trans and interdisciplinarity from the natural scientists would be different –and hopefully more aware of their impacts– if they worked on their positionality in their research questions, research design and in the ways they do fieldwork.
situates discursive contexts as political arenas where the active responsibility of speaking for others will have different impacts depending on the discursive context. Alcoff agrees with Spivak’s *Can the Subaltern Speak?* where “speaking to” is preferred on the grounds of neither abnegating the discursive role of the intellectual nor presuming authenticity of the oppressed but allowing the possibility of “countersentence” that can generate new historical narratives (23). She suggests a set of interrogatory practices to evaluate the possible and actual instances of speaking for. The first practice is to analyze the impetus to speak when one is in the privileged position of retreating or choosing to speak. The second practice is to interrogate our location and context before speaking. These two practices, I understand as an active exercise one can be aware of during a research interview. It can be part of how you as a researcher perform in the field. Listening, posing accurate questions, not jumping to conclusions during the dialogue established in the field. The third practice is about “accountability and responsibility for what one says. To whom one is accountable is a political/epistemological choice” (25). The choice I make related to this is clarified in the introduction when I explain why I am not only using pseudonyms but also avoiding municipalities and organizational names in this dissertation. Many campesina/o leaders are being killed while I write this dissertation after the signing of the peace agreements. My accountability right now lies in protecting their identities and locations. The fourth practice is to analyze the probable or actual effects of the words, that is to “reconceptualize discourse” as an effect (26). For me, all these practices also relate to accepting that some interviews will not be accessible, others cannot be recorded, and things that were told to you or observed in the field should not be written. They are all active decisions with different timings and often with immeasurable consequences.
Drawing from Third World Feminism, Chandra Mohanty (2003) warns about the textual strategies used by white feminists and by middle-class women scholars from Third World countries “who write about their rural or working-class sisters and assume their own middle-class cultures at the norm and codify working class histories and cultures as other” (2003, 18).

Marnia Lazreg (in Saunders ed. 2004, 127) similarly refers to how seeking to expose Third World women voices evinces a desire for power, a ‘will to power’, the power to carve out spaces for others, convene them to talk about themselves under the fiction of a polyphony and multiple-authorships which are meant to aid local women to acquire ‘voice’. [the] desire to frame these women’s ‘discourse’ and their advocacy of the use of life histories as ethnographies reflect their interest in women as a field and an object of study.

Lazreg states that “postmodern feminist development eschews the linkage between power, desire and interest.” (2004, 127) and that there is no neat way out of this. She condemns “post” (-modern, -structuralist, -development) feminisms for seeking a theoretical elimination of difference which did not seem to be their objective. “Seeking refuge in subjectivism by proxy can be very appealing. But, as with all subjectivism, reaching the ‘real’ Third World woman might be an ever-receding illusion.” (2004, 142) Reading this, am I a Third World Woman or not? As a researcher, Lazreg sounds like an assertive scold, implying my research is futile if I enter the paths of poststructuralism with its subjectivity and identity discussions. As a woman from a Third World underdeveloped nation, her reflection is nicely written but gives no assertive paths where the political problems of underrepresentation and discrimination are clearly visible in socio-economic realities and one seeks to participate in naming them, hoping to participate in changing them. I acknowledge Lazreg’s critique as a never-ending dilemma between theory and practice, and my position in relation to her arguments are explained below, drawing from more authors who shape this conversation about the researcher, her role and impacts.
From anthropology, Sonia Ryang (2005) offers an important perspective of the dilemmas for people like me coming from the Global South and writing in another language for academia in the Global North. Drawing from Abu-Lughod’s concept of the “halfie” which refers to those whose cultural identity is mixed by migration, overseas education or parentage, she proposes looking at location, authenticity and reflexivity in relation to the uneven distributions of power (among scholars, with institutions, in the field). She suggest that “the issue of intersubjectivity … permeates an ethnographer’s lifelong career” (2005, 144). She exposes how one will always have to deal with publicity, plausibility and legitimacy, and how

Given that the modern self is constantly deconstructed and reconstituted, the fieldworker’s learning about her self is a process constantly marked by the shift of positionality and adjustment to different configurations of the situatedness… the ethnographer faces a choice: whether to place herself and the story about her transformation central to her text or not. And, it is a choice that has political and moral implications. (Ryang 2005, 153)

I do not assume straightforward answers to the questions I pose, since this would fall first, under Spivak’s first call of attention of not seeking absolute truths; and second, on Lazreg’s (2004, 141) ridicule of how I am molding, bartering, and auctioning – myself and my research subjects’– consciousness, subjectivity and identity in the name of “post”(s). There is no way out. So in the meantime I go back to when these inquires became relevant for me as a researcher. I found them through feminist studies and feminist geography. Concepts such as “dynamism of positionalities” and “positional spaces” (Mullings 1999, 340, 341), or “self-critical partnerships”, “reciprocity in collaboration”, “collaborative research” and “knowledge across borders” (Benson and Nagar 2006, 584, 581, 584) shed light on what these questions are about and in guiding a way of how they can be productive and useful, not only for me as a research result, but for others in unexpected ways. In the North American academic context I am a Third World woman being mestiza and Colombian. In Colombia where I do research, I am read
differently. I am an urban woman, a researcher, surely other things too. *How do these differences in how I am read, affect what I produce, and for whom I produce research?*

And what does mestiza mean? It means different things depending on the ontological point of view. I take refuge in Anzaldúa’s (1999) explanation of what it implies for me:

*To live in the Borderlands means you [Title]*  
Are neither *hispana india negra española*  
*ni gabacha, eres mestiza, mulata,* half-breed  
caught in the crossfire between camps  
while carrying all five races on your back  
not knowing which side to turn to, run from (216)

*La mestiza* constantly has to shift out of habitual formations; from convergent thinking, analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move toward a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking, characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals and toward a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes. (101)

Reciprocity and collaboration are not easily measured, if measured at all. They are subjective ways of giving meaning and adding efforts. Throughout this chapter and dissertation I will mention reflections that relate to these *what* and *how.* In the meantime, I also mention *why(s)* proposed by feminist geographers such as “reflexivity” about one’s position vis-à-vis the research and about the false assumption that being an insider or outsider is a fixed position or attribute (Mullings 1999). This means that even though I have not experienced the life of a *campesina,* there are other life experiences where I can relate to them. For example as a woman, as a Colombian, with a political position, generationally, or historically. “To frame research as unbiased observation is to ignore how power relations are embedded in the very interpretative categories that form the bases of research questions” (Sundberg 2003, 180). As a starting point, I am aware that observation is biased when I ask how I am being read by my interviewees and how I analyze what I interpret of them. I am also aware there are power relations due to factors such as my middle-class origin where I have the privileges of education, mobility, more
economic stability—or at least less vulnerability—due to this classed factor which is so marked in societies like Colombia. The question which exceeds this research is: how do I use these privileges in ways that are not only useful for me? Who can—or should—write whose story? or “what kinds of struggles should research/theory enable?” (Benson & Nagar 2006, 583). This takes me back to the introduction of this dissertation.

When I met Jaime Jara and read his autobiographical notebooks, I was sixteen years old. When I was able to help make possible the publication of his autobiography as a book (Jara, 2017), I was thirty-six. Jara’s autobiography is about a campesino boy who lived in the Sumapaz region through the times of political persecution, armed conflict and violence of the 1950s. This story was publishable more than half a century later, in a new time of hope around the resolution of the same armed conflict and evolvement of the violence he described. Jara was killed by the same armed conflict that he had always been a victim to. What this story means more than 50 years later, to whom, for what ends, and what it can help transform or accomplish is an immeasurable task. This is what I mean when I question collaboration and accountability as a researcher as something tangible that one can easily claim and name.

Sometimes a story is like a seed. By being written or told it gets dispersed. It can be forgotten, suspended in time as a seed can lay dormant, or be pushed by the wind or water. Where it will end up germinating and growing depends on many variables, often intangible or hard to follow. As I write I will just say to conclude this section, that I am letting a seed be taken by the wind. A seed of intention, of observation, and of careful handling. I am deciding who to protect and in what ways with the information they shared with me, and I am deciding what to show and how to say it, hoping it has positive echoes as a seed of collaboration. In the phase of writing this dissertation, I have not been in close contact with the organizations and interviewees.
It is a time of focusing on finishing this phase and graduating and sustaining a livelihood for my daughter. There is a sense of guilt of not been an active collaborator, but there is also a reflection on what collaborating means, who can do it, who has the time, resources, funding and mobility to do it, who is welcome to do it and for what purposes. Perhaps it is also a reflection about willingness or possibilities as privilege. I will resume these reflections in other sections and chapters. Finally, the PhD dissertations of Diana Gómez Correal (2015) and Carolina Arango Vargas (2018) –both situated in feminist anthropology– have been very inspiring and reassuring in exposing their positionalities, personal and ethical conflicts, loyalties, and doing fieldwork in contemporary Colombia amid the tensions and uncertainties of armed conflict and with people who have suffered the impacts of the forms of Colombian violence. Reading about their positionalities and inter-subjectivities reassured me of how doing field work in Colombia is emotionally demanding and how the violence that still prevails is also part of what we decide to research and write.

In my case, the readings of my identity from the people I interviewed were not racial, since we are all mestizos. Rather, due to our Colombian ontology fed by the political violence we have experienced, I dare say we all (interviewers and interviewees) read each other politically. Can this person be an infiltrator? Of what group (e.g. guerrillas, paramilitaries, armed forces, police, security agencies – Public Prosecutor)? How we interpret a person politically might result in what information and in what ways we provide it. ‘What is at stake with what I say, and how can this put me in personal, family, organization or community danger?’ I suggest

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37 If you want to add colorism to this statement, the people I interviewed as campesina/os or of rural origin are often lighter skinned than me. Many Colombian Andean peasants are light skinned and pale eyed. I am darker in my skin, eyes and hair complexion. For racial-color imaginaries, I am more mestiza, they are whiter.
we as Colombians do this calculation, particularly in certain regions with a recent history of armed conflict and for certain topics which have been historically subject to political persecution.

Inevitably, this positionality section introduces in an implicit way the concepts that I will use throughout this part of the dissertation: subjectivity, identity, identity politics, performativity and agency. The next section will frame how I understand these concepts from the schools of thought that have shaped the lenses I apply to my case studies (the subsequent chapters of this part two). Although conversations are entangled along time and disciplines, I present them from the wider schools of continental philosophy, to their uses and advancements through cases in feminist geography, political ecology and finally with examples of recent research in Colombia.

**Theorizing Identity and Subjectivity**

I began this dissertation partially based on agrarian studies influenced by Marxist theory. I then introduced development theory discussions based on the notion of livelihoods. Therefore it seems epistemologically dangerous to now introduce a theoretical background for *identity* and *subjectivity* influenced by postmodern and poststructuralist theorizations. Of the philosophic frameworks that have worked on identity and subjectivity, I choose a feminist theory path which has influenced feminist geography, political ecology, its subfield feminist political ecology (FPE) and feminist environmentalism where I situate my work. I aim to contribute to how geographers solve and use these theoretical discussions in dialectical ways of putting in conversation different theories. The objective of this section is to present how the conceptualizations of identity and subjectivity serve to understand how a population with common situations and histories, seeks to portray an internal cohesion and relate with different protagonists to achieve social, political, cultural visibility and support in a nation known for its
violent history and discrimination. In the case of the campesinado it is about relating with state agencies (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture), public policy (e.g. being statistically visible for DANE; Law 730 on Rural Women; policies for youth), NGOs, research institutions, international cooperation, social media – among others. Through these relations, identities and subjectivities – both individual and collective – are transformed, constructed, negotiated, reemerged, portrayed in different ways, in different spaces and for different purposes. This section provides a conceptual base to observe these dynamics throughout the following chapters.

I take as a starting point the contributions in the form of questions posed by philosophers Judith Butler and Joan W. Scott (1992, xiii) about “What are the political implications of using ‘theory’ for feminist analysis… Is ‘theory’ distinct from politics? Is ‘theory’ an insidious form of politics?” I consider my research questions as political ones in the sense that the struggles by organized campesina/o populations are constantly seeking political recognition in relation to their human rights, land rights, economic possibilities and political participation and visibility in diverse spaces which constitute the State. They are also feminist because feminism is attentive to social discriminations and inequalities. I choose to emphasize and render visible cases of gendered and generational discriminations in an agrarian, rural or campesino context. I consider these inequalities need to be named in an already marginal population such as the Colombian campesinado. The authors introduce feminist theory questions such as “what political possibilities does a critique of identity categories make possible?” (Butler and Scott 1992, xiv) They offer theoretically guided questions where the following one is particularly relevant for this study:

6. What are the political implications of prevalent epistemological paradigms within contemporary feminist theory (i.e. standpoint epistemologies, ‘situated knowledges’, and identity politics)? How can ‘color’, ‘ethnicity’, ‘gender’, and ‘class’ be read as more than attributes that must be added to a subject in order to complete its description? To what
extent does the theorization of the subject and its epistemic postures through the categories of race, postcolonialism, gender, class compel a full critique of identity politics and/or the situated or encumbered subject? (1992, xv)

I interpret Butler’s text suggesting that although categories cannot not fully compel identity politics, they are useful for political implications if they manage to be read as more than attributes to complete a description. In this sense, I add age/generation as a category that should be included in the question of completing a description of the subject to its already racialized, gendered, and classed experience. However, this inclusion will never fully complete a description of an identity since there are also the notions of fluidity, location/standpoint, identities-in-the-making, the negotiations, which will be explored further on in the chapters of this part two.

Another question posed by Butler and Scott asks: “Who qualifies as a ‘subject’ of history, a ‘claimant’ before the law, a ‘citizen’?” (1992, xiv). These inquiries resonate with what will be seen in the next chapter posed by the legal protection that asks why the campesinado is not “counted” as a subject of history, a specific claimant before the law.

The authors are also attentive to inquiring who the subject is (theoretically in Western philosophy) and who it includes or excludes. Drawing on other feminist theorists, they state:

[I]f Irigaray is right that ‘the subject is already masculine,’ is it not also true that ‘the subject is always already white? How do universal theories of ‘patriarchy’ or phallogocentrism need to be rethought in order to avoid the consequences of a white-feminist epistemological/cultural imperialism? (Butler and Scott 1992, xv)

I transpose this highly relevant reflection of “the subject already being masculine” to question how in agrarian studies traditionally, the peasant was already male. I situate the question even more specifically for the case of the Colombian campesina/o. Was the campesino subject already a male, middle aged, able bodied, heterosexual (already married), and whitish (for Colombian racial standards and imaginaries)? I do not extensively explore the iconography of the campesino
to prove this, but the question is valid in the chapter where I show how campesina women claim their historical invisibility within the already invisible campesino population. This is also a theme treated in current Colombian research on agrarian subjectivities (Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018).

This leads to situating the theoretical question of the male subject even further for this study. If the campesino was already an “other” in terms of its invisibility and marginality as part of society –and could only be male– (because all subjects were already male according to this thread of feminist theory), then when and to what extent, is the still more marginal otherness of the campesina/o population (e.g. female, young, indigenous, Afro, single, sexually diverse, disabled) becoming part of the current campesina/o identity? Who brings these new identities and what do they mobilize? How are these more inclusive and ample campesina/o identities negotiated in different spaces? These questions are also developed in the following chapters.

Also, recalling “in order to avoid the consequences of a white-feminist epistemological/cultural imperialism” is an important reflection to consider when analyzing “Campesina and Popular Feminism” (CPF/FCP in Spanish) in the chapter about campesinas and rural women. To what extent is this term and its discourse influenced by a white feminism, or a white development scheme? We can also change “white” to “Global North” label. What does this imply and for whom? Who does it benefit? How does FCP challenge, disrupt, contest, encounter white/Western feminisms? Or does it only comply to those normative feminisms? These questions will be approached in that chapter and also call for a more precise definition and situatedness of identity politics in this study.

Emerging from legal scholarship, Kimberle Crenshaw (1991) offers an important concept that has transcended in social sciences and feminist scholarship. She states that “identity-based
politics has been a source of strength, community, and intellectual development” when seeking to speak out and denounce “a broad-scale system of domination that affects women as a class” (1241-1242). Contesting that identity categories are merely vestiges of bias or domination… intrinsically negative frameworks in which social power works to exclude or marginalize those who are different [she argues that]… in certain strands of feminist and racial liberation movements… is the view that the social power in delineating difference need not be the power of domination; it can instead be the source of social empowerment and reconstruction.

The problem with identity politics is not that it fails to transcend difference, as some critics charge, but rather the opposite – that it frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences. In the context of violence against women, this elision of difference in identity politics is problematic, fundamentally because the violence that many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such as race and class. Moreover, ignoring difference within groups contributes to tension among groups, another problem of identity politics that bears on efforts to politicize violence against women. (1242).

For Crenshaw, exploring racial and gender dimensions of violence against women of color, and rendering visible the “intersectional identities” of women of color evidence how these violences are intersecting patterns of racism and sexism (1243). The focus on intersections serve to highlight “the need to account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed.” (1245) “[W]hen one discourse [e.g. feminism, or class-oppression] fails to acknowledge the significance of the other, the power relations that each attempts to challenge are strengthened.” (1282) She suggests the term “representational intersectionality” to expose subordinations that are mutually reinforcing – in her case studies race and gender – “and that a political response to each form of subordination must at the same time be a political response to both” (1283). Crenshaw’s work is particularly relevant for this study because I also explore intersections of class, gender and age. Of course I am not implying that they are the only identity markers to approach, but rather limiting my data and sources to their analysis. Other identity categories that I do not explore are for example race and ability. The relevance of Crenshaw’s
work will come across again in the specific cases where I explore intersections such as gender and class with the campesina identity and the Campesina and Popular Feminism, or with the intersections of age, gender and class in the cases of campesino youth.

In Stuart Hall’s *Who Needs ‘Identity’?* (1996) he situates the emergence of the contemporary question of subjectivity “and its unconscious processes of formation … developed within the discourse of a psychoanalytically influenced feminism and cultural criticism” (1). In responding to the question “who needs identity?” he signals two paths. The first one is the deconstructive approach. It is about putting key concepts “under erasure”. A deconstructive approach does not seek a truth in the concept, just to acknowledge that they no longer operate “within the paradigm in which they were originally generated” but no other concept has emerged to replace them, therefore “there is nothing to do but continue to think with them” (1). He places identity “operating ‘under erasure’ in the interval between reversal and emergence; an idea which cannot be thought in the old way, but without which certain key questions cannot be thought at all.” (2). This links to and supports Butler’s and Spivak’s analysis within postmodernity and poststructuralism in not seeking absolute truths, unquestionable structures but situating concepts historically, personally, subjectively (as opposed to objectively). The second path is based on identifying that the concept “identity” emerges from a set of problems central to the questions of agency and politics (Hall 1996, 2). He relates politics to

> the significance in modern forms of political movement of the signifier ‘identity’, its pivotal relationship to a politics of location – but also the manifest difficulties and instabilities which have characteristically affected all forms of ‘identity politics’ (2).

> “Agency” he situates in the reconceptualization of the subject “thinking it in its new, displaced or decentered position within the paradigm… in the attempt to rearticulate the relationship between subjects and discursive practices” (2). This reflection serves for the case of the
campesinado/peasantry, where in many scenarios it is taken as an obsolete term, a paradigm valid for a pre-capitalist scenario where they used to exist but where in a capitalist scenario would turn to something else: agrarian laborers, small-capitalist farmers, or collective farmers. To seek an identity as campesino/a in a contemporary political scenario of the early 21st century is related to the manifest difficulties and instabilities which have characteristically affected forms of identity politics. In the following chapter, I show the arguments of the legal protection for the campesinado, and expose a case of why identity politics are relevant in these contemporary political scenarios and how performative agency is also a useful concept to understand its relevance and possibilities of incidence.

Butler’s analysis of “performative agency” (2010) on the performativity of gender gives us a parallel to the performativity of other identities, such as campesina/o in this study.

If we say, for instance, that gender is performatively constituted, then we call into question whether there is a stable gender in place and intact prior to the expressions and activities that we understand as gendered expressions and activities. The presumption that gender is a metaphysical substance that precedes its expression is critically upended by the performative theory of gender. (147)

Similarly, I make the case for identity politics of other identity markers, where it is not necessarily about gender, but where we can question a stable state of being, a stable identity with its corresponding expressions and activities. Thinking of the “campesina/o identity”, what would be those pure, essential, universal campesina/o attributes? Do they even exist without a place and historic relation? This line of thought of questioning performativity and “[t]he theme of performativity and politics” (147), Butler continues explaining that performativity seeks to: 1) question “already delimited understandings of what gender, state, or the economy are” –or in this case of what the peasantry is, or its culturally constructed category–; 2) “to counter a certain metaphysical presumption about culturally constructed categories and to draw our attention to
the diverse mechanisms of that construction”; 3) “performativity starts to describe a set of processes that produce ontological effects, that is, that work to bring into being certain kinds of realities” (2010, 147). Taking this into consideration, what is it in the ways of being, what sorts of daily and social processes produce the ontological effect of identifying or being identified as campesina/o? 4) what leads “to certain kinds of socially binding consequences”, and what does it seek? Again, in what cases, in what scenarios, can we consider there is a socially binding effect of identifying and being identified as campesina/o? This is precisely what the following chapters propose with examples of how these questions on performativity and identity can be analyzed.

Butler (2010, 148) also identifies discursive and non-discursive practices that reconstitute the idea of a particular subject. She takes the case of the market questioning it “as an existing and autonomous reality” with the codification and ritualization elements of that discourse and the institutions that make a subject possible. For Butler, it is the repeated and sometimes errant processes that constitute the market as existing in its autonomy… how we describe the field has something to do with how the field finally looks and what we take it to be. …we have a set of processes that work to fortify that very assumption [a methodological assumption], but also to call into question its pre-given ontological status as well as the supposition that it operates by casual necessity.

Butler takes the case of Polanyi’s work38 when going on to analyze how the economy is made to appear as an autonomous system, disembedded from its broader relations in social structures. To understand how the “structures of social meaning and authority” changed and how the “autonomy effect” happened creating a conception of “the economy” as a separate entity, she argues that the relation between the processes of reiteration, re-establishment and sedimentation are key in the autonomation effect “in order to sort out the paradox of a process that achieves its effects in both regenerative and accumulative ways”. “[R]eiteration is the means through which

that effect is established anew, time and again.” (149). Can this argument be used to explain how social categories are created, defined, identified, and then used internally—by those who identify as—or externally by those who use the category discursively? Can we translocate the previous example used by Butler of the market, to the idea of the subject of the peasantry? Are the reiteration of campesino discourses, the re-establishment through active presence in particular spaces, ways through which campesino performativity is enacted and sedimented in social imaginaries of what campesina/o is? The next chapters expose and argue this possibility with the wording used in documents such as laws and the extracts of institutional interviews as examples of how institutions (e.g. state agencies, peasant organizations, development aid projects, technical aid corporations and agencies) use the labels campesinado/peasantry/rural population or other related social categorization (e.g. rural youth, campesina) as part of their nature and institutional objective. “[H]ow we describe the field has something to do with how the field finally looks and what we take it to be”. Taking all this into consideration, all the set of protagonists mentioned, plus the imagery promoted in social media, and the individuals who use these labels use the term, are contributing to the processes of reiteration, re-establishment and sedimentation of the performativity of what peasantry is understood to be.

In the second part of her *Performative Agency* essay, Butler (2010, 154) asks “how performativity works within theories that are explicitly political, but which tend to define the politic in separation from the economic sphere.” She chooses cases from Maruyama and Arendt to show this. It is highly relevant for the context of my study that the cases chosen by Butler correspond to post-fascist scenarios since the context of the peace agreements between the Colombian State and the FARC guerilla when I do my research hopes to change decades of a right-wing led political handling of the mediatic portrayal of the guerrilla. I bring this analysis
here because the campesinado claims agency in both the political and economic spheres and is emerging in this new historical context also as a peace-builder subject as will be seen in the last chapter of this part two, *Environmental and peace-building subjectivities.*

Butler uses the work of Masao Maruyama introducing him as one of the most important postwar Japanese political thinkers, critic of fascist Japan and worried with a conformism that led to an acceptance of unjust public and state policy (2010). For Butler, “Maruyama was interested in the cultivation of critical individuals” and his theory of the subject is based on an ethics of doing where the subject who takes on the responsibility for building a future must become capable of translation and invention which are ways of performative agency, seeking

> [H]ow a social form for the subject might emerge that would be capable not only of apprehending the war, its causes as well as its devastating losses, but of struggling for a democratic political form in the aftermath of war. … to assume responsibility for a future. , (154-155)

Other more specific questions arise that are also sensible for the Colombian context portrayed in this dissertation. Derived from that general ethical question, other questions identified by Butler in Maruyama’s work are:

- *How does a subject (struggling for a democratic political form) emerge capable of democratic evaluation and deliberation?*

- *“How does a new subject emerge, contingently, that is, non-deterministically, from the ravages of war?”* (155)

These questions inspire us to think about the post-conflict emergence of new subjectivities which as I mentioned earlier will be treated in the last chapter of this part two. In Colombia, since the 1950s campesinos were often portrayed by the State as *bandoleros* (bandits), later associated with “terrorists” when the governmental discourse of the early 2000s –following the “War On Terrorism” rhetoric from the USA– which portrayed the guerrillas as terrorists and implied that
many campesinos where either guerrilleros or their allies, generating a stigmatizing signaling of this population, and a polarized view of politics. The time of the peace agreements between the government led by Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018) and the FARC guerrilla is when most of this research is developed and invites to relate Maruyama’s questions to ask how new campesina/o subjectivities emerge, denouncing how the armed conflict affected them; naming their struggles in a national panorama that is no longer able to have as its main media and budget concern the “war on terrorism”. They are making new enunciations (using Butler’s terminology) and claiming new political spaces. This—in Butler’s terms—is a performative agency because it challenges the previous established framework, and contributes in the questioning of the social and political frameworks. I add, hopefully achieving incidence in the economic frameworks and policies as a sign of new political power and voice legitimated through formal (e.g. resorting to the Constitutional instrument of the legal protection) and institutional political scenarios (e.g. the Direction for Rural Women -DMR- in the Ministry of Agriculture). For Butler, these new enunciations, claims, appearances in political spaces, remake the subject who is doing the enunciation. In the final part, Butler (2010) identifies that neither Maruyama nor Arendt who reflected on the “post-fascist possibilities of democratic renewal” (155) considered “the particular formations of performativity within the social organization of economic life” (159). In response, I argue that seeking the campesina/o subject in this study is an attempt to relate those two spheres (economic and political) by trying to formulate and describe a new political subject derived from an economic subject (as portrayed in chapter one of part one). I am aiming to describe “particular formations of performativity within the social organization of economic life”. I am offering an account of performativity that achieves (in contrast to fails) to include the
economic. The emerging question I offer is: *Are campesina/os proposing a new economic path based on/through their new political subjectivity?*

**Identity, Subjectivity and Intersectionality in Feminist Geography**

Scaling down from introducing concepts as they are being used in feminist theory and social sciences, I now explore more specifically how geography, political ecology and environmentalism— Influenced by feminist theory—have used and advanced the previously exposed concepts of performativity, subjectivity, identity. These concepts are now situated in relation to nature-society exposing the use, access and control over natural resources; the diverse conceptualizations of gendered, racial and ethnic identities constructed in relation to “closeness” to nature, as well as environmental struggles and practices.

During the emergence of identity and subjectivity academic work in the 1990s, Lise Nelson (1999) offered a solid reflection for geographers who use these concepts in their work. She positions her argument saying that geographers have not done a critical reading of Butler’s theory and her abstracted subject (referring specifically to 1990 *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*) and that

Uncritically transcribing this abstracted subject into geography limits how we can conceptualize the linkages between emerging identities, social change and spatially-embedded, intentional human practice. A more thoughtful and nuanced use of performativity would allow geographers to map how concrete subjects (individual or collective) do identity in relation to various discursive processes (e.g. those that constitute race, class, sexuality and gender), to other subjects, and to layers of institutions and practices. (Nelson 1999, 331)

For Nelson, “performativity” is a “processual, linguistic-oriented understanding of identity” (331) and argues that geographers began using the term without really understanding Butler’s theory and therefore

by not reading performativity critically, they inject an undertheorized and often problematic notion of agency into their work… performativity ontologically assumes an
abstracted subject (i.e. abstracted as a subject position in a given discourse) and thus provides no space for conscious reflexivity, negotiation or agency in the doing of identity. This point is crucial for geographers because spatially embedded, intentional human practice often lies at the center of our inquiries into identity and space. (332)

I hope to open up a discussion of how to think about identity as an iterative, non-foundational process in relation to intentional human practice, concepts central to much of geographic inquiry. (Nelson 1999: 333)

For geographers to use Butler’s theory more correctly, migrating and translating from an abstract subject originating in philosophy or cultural studies to a geographically situated subject – since location, place and space are geography’s strengths – Nelson suggests to think through fieldwork theory and practice. This allows geographers to

adequately analyze social processes located in time and space – e.g. how a researcher goes about doing interviews, observing, and analyzing given particular assumptions about the nature of knowledge and subjectivity – it is essential to theorize a speaking, potentially reflexive subject. Such a subject is discursively constituted but capable of negotiating discursive contradictions over life course, a personal history itself embedded in particular historical and geographical processes, including inter-subjective interactions. (333)

Although it can be true that most geographers do not have substantial training in philosophy as a field to fully grasp the theoretical origins and implications of Butler’s work, it is also true that after the 2000s it is possible to find publications in geography that advance and contest Nelson’s reflections and cautionary statements, with or without mentioning this seminal work. In this study I contest the premise of Nelson of the “abstracted subject” by arguing with the case of the legal protection, that the use of this legal instrument calling the State to count the campesinos, is a way of negotiation with agency in the doing of identity. James Scott (1998) who has also influenced geographers from sociological and political science perspectives also refers to how an abstracted subject – or what he calls an “unmarked citizen” – is an elite project of those managing the state. His work on this issue will be resumed in the forthcoming case where I examine the legal protection or tutela, its name in Colombian Spanish.
The positioning of Campesina and Popular Feminism is also seeking to manifest and position a conscious reflexivity in the doing of an identity. It negotiates the use of feminism by branding a feminism that is more aligned with the needs and ontologies of campesinas. One, that seeks feminism with a historical class struggle against capitalist oppression where women and men are both victims and actors, and examining oppressions at different scales from the household to the global economic system. The case of Esperanza seen in the previous chapter shows how she is full of agency in the diverse spaces where she seeks her livelihood and contests the traditional ways of doing peasant production, even when she is not favored with a land title, has fluctuating access to formal education, is a single-mother coming from an abusive relation, and other external circumstances against her. Beyond marketing her example in the neoliberal way of “everyone can succeed no matter the circumstances, it’s just a matter of will”, I propose to analyze her case as one of “conscious reflexivity, negotiation or agency in the doing of identity” (Nelson 1999, 332). I argue that identity is always in relation to something (searching a political or economic space, a space of protection, a public legitimacy in the case of the peasantry) and is full of intentional human practice as seen through the interviews with campesina/os. What I am understanding with the campesina/o identity is that they are performing identities to answer the hegemonic invisibility and stigmatization of this population in a particular place. As will be seen later, this is also the message in Ojeda and Gonzalez’s (2018) argument of the elusive spaces of the Colombian peasantry.

Seeking the trajectories of the use of the concept of intersectionality, Gill Valentine (2007) brings to feminist geography a discussion of how thinking through/with intersectionality implies focusing on the ways how “individuals accomplish identities”. “[I]dentities occur in interactions, not on stable or given understandings of social difference” (13). And when they are seen as
“situated accomplishments” the theoretical focuses “not on being but on becoming” which reminds us of Butler’s work on the performatve. Also how thinking the intersection of identities in terms of doing, a more fluid coming together, of contingencies and discontinuities, classes and neutralizations, in which positions, identities, and differences are made and unmade, claimed and rejected. In this way they trouble rather than reinforce identity demarcations… this approach to intersectionality picks up on the full meaning of the word ‘difference’: clash, conflict, contention, controversy, debate, disagreement, discord, dispute. (2007, 14)

Valentine concludes

It is possible to move beyond theorizing about the intersection of categories to an understanding of how identifications and disidentifications are simultaneously experienced by subjects in specific spatial and temporal moments through the course of everyday lives.

…although our identities as individuals might be multiple and fluid, power operates in and through the spaces within which we live and move in systematic ways to generate hegemonic cultures that can exclude particular social groups… attention to lived experience, through rigorous empirical work, offers an important potential tool for feminist geography to understand the intimate connections between the production of space and the systematic production of power… (2007, 18)

The development of identity and subjectivity in feminist geography will not be summarized here. Rather, I pass on to how the concepts presented in the previous sections are being used to examine agrarian and environmental subjectivities.

Identity and Intersectionality in Feminist Political Ecology and Feminist Environmentalism

Using, advancing and updating Nelson’s geographic reflection of the use of identity, subjectivity, performativity and agency, Sundberg (2004) coins the term “identities-in-the-making” defining an approach that is attentive to how disciplining discourses and practices are invoked, enacted, (re)configured, subverted, and transformed by individuals who chose to be ‘for some worlds and not others’ (47)

and “multi-dimensional identities” (Sundberg 2004) to come to terms with some of our several contradictions both as researchers and to make sense of the contradictions we find in the field, “are produced, enacted, and transformed in the action of social relations, in articulation with
others” (47). This term reminds us of the debates in anthropology about intersubjectivities, the halfie as an identity used by the researcher, and the “multiple axes of tension” (from Ryang 2005) that researchers navigate in the field and in academia. Sundberg uses this term when examining how indigenous women relate with international conservation NGOs. I like the notion of “in-the-making” to approach how young campesina/os narrate and appropriate the environmental, peace-making, feminist as well as economic subjectivities (e.g. rural entrepreneur) available in their relations with the state, NGOs and other development institutions.

Agrawal argues in *Environmentality* that “[n]ew environmental subject positions emerge as a result of involvement in struggles over resources and in relation to new institutions and changing calculations of self-interest and notions of the self” (2005, 3). He calls to expand scholarship on how institutions and subject-related formations “relate to and produce each other” (204). Taking a “feminist environmentalism” lens to approach the relation between gender and environmental subject formation, Agrawal suggests:

feminist environmentalists are committed to investigating how economic processes, social practices, and political relations are instrumental in producing gender-related inequalities… [they] seek to insert material, political-economic, and cultural processes into their analyses of gender and environment. (212)

From his definition of feminist environmentalist, my work fits in that category since it examines gendered and generational inequalities in how they are influenced by social practices and economic situations. His work will be instrumental in chapter seven *Environmental and peace-building subjectivities* to examine environmental subjectivities.

Feminist Political Ecology examines the relations between subjectivities, material and symbolic relations with nature—and often—power schemes at different scales for the use, access and management of nature in its diverse meanings. It also proposes to examine emotions in these
relations. For instance, the work of Farhana Sultana (2009) examines gender-water relations through “embodied subjectivities that are simultaneously constituted socially, spatially and ecologically” (2009, 428, italics are added). This suggests that gender relations to water are also related to gendered divisions of labor, “norms and rights as well as the spatiality and materiality of different kinds of waters” (498). She argues that “gendered and embodied subjectivities are produced and negotiated through (water) resource management practices.” And how “ecological components and nature’s differentiated spatiality and materiality interpellate people differently, thereby influencing the ways they come to understand themselves and relate to others as well as to their natural environments” (428). Sultana (drawing from Gibson-Graham 1996) signals how within a household, members have differentiated access to and control over resources. This shows how “[i]n a hierarchical family structure, different members are positioned differently within the household class relations and thereby command differential access to cash, food, decision-making powers, education and other resources” (431). This challenges the traditional socio-economic class view that agglomerates populations in a socio-economic class category without examining the inter-personal possibilities due to other conditions (e.g. age, gender, ability, membership status) and the micropolitics and power schemes this creates. This coincides with part one of this dissertation which puts in dialogue a traditional class perspective with a gender-focused one and a livelihoods approach that are more keen to notice and name these social differences within what are considered economic classes. Sultana’s contribution using a FPE lens to subjectivity analysis resides in proposing that besides gender, and internal household power dynamics (already highlighted with Razavi’s work in the previous chapter), there are specific materialities (e.g. water in her case study) related to the place, the environment, the ecosystem, that influence subject-formation and shape the relations that we can describe as
subjectivities. This passes also by examining “corporeities”, how the body is used (e.g. to fetch water), and how for instance a recurrent labor shapes the body and the social relations entangled in who gets to do certain labors related to specific resources. These specific resources, labors and productive bodies carry elements for analyses of subjectivities. In chapter seven *Environmental and peace-building subjectivities*, I propose an additional perspective of emotional subjectivity related to water in a different way.

Jacqueline Lau and Ivan Scales (2016) suggest the term “fluid *subjectivities* (rather than concrete identities)” to observe how multiple aspects of identity shape resource use, and how external categories are taken by individuals and groups and turned into lived choices (137, emphasis in original). With regards to political ecology, they define identity as a process through which a sense of self is expressed and how political ecology pays attention to the role of identity shaping access to and control over natural resources. This vein of work has revealed how individuals and groups strategically deploy and articulate particular identities as key mediators in claims to resource rights… However there has been less empirical work detailing how multiple aspects of identity shape resource use at the same time. (2016, 137)

These authors consider that “[w]ork on intersectionality and the environment has been strongest in feminist political ecology where research has shown how natural resource use intersects with different axes of power” (138). They carefully distinguish on how *identity* and *subjectivity* have been used recently in anglophone geography and propose to understand that “identities are taken as more or less stable, fixed and permanent, while subjectivity ‘sums up the actual complex person and lived life’… The important point is that while subjectivities may reference a particular sense of identity (or identities)… they will inevitably be shaped by context and thus shift in relation to changing circumstances” (138). Curiously, Lau and Scales (2016) did not include Nelson’s review of identity and subjectivity in geography where she argues
that if we retheorize identity and subjectivity in ways that treat them not as fixed and exhaustive, but changing and contested over time and space, we could still conceive of a conscious, thinking subject without necessarily invoking the autonomous subject (1999, 341).

For Nelson

reading identity as performative, focusing on how dominant discourses are repeated by ‘subjects’ is an ontologically distinct project from one which questions the spatial-temporal location of and influences upon identity and/or the effects of that ‘performance’. These issues represent central terrains of geographic inquiry (1999, 348).

Lau and Scales update this discussion suggesting that the problem is not about “how dominant discourses are repeated by subjects” but in distinguishing between individual and group subjectivities where “[g]roup or collective subjectivities refers to the lived experience of ‘togetherness’, or how individuals are ‘subjected’ within configurations of power” (138).

The basic contribution from feminist geography on identity and subjectivity is that they are negotiated in place/location and in time/situation. They are situated subjectivities. Therefore they have to been seen as fluid, changing, negotiated, multi-dimensional and working in response or in relation to power schemes and material, political-economic, and cultural processes. FPE and feminist environmentalism call for analyses that along these lines also include the social relations with nature, natural resources, ecosystem adaptation and use, climate change and how these relations are differentiated along lines of gender, age, social status, race, among other identity categories and are influenced by power structures at different scales.

**Environmental Subjectivities in Contemporary Colombian Social Science**

In this section I focus only on the recent trajectories of research about environmental and agrarian identities and subjectivities in Colombia. The last decade has brought an emerging development of academic literature with this focus forming a growing niche provided by Colombian geographers and anthropologists trained in the United States academia for their graduate studies (Escobar 2008, Bocarejo 2009; Ojeda 2012; Ojeda and Guillard 2013; Bocarejo
2014; Del Cairo and Montenegro-Perini 2015; Herrera 2016; Camargo and Ojeda 2017; Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018). The work highlighted here is situated in the subfields of feminist geography, political ecology (PE of the state, FPE), and anthropology (legal, political, social, feminist). This scholarship evolves from a state narrative that only allowed indigenous people as environmental subject, to one where the campesinado has been carving a political space where they too can be environmental subjects, ancient defenders of nature. This has implied changes in how to be culturally read, how to negotiate with the state, and how to claim new political spaces of protection in the scenario of the peace and post-peace agreement times, and climate change.

Arturo Escobar’s (2008, 204) section on “Modernity, Identity, and the Politics of Theory” offers a good review on the developing scholarship of these themes in the late 20th and early 21st century, using it to explore “The Emergence of Black Ethnicity in the Colombian Pacific in the 1990s” (203). Although some of the grounding literature on identity and subjectivity from feminist poststructural theory might be shared, the analysis of ethnicity that he does from an anthropological perspective drifts from the case I am making on the campesinado. I am not entering issues of racial and cultural identities because they exceed the possibilities and focus of this dissertation.

Astrid Ulloa, Colombian anthropologist and political ecologist –also trained in US academia– has recently published an article on Gender and Feminist Geography in Colombia (2019) which describes the trajectories and emerging research in this field. She states that the academic discussions that relate environment, gender and feminisms “remain rare in Colombia” (2019, 1025). I take as a seminal work Ulloa’s La construcción del nativo ecológico (the construction of the ecological native) (2004) which develops the idea of the Colombian indigenous people as a “closer to nature” subject that she defines as the “ecological native” and
how this operates when relating to the Colombian state, international agencies and in general in the indigenous movements and environmentalisms39. Her work will be particularly relevant in the chapters *Youth* and *Environmental and peace-building subjectivities* when exploring the use of rituality in environmental events and in agroecology formación and its impact in shaping environmental subjectivities. In *Deceptive Utopias: Violence, Environmentalism and the Regulation of Multiculturalism in Colombia*, Diana Bocarejo (2009) continues with the examination of “the hegemony of an environmental rhetoric linking indigenous groups to ecological conservation” allowed by what she calls the “legal constitutional isomorphism between ethnicity and territory” (309-310). She explains how the 1991 National Constitution assigned a multicultural regime of spatial distribution where in the case of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta diverse actors (indigenous and peasant organizations, state agencies, NGOs, illegal armed forces – guerrillas an paramilitaries) construct multicultural political landscapes reinforced by the differential citizenships and therefore political subjectivities that the Constitution assigns. Bocarejo refers to the “geography of management and legibility (through which communities were spatially located and rendered legible)…mapped by a strong connection or isomorphism between territory and ethnicity that openly redefined the boundaries between peasants and indigenous peoples.” (2009, 324) This “differential citizenship” in her case results in an “environmental fetishism” that welcomes the territorial expansion of indigenous peoples where they embody and represent environmental conservation while silencing the violence and displacement of the peasantry in that region.

Diana Ojeda’s (2012) *Green Pretexts: Ecotourism neoliberal conservation and land grabbing in Tayrona National Natural Park, Colombia* examines the same Caribbean region site to advance the exposition of how the landless campesinos are seen as a threat because their presence does not correspond to the multicultural regime of spatial distribution (Bocarejo 2009) where it is implicit that indigenous people belong to *resguardos* (collectively titled indigenous lands), Afro-Colombians to river banks and coasts, and peasants to plots, and each are meant to behave ecologically in their ethnically or culturally established space –and I add– ecosystems. Therefore campesinos in Caribbean indigenous territories and national parks are portrayed as invaders and ecological threats by the Colombian State. Their identity as *colonos* (landless peasants) is portrayed as foreign, external, without ethnic markers and therefore cannot allude to an ancestral culture in harmony with the environment. The lines that separate guardians from invaders is a hierarchical system of difference and domination based on class, race, ethnicity, gender and regional origin, a ‘multicultural hierarchy’. Continuing with this argument, Guilland and Ojeda’s (2013) ‘*Authentic* indigenes and *green* campesinos, the imperative identities of tourism in Colombia’ argue that in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, a peasant mestizo population is regarded initially as not having racial or ethnic markers and is identified with physical labor and male bodies embodying ideals of progress and thrust, civilization and culture, in counter position to nature (Guilland and Ojeda 2013, 136). This ability to dominate nature, colonize the agrarian frontiers was honored as a nation-making ideal, a kind of heroism up to the 20th century when this moral value was replaced with an identification of invaders, guerrillas and producers of the illegal coca crops.

The authors argue that the new tourist economy in Colombia, driven by the national government and done in the name of generating jobs while preserving nature and benefiting local
communities, imposes new identities easily consumed in the touristic experience. This leads to communities (campesino and indigenous) having to do important concessions in order to remain legitimate habitants of their own territories. They have to be read as “guardians of patrimony”, “tourism entrepreneurs”, “authentic natives” and “green campesinos” in order to enter and be able to control this new economy in their territories. The presence of these colonos who do not “belong” in the institutional cultural-ethnic-territorial narrative was allowed in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta when they complied to the eco-touristic project logic of becoming “neoliberal entrepreneurial subjects” and “ecological subjects” therefore performing an adequate use of the environment. This could be realized through the desire of passing from illegal economies (working in coca crops) to legal, institutionally supported economies, desiring progress, efficiency and economic rationality in the role of eco-tourism workers. These new moral values were acquired through training workshops, short courses, and field assessments and need to be shown with entrepreneurial and “green” behaviors derived from a neoliberal conservation logic. Carlos Del Cairo and Montenegro-Perini (2015, 50) explore a case of campesino subjectivity in the Amazonian department of Guaviare. Inspired by the work of Agrawal on Environmentality they observe the State project of generating green subjects, campesino environmental subjects that will comply to State environmental ideals based on western conservation imaginaries. These authors also observe the imposition of conservation to the campesinos of Guaviare and their portrait by the state as illegal colonizers of frontier zones and protected areas, destroyers of the environment. They argue that now these campesinos show themselves as environmental subjects who protect their territories and to be legitimated by the institutions for material and symbolic relations with the forests.
In this same line of thought, Ojeda and Gonzalez’ (2018, 4) *Elusive Space: Peasants and Resource Politics in the Colombian Caribbean*—situated in the same time and historical time as my research—proposes to observe peasants’ political strategies as a “repertoire of action and enunciation… to make their lives possible and meaningful, and to voice their demands”; as important means to express ideological struggles, and as key elements to construct their subjectivities as ways of “acting in (and making) the world.” Showing the case of the state program of forest ranger families (*Programa Familias Guardabosques*40) in the Tayrona National Park they argue that peasants now mobilize, appropriate and reinterpret environmental identities as a way of staying in place (2018, 18). For the authors there is a response in the political strategies and their transformation and adaptation to state narratives. This is why now peasants insist on the importance of development, peace building and conservation. They need to show viability and relevance in their forms of production in terms of profitability and due to the stigmatization and criminalization of the narratives around peasant struggle (*lucha campesina*). It is more palatable to be immersed in narratives of victimhood, food security and biodiversity conservation (2018, 18) to adjust livelihood strategies according to possibilities (2018, 20) and construct their resistance also within accepted and promoted narratives of the state about agrarian subjects. They call the “constant constitution of peasant space” the diverse political spaces beyond the relations—with public institutions and also with other manifestations of power—and their manifestation in socio-spatial processes shaping everyday practices. The authors expose how for institutional officers related to land issues, peasants do not represent ethnic subjects so

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40 *Familias Guardabosques* was a government program initiated in 2003 during the presidency of Alvaro Uribe. It was presented as an alternative development program, so that families who worked in the illegal crops and economies of coca and poppy could have alternatives in legal economies while also protecting strategic ecosystems. The most common productive activities were coffee, cacao, tree orchards, apiculture and rubber with the possibility of also offering ecotourism services.
they are not supposed to have spiritual relations to land/territory (see Ulloa 2004, Bocarejo 2009), nor use resources collectively (like ethnic subjects do), only have over-exploitative, productive relations with plots but with no close connections to nature. Recalling the institutional configurations of difference from the Constitution of 1991 the authors draw from Herrera (2016) who suggests that in the 20th century, when the struggles in el campo were about labor, land, and agrarian reforms, indigenous people had to

‘peasantize themselves’ that is to act as members of a social class, while silencing their ethnic dimension. Today, many peasant communities tend to ‘indigenize themselves’ in order to access land and services primarily provided to indigenous and Afrodescendant peoples (Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018, 8).

As Ojeda and Gonzalez show, in this era campesina/os are meant to be/become small rural entrepreneurs. The authors “traverse generalized versions of who are (or should be) the peasants and what is (or should be) their political space, delineating its elusiveness.” (2018, 14). “El campo (the countryside) and los/las campesinos/as (peasants) are fields of constant dispute in Colombia, and even more so in relation to the country’s violent history” (Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018, 12). According to different State interests, campesina/os have been portrayed and used differently. This analysis is a clear reflection of a changing subjectivity from a productive worker approach, related to unions and other labor movements. For example the denomination Sindicato Agrario (agrarian union) of several organizations as well as the reference to “agrarian workers” and not to campesinos has changed over the last five decades.

A feminist geography project particularly grounded in the historic juncture of the peace process when my research takes place, generated the special issue or 5th volume of the Annual digest of the School of Gender Studies of the National University of Colombia Espacialidades

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41 This is not the case however of all organizations. ANUC: Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos, has the campesino denomination in its name and was created in the 1960s but was recently reactivated.
Feministas (2017). The case presented by Barbosa Gamboa (2017) is particularly relevant for me since it is from the same Andean region and river basin where I did my field research, but in different municipalities. Barbosa refers to the women leaders in the constitution of the Peasant Reserve Zone (ZRC) of the Sumapaz locality, exposes an interpretation of construction of territory (body-land) and gender violence. Barbosa describes land and body as spaces of class struggle and political territories in the constitution of ZRC. The women of his study, play a key historical role in the resistance to land grabbing, the industrial exploitation of natural resources, the high militarization of this region and the gender violence within their communities which are deepened and fomented by capitalism. Barbosa proposes they are defending their bodies and communities facing processes of de-peasantization (descampenización). Land is conceptualized as a historically constituted laboratory of production and common space of social relations. The body, understood as a first territory of social struggle, situated in this space-land, experiments forms of exploitation, domination, subordination and constructed exclusions such as socio-economic ones: e.g. class domination, stigmatization of their communities in war, lack of land titling for women; environmental: dispossession of the páramo water resource; physical (sexual division of labor and naturalization of less value of their work), sexual, and psychological. This last one occurs when any of the other violences are produced. Also, how by being or becoming dependent on the state and its subsidies, or economically dependent to a husband or partner, are ways of being violentadas (violated, or subjected to violence). In this sense, the body is a first territory of resistance to many of these violences. His research produces six proposed points of action that respond to these violences. I relate specifically the points with the angles of my cases and analysis. 1) Access to land and development of productive capacity in relation to Law 731 and other rural and agrarian development policies. These will be analyzed in the chapter on rural
women and policy, and relate to what was signaled in Razavi’s contingent points (see chapter on
gender and agrarian studies), and in gendered perspective critiques to the technical document on
the campesinado as a subject of rights (Saade et al 2017) which will be exposed in the chapter on
that topic. 2) A conservationist relation to land which will be further discussed in the chapter
about environmentalisms and campesinado. 3) On de-militarization of campesina/o life, I have a
different approach which was given in the discussion in the previous chapter La labor del campo,
where I expose how young campesinos suffer an intersectional discrimination of being labor for
war and armed conflict. My cases expose this discrimination but argue for a response to this
body-territory violence (in Barbosa’s terms) where military life is not enforced, nor an economic
and social way out of campesino life, when young campesinos could be favored by education
support and agrarian policy support in order to achieve their aspirations of shaping a campesino
livelihood, when this is what they are interested in. Currently, they do not have this option when
forced to serve the army or being coopted by illegal armed forces due to their body-territory
endurance and knowledge of physical labor in el campo. 4) Valuing ‘unproductive’ labor. This
also relates to Razavi’s perspectives and the recommendations which are shown in the gendered
perspective critiques to the technical document on the campesinado as a subject of rights (Saade
et al 2017) in chapter four Tutela.

Finally, Camargo and Ojeda (2017) call for political ecologies of the state proposing the
“environment making states” when examining the relation of a peasant community with the state
in the Caribbean region through climate change adaptation and mitigation projects and the
“emotive repertoires that mediate local populations’ understandings and experiences of the state
and the political.” (Camargo and Ojeda 2017, 59). These issues around subjectivities will be
particularly relevant throughout the following chapters of part two as I examine how
campesina/os negotiate new identities and subjectivities that comply with institutional projects (e.g. peace, rural development, rural entrepreneurs) in order to be legitimate, recognized and – I argue – furthermore seeking protection through different means.

Neoliberal subjectivities

Surging from different academic fields, there is also considerable scholarship on how the economic regime of capitalism is internalized by individuals (Ball 2016, Ojeda 2012, Schiwter 2013, Scharff 2016, Walker et al. 2018). This scholarship is often based on the Foucauldian concept of governmentality and the discipling of subjects where the economic domination is internalized when people believe in individual faith and fault in the achievement of aspirations and livelihoods. Michel Foucault is said to have approached neoliberalism in his lectures on The Birth of Biopolitics (Ball 2016, Flew 2014, 59). However, it exceeds the possibilities of this dissertation to describe and define Foucault’s discussion of neoliberalism. Rather, I prefer to connect how the feminist work on subjectivity (Butler 1990, Alcoff 1991, Spivak 1996, Sundberg 2004, Ojeda 2012, Lau & Scales 2016) can offer insights to understand how “neoliberalism is lived out on a subjective level” (Scharff 2016, 107) since “subjectivity is a key site of political struggle in the contexts of neoliberalisation and neoliberal governmentality” (Ball 2015, 1129). Similar to how I am not giving a preconceived definition of “the environmental” but observing how it appears in young campesina/os lives, I am not aiming at a definition of neoliberalism but observing how economic regimes operate through individuals in their subjectivity. This can offer insights for instance on how neoliberalism is said to operate as intervention in the name of non-intervention (Flew 2014) through its instruments, techniques and procedures as they appear in policies, development projects, institutional language, performances
of power as “practices of governing” (Flew 2014, 61), among others examined in this dissertation.

Conclusion

This theory chapter presented the basic concepts and their academic developments that are pertinent for the following chapters. I come back to many of these concepts, authors and their arguments as I discuss the cases that unfold from this research and how they contribute, contrast or inform the conceptual developments of the aforementioned pieces. In general, there is an implicit agreement among these literatures –from the ones on positionality to those used for contemporary cases in Colombia– that identity and subjectivity are fluid, negotiated, in relation to context (spatial, historic, economic, racial, political) and that they respond to narratives. There is no clear delimitation or agreement between conforming to hegemonic practices or permanently resisting them. Rather there is a constant interpretation and response, which can be named agency, performativity, performative agency. This performance is not only done by campesina/os, it is done by researchers in relation to their research subjects, to academia and to the concepts and theories –hegemonic or not– which they/we wish to comply, contest, respond, feed, identify or contrast to.

The following chapter shows how the campesinado now seeks a visibility in the national statistics and claims their political subjectivity, through enunciative performativity (see Butler 2010) of reiteration, re-establishment and sedimentation in different political spaces seeking an empowering effect for the establishment of the social categories and identities that they mobilize in the current political scenarios. The subsequent chapters show other subjectivities related with the Colombian campesinado gendered, needing rural development, environmental/green and peace-constructing subjectivities and how campesino/a youth navigate these subjectivities and
identity formations. What I continue arguing in part two is the agency in negotiating these identities as was mentioned with Butler’s argument of performative agency in the transformation of political subjects. In situating my study regionally I also follow Ojeda and Gonzalez’ call: “there is urgent need for a wider understanding of peasants’ political strategies and their spatial concretions” (2018, 24).
**Chapter four: *Tutela.***

**Making *lo campesino* count: Campesinado as political subject and bearer of rights.**

This chapter makes an abrupt change in scale and type of analysis from the ethnographic approach of the daily lives of young campesinas/os portrayed in chapter two, to an abstract legal analysis presented in this chapter, using some of the conceptual tools presented in the previous chapter (three). This jump in scale is important because it provides an additional perspective of how a collective effort, both of campesina/o individuals and organizations, generated a political strategy to communicate with the state in relation to campesina/o identity and socio-economic needs of attention and protection from the state. Their petition is to be counted by the state in its statistics as a particular population. The question that emerges from the conceptual framework presented in the previous chapter is: why would a collectivity want to be legible for the state if this implies reducing their day-to-day struggles, complex realities, history, cultures, economic situations, relations with land and nature, social structures, to binary responses and multiple choice answers to a census or a survey? I argue that this a form of “rendering technical” (Li 2005) a social reality by reducing it to statistical and legal languages (state languages) but it has a political intention which is the enunciation of a collective political subjectivity that proposes new ways of relating, or entering in dialogue and visibility with the state apparatus.

This *tutela* emerges because several campesina/o organizations –among them the petitionaries of this tutela– have requested repeatedly and for years to DANE and the Ministry of Interior that the campesinado be recognized in the census and that their social and economic conditions be censused. This with the aim that the public policies take into consideration their specific social situation and their special cultural identity. (Uprimny 2017, 4 my translation\(^\text{42}\))

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\(^{42}\) The bibliographic reference of a tutela legal document is challenging since it is a unique type of document, in this case signed by 1,758 individuals plus organizations. I propose to reference it as Uprimny 2017, since the lawyer Rodrigo Uprimny is who interposes the tutela in their name on November 23, 2017 to the Superior Tribunal of the Judicial District of Bogotá. The original document can be found in: [https://www.dejusticia.org/el-campesinado-si-cuenta-para-la-corte-suprema/](https://www.dejusticia.org/el-campesinado-si-cuenta-para-la-corte-suprema/)
The point is simply that high-modernist designs for life and production tend to diminish the skills, agility, initiative, and morale of their intended beneficiaries. (Scott 1998, 349)

These two introducing quotes frame the theme of this chapter. In the context of this dissertation about campesina/o youth identity and subjectivity and its relations with environmentalisms, it is key to examine a specific lawsuit presented by 1,758 campesina/os and organizations in November 2017 in the form of acción de tutela (a legal tool defined in the Colombian constitution). With a title that translates as “For the peasantry to count, it has to be counted”, this acción de tutela was presented against two public authorities

the National Administrative Department of Statistics [DANE, its acronym in Spanish] and the Ministry of Interior, for the violation of the fundamental right to material equality (Article 13 of the Colombian Constitution) to the campesinado. Considering them [the campesinado] as a group and individuals that have their economic, social and cultural rights affected, as well as the protection of their life project and their differentiated cultural identity. This violation emerges as an unjustified omission of the entities which had to act to include –in the 8th National Population Census and the 3rd Housing census in 2018– questions about the differentiated cultural identity of the campesinado and its socioeconomic situation. (Uprimny 2017, 3 my translation)

This specific acción de tutela –which I will simply call tutela throughout this chapter– is analyzed as an expression of the campesinado to be recognized as a political subject in Colombian society and by its state in the context of the post peace-agreement signature (2016)43.

I analyze this document as an enunciative performance according to Butler’s terms presented in the previous chapter. I argue that the act of interposing this tutela was an act of enunciation because it calls for a public naming and recognition of a political subject, a collective subjectivity. It also demonstrates performative agency with the signature of individuals and

43 The signing of the peace agreements between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla had a traumatic episode after four years of the peace deal process. After a peace agreement was reached by the parts in 2016, a plebiscite was held on October 2 2016 so the deal could be ratified by Colombians. However, the rejection of the agreements won the “No” vote with 50.2% over the 49.8% of the “Yes”/approving of the peace deal. As a result, the peace agreements text had to be modified in 50 of its points to satisfy the political forces that won the No/rejection vote. The new deal document was presented on November 12, 2016.
organizations claiming a collective political subjectivity to be explicitly named and demanding to be counted by the state, becoming then a visible part of the nation. Taking this into consideration it answers Butler’s (2010) questions posed in the previous chapter: *How does a subject (struggling for a democratic political form) emerge capable of democratic evaluation and deliberation?* And “*How does a new subject emerge … from the ravages of war?*” The case presented here of this tutela contributes to answer these questions. I also observe the narratives that are used in the tutela document related to ethnicity. This adds to the recent observations in Colombian academic debates (Bocarejo 2009, Herrera 2016, Ojeda and Guillard 2013, Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018) that observe how the *campesinado* is currently arguing ethnic and territorial bonding identities in order to be legible and adequate as a cultural subject for the Colombian state imaginary. This demand of recognition of political subjectivity I relate to two contemporary works of social science, *Seeing Like a State* (Scott 1998) and *The Will to Improve* (Li 2005). The first, describing the origins in creation of the nation state and the creation of the abstract citizen for state planning schemes; the second about rendering technical the interventions and programs for the improvement of life conditions along the state logic. In both works, the initiative of classifying subjects is described as an initiative from the state. The question that arises when we see the intention of a population group demanding that the state classify them in a particular way—such as the one portrayed in this section—is *why would a collectivity want to be legible for the state and why do they want to render technical their social reality?* These questions are part of the broader research questions of this dissertation: *for what purposes is campesino identity and subjectivity mobilized by those who self-relate, self-recognize with that label? In what spaces or scenarios is this identity mobilized?* I also examine the technical document elaborated by the state’s history and anthropological institute ICANH which defines the campesinado and
suggested questions for the national census of 2018 (Saade ed. 2018). It has been challenging in
the writing of this chapter to describe chronologically the documents and actions related to
defining the campesinado and including it in the current statistics since some of the events have
overlapping timings as social processes and legal actions and answers. The overall structure of
this chapter is as follows: First, I begin by situating the legal tool of the acción de tutela—or
simply tutela— in its context in Colombia. Subsequently, I present the ICANH technical
document (Saade ed. 2018) available to the organized campesinado and its state interlocutors
since 2016– before the tutela— but accessible as a published document in 2018. Then, I describe
key aspects of the tutela document (Uprimny 2017) and some of its key elements. Afterwards, I
offer a theoretical discussion that approaches the research questions with concepts and authors
presented in the previous chapter. Next, I highlight the recommendations for gender inclusive
perspectives of the campesinado in the ICANH technical document (Saade ed. 2018) which links
to the themes of the next chapter. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key aspects of the
documents (Uprimny 2017, Saade ed. 2018) and the arguments presented throughout the chapter.

The Importance of the acción de tutela: legal protection claims in Colombia

Acción de tutela is a legal mechanism described in Article 86 of the 1991 National Constitution
of Colombia44 that seeks the protection of citizens’ constitutional rights. Among the translations,
descriptions, interpretations to English include legal device, describe it as a legal device,
“tutelary action” (Bocarejo 2014), “guardianship action” (Carrera Silva 2011), or “tutela claim”
(Taylor 2018). I will use the term tutela throughout the chapter acknowledging it is a legal

44 I use the translation of the Colombian Constitution provided by ConstituteProject (2005) Accessible in:
University Press, Inc.
protection tool very specific to the Colombian legal and constitutional structure. Situated under Title II of Rights, Guarantees and Duties, Chapter IV on The Protection and Application of Rights, Article 86 of the Constitution determines the meaning and use of the acción de tutela beginning with:

Every individual may claim legal protection before the judge… for himself/herself or by whoever acts in his/her name, the immediate protection of his/her fundamental constitutional rights when the individual fears the latter may be jeopardized or threatened by the action or omission of any public authority. (constituteproject.org 2005, underline added)

It aims to protect fundamental constitutional rights, even those not affirmed in the National Constitution, when they are infringed or threatened by the action or omission of any public authority. The court’s ruling from this action is of immediate compliance. The tutela has been an important legal tool for many Colombians to expose discriminations and abuses by the state.

According to Liliana Carrera Silva (2011) the Colombian Constitution is part of the “new Latin-American constitutionalism.” For Carrera, the emergence of the “constitutional state” implies that “the constitution, its principles, rights and guarantees, ‘invade’ all, arrogating the power to demand that all political, social, juridical, public or private expression molds to them.” (my translation of Carrera 2011, 74). She argues that one of the characteristics of the Latin-American constitutional transformation is

the incorporation of legal devices that guarantee the absolute submission of the expressions of power –of any origin, public or private– to the Constitution and promptly to the rights they incorporate. The tutela action of the Colombian 1991 Constitution is a clear example of such a device. (Carrera 2011, 74 my translation).

It is also important to note that the tutela emerged accompanied with the creation of the Colombian Constitutional Court (CCC). A constitutional organism ascribed to the judicial branch

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45 The original text in Spanish begins with “Toda persona tendrá acción de tutela para reclamar…” which more literally translates as “Everyone will have guardianship action to claim…”
of public power and in charge of ensuring the integrity and supremacy of the Constitution (74). The CCC was considered essential by the National Constituent Assembly so that the new constitutional state could have a specialized judge for the interpretation and guarantee of the effectiveness of the constitutional rights and its clauses (74). In its first twenty years of existence, more than four million tutela actions were presented to different judicial offices throughout the country, in issues ranging from the situation of prisoners, homosexuality, the tragedy of the internal displaced, the right to information, petitions about pensions, access to health services, workers’ rights –among many others– becoming the most important, accessible legal tool (76). Just in 2014, nearly 500,000 tutelas were filed (Taylor 2018, 339). According to Carrera it has promoted a democratic culture, allowing the dismantling of privileges, and promoting the values of a social state where collective rights can also be rendered fundamental under the connection to other fundamental social and economic rights (76).

Whitney Taylor’s (2018) study of Colombia’s tutela and the perceptions of its effectiveness among urban citizens, proposes an alternate view observing the relationship between “legal consciousness” and “legal mobilization”. Suggesting that there is a profound skepticism of the ability of the judiciary to provide justice yet there is still a high level of use of the legal system which she calls a “high mobilization environment” (340). She argues that this apparent contradiction exists due to the understandings of law and the state that encourages using the tutela as a tool because “it is understood to be the only mechanism through which citizens can access their rights [and]… there is no other alternative” (341). Taylor considers that the use of the legal procedures to make rights claims is a political act, not only a legal one. When citizens make claims on the state, they are implicitly calling for changes in relationship between state and society, in the provision of goods by the state, and in the protection of rights. (2018, 341)
This political act when done as a group claim (such as the tutela in this chapter), is a form of “strategic litigation” (341). Strategic litigation like “strategic essentialism” (from Spivak 1996, 204) can be interpreted as political tools of collective identity in political spaces.

The tutela text clearly exposes why it is this legal tool and not others that were used, or in Taylor’s terms, why there was no other alternative. Rather, it was used after other tools were implemented with no success in their claims. After mentioning that DANE already had in its hands the technical document produced by ICANH suggesting specific questions for the campesinado to be censused in the 8th national census,

In this case, the acción de tutela meets the functionality of guaranteeing that the institutional process concludes. It had met almost all the steps for the inclusion of the campesinado in the national census, including the technical aspects that were agreed by several institutions with the appropriate participation of the organizations. (Uprimny 2017, 7. My translation)

The tutela meets the subsidiarity requirement since the other possible judicial actions are not suitable or effective. Those that seem potentially applicable are administrative actions and popular action, but they are not. The actions of nullity or nullity and reestablishment do not proceed because there is no administrative act susceptible of being attacked. What there is, is a reiterated omission from DANE and the Ministry of Interior to accept the request made by the actors without offering any constitutionally admissible reasons for this omission. (8)

Bocarejo (2014) has contributed with legal anthropology research of the use of tutela in indigenous cases and analyzed the construction of indigenous alterity and spacialization within the CCC. She argues that –more than analyzing its results– observing the specific rhetoric and contents of the categories mobilized can serve to “reveal the implications of the ambiguous manner in which parties invoke concepts such as culture, habitats or acculturation” (356).

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46 Strategic litigation can be defined as “the use of litigation and other legal and non-legal methods to seek legal and social change… Strategic litigation is used to change the policies and attitudes of the justice system, government, and civil society (Barber 2012, 417).

47 Chela Sandoval (2000, 180,1) refers to strategic essentialism as a meta-ideologizing vector, and “necessary for intervening in power on behalf of the marginalized” (2000, 60,1). This argument is important to explore but exceeds the focus of this chapter’s theme.
Considering this, in the case of the legal interpretations of indigenous “typology” understood as the “characterization and classifications of indigenous groups” and indigenous “topology” as “delimitations of indigenous territory” (356) she concludes that “[t]he close relationship that is imagined to exist between culture and territory is premised in the notion of culture as a list of traits.” (356). Taking this into consideration, her analysis is relevant in this chapter to examine how the campesinado portray their culture, if they resort to ethnic traits to describe their culture in terms palatable for the CCC or how else they argue a cultural identity for an audience that is used to see culture equated as race and ethnicity. Recall that in the previous chapter I mentioned how Colombian academic debates signaled a “geography of management and legibility (through which communities were spatially located and rendered legible)” where a strong connection is assumed between territory and ethnicity which has created boundaries between peasants and indigenous peoples (Bocarejo 2009, 324). These debates are currently showing how today the campesinado “‘indigenize themselves’ in order to access land and services primarily provided to indigenous and Afrodescendant peoples” (Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018, 8; see also Herrera 2016). If the CCC can only read and approve culture and territorial belonging in ethnic terms, then how is it plausible for the campesinado to organize their narrative for the CCC audience in terms that can show their cultural characteristics? Do they have to present it in terms of ethnicity and territory to gain differential attention? Territorially speaking, they have to argue territorial bondage beyond the farm, or household plot, to a collective use and territorial conservation traditions since they have been previously blamed of being environment destroyers from diverse state narratives (Ojeda and Guilland 2013, Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018). These are some of the aspects that will be examined about this specific tutela document and its political reach.
However, first it is important to situate what happened before presenting the tutela in November 2017.

Previous actions of the organized campesinado had achieved dialogue spaces with some state agencies to advance the claims of the campesinas/os. The agreement made between the Colombian state and the Mesa Campesina del Cauca-CIMA in July 2016 was what led to the construction of the technical document that would serve as the concept “about that which can be considered peasant” (sobre lo campesino) for the design of the 2017 National Census by DANE. Complying to the agreement, a seminar took place in November 2016 between peasant organizations and state agencies led by the Ministry of Interior. Its results served as a baseline to construct the technical document led by ICANH and mentioned earlier in this chapter. It is to note that the document was elaborated when it was still a possibility to include its results in the national census, initially planned for 2016 but which finally took place in 2018. Although it was mainly meant to be an internal document between the state and the working groups, it was published in April 2018 (Saade ed. 2018) after the tutela was presented.

“Elements for a conceptualization of lo campesino in Colombia” (Saade ed. 2018)

We are informed in the introduction of the publication that the technical document was previously commented on and revised by an [all-male] academic group. However, the publication comes along with five additional commentaries done after its initial internal presentation by five academic researchers (four women, one man). The issue about who gets to be called a peasantry expert and for what political spaces will be discussed later on, and some of the recommendations will serve to advance the discussion on feminist agrarian studies initiated in part one. I leave that section for the last part of this chapter to link with the themes of the following chapter.
The technical document (Saade ed. 2018) establishes a series of general considerations that allows for the location and identification of the campesino population and its technical considerations suggests that it is important to include the category campesino in the national census planned initially for 2017. It also proposes a definition to serve the census effort and suggests a series of questions to be included in the census. A first series of specific questions is about *lo campesino* (that which can be considered peasant) in relation to common resources and community issues (*lo comunal*). It also proposes a series of theses about the peasantry organized in four dimensions that will be described hereafter. Finally, it proposes the establishment of statistical connections with other groups of questions in the general census. The document begins from a general assertion loosely translated as:

The peasantry is constituted historically. Its genesis and transformation are related to the process of accumulation of capital from each historical period and with the different ways of life of the peasants associated to them. In this sense, the peasants are specific historical products, which implies likewise to understand its multiple and diverse communal origins, as well as its variable and differentiated trajectories. It is necessary to conceive the configuration of peasant communities in relation to the tendencies of agrarian production, the political processes, the role of violence and the presence of multiple stakeholders in the countryside [el campo]. (Saade ed. 2018, 17. My translation)

The text establishes four dimensions that serve as axes for the general thesis and that suggest a series of premises that should serve for the objective of conceptualizing the peasantry for census matters. I underline the issues from each dimension related specifically to subjectivity for their further analysis in this dissertation. It is to note that this conceptual exercise is tailored for the Colombian contemporary context. Therefore, the examples and languages are related to this context. The following are my own translations of sections from the technical document and I underline the aspects which I consider more related to this dissertation research.

1. **Sociological – territorial.** Relates the peasantry to land and territoriality, related to forms of land possession such as neighboring, associative, social organization based on family and communal nuclei. There are differentiated ways of inhabiting and transforming
nature from labor. This dimension seeks to differentiate the peasantry from the rest of rural populations or productive systems in the rural areas although they can be associated by work to them. The peasant ways of life are expressed territorially and through social networks, as well as constituted in relation to ecosystems. Although there is a strong bind of the peasant to nature through labor, the agrarian activity remains the primordial element of appropriation of el campo. There are specific attributes closely related to the territory of the region they live in, e.g. from the coasts: costeño, from the river side: ribereño, from the wetlands: cienagüero, from the savannas: sabanero.

2. **Sociocultural.** The individual, family and communal autorecognition of being part of a peasant collectivity seems to be fundamental in the construction of campesino identities. The relations to family and community as social organizational nodes and of peasant types of labor, which are in themselves articulated to regional and local networks, culturally constitute the campesinoado. It recognizes ways of communal life not only expressed by spatial closeness (veredas, neighborhoods) but also by age and gender. “The peasant is an intercultural subject in his/hers historical configuration. This implies conceiving as much its diversity as well as its common characteristics as campesino. There is not just one way of being peasant because in this subject is expressed the constitutional recognition of being a pluriethnic and multicultural country.” “The peasants are heterogenous in socioeconomic terms (this means, in relation to their quality of life.)” The peasants constitute ways of life. It is possible to understand the peasant life as an assemblage of ways of living sustained by rural social relations, urban connections.

“The peasant is a subject that comes from el campo” (emphasis added). Relating this statement to their relationship with peasant ancestry and descendancy. “The peasant is a subject that exists in el campo” (emphasis added). Relating it to sense of belonging and representations from their entrenchment to land, sustained by knowledges, memories, ways of doing, transmitted generationally.

3. **Economic – productive.** There are different labors such as harvesting, cultivating, fishing and raising animals that establish special relation with land. There is a central relation established between peasant life and its quality of producing food, use-values and primary materials. Relations with nature from labor, relations that imply using and managing biodiversity for food production, service delivery, multi-active economic activity and diverse land tenancy constitute this dimension. “The peasant is a multi-active subject from a point of view of its economic activity.” “The peasant is a social subject that has constituted and transmitted -through generations- an amount of memories, knowledges and ways of doing.” The campesino subject works for household

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48 The original quote says: “El campesino es un sujeto intercultural en su configuración histórica. Esto implica concebir tanto su diversidad como sus características comunes en cuanto campesino. No solo hay una forma de ser campesino pues en este sujeto se expresa el reconocimiento constitucional de ser un país pluriétnico y multicultural.” (19-20) “Los campesinos son un sujeto que viene del campo.”; “Los campesinos son un sujeto que existe en el campo.”

49 “El campesino es un sujeto multiactivo desde el punto de vista de su actividad económica.” (pg.22)

50 “El campesino es un sujeto social que ha constituido y transmitido, a través de las generaciones un acervo de memorias, saberes y formas de hacer.” (pg.22)
consumption and generate products and primary materials destined to its self-sustained reproduction and circulation in the market.

4. **Organizational – political.** The peasantry has constituted itself from organizational-political experiences that are part of what they are today. “The peasant is a participative subject that has constituted itself as part of national life in relation to the revindication and enforceability of their citizen rights.” “It is a cosmopolitan subject for its social action and politics.” “The self-affirmation of the peasantry as a subject has been expressed in diverse mobilization spaces and of social struggle for decades.” (23)

These dimensions are interesting material to think about subject formation. The exercise is to comprise what already is considered campesino and describe it, leaving it as open–but also as precise–as possible. There are particular Colombian issues at play in these dimension descriptions that can be identified. They use the state narratives from the Political Constitution of 1991 of Colombia as a pluriethnic, multicultural nation. They also mention the country’s rich biodiversity–common and preferred language–to describe and sell the nation’s image in issues from tourism to sustainable development projects and relate it to its peasantry. This basically implies “our peasantry is as rich as our biodiversity” or perhaps, “our peasantry is part of our biodiversity”? Ulloa (2004) has portrayed these narratives of the links between biodiversity and cultural diversity in her work in Colombia, particularly about the “ecological native” in relation to state portrayals of indigenous people. Highlighting the narratives of the relation between cultural and biological diversities is not meant to deny that the ways of being campesino are not related to its environment and to how nature is inscribed and described in this equation. Cultural ecology and geography have a tradition of studying these socio-natural relations. However, it is to highlight the institutionally driven subject formation and the inherence of institutional narratives implied in this technical document showing a state narrative of environmental subjectivity. More on this will be analyzed in chapter seven.
After describing the dimensions, the ICANH technical document suggests a structure to the questions about *lo campesino* in the census. It recommends beginning with an autorecognition in three levels: individual, family and communal. “Do you consider yourself campesino/a?; do you consider your home/family campesino/a?; Is the community where you live campesina?” It then suggests crossing these questions with others of the census such as those related to displacement. Then there are a series of questions related to land tenure and belonging; community activities (e.g. religious, productive, common-pool resource use); then about laboring “Who taught you the crafts, skills and campesino labors?; percentage of the destiny of production (household consumption, exchange, regional /national/international market); “Do you belong to any communal organization? (e.g. JAC, communal board, aqueduct board); and finally: “Have you or your community been affected by violence generated by the Colombian armed conflict?” Yes or no. If yes, there are seven options (A through G) of consequence answers (e.g. death, destruction, loss, displacement, dispossession). These seem to be designed from a centralized, urban perspective. A center who defines “Colombian armed conflict” and the options of consequences, rendering technical many complex and traumatizing experiences of life histories. However, going back to the research question of *why would people want to be legible for the state and why do they want to render technical their social reality?* I argue that this is an important tool to generate focus for public policies directed to recognize the national, historical armed conflict and repair its victims. The narrative of victimhood is a current performative language tool used by diverse social groups and political sectors to name the historical debts that many rural populations have suffered for decades living –or trying to survive– in what became the battleground between the state armed forces, insurgent armed forces and paramilitary armed forces. In the political moment that Colombia is living through since the establishment of the
peace dialogues (2012) and further agreements between the state and FARC (2016), the categorization of victimhood as presented in the technical document is a political tool. In August 2018 –after this document was elaborated– the presidential elections changed the political ground from a pro-peace agreements government (Santos: 2010-2018) to an anti-peace agreements government (Duque: 2018-2022). This can help explain why the decisions around the naming and categorizing of the campesinado in the state language of statistics, became an ambivalent theme for state agencies. There is no governmental interest in naming and recognizing their victimhood around land tenure, armed conflict and economic discrimination among other historical reasons. It is also an important input about subjectivity for this dissertation to analyze why the state –under the current national government (2018-2022)– may not be interested in moving forward the commitments that the state agencies in the working groups did before this government came to power, and that the Supreme Court’s sentence (STP 2028-2018) reinforced around “that which is peasant in Colombia.” The following section describes the tutela text and the process which has developed around it, focusing on state responses to this claim. The subsequent section offers a theoretical discussion on why this collectivity wants to be legible to the state and situates this chapter in the broader scope of the dissertation. The final section (before the conclusion) links to the next chapter by presenting the elements for gendered inclusive perspectives of the campesinado which is a section of the Saade ed. (2018) technical document.

“For the peasantry to count, it has to be counted” and its state responses

Recall from the beginning of this chapter that Para que el campesinado cuente tiene que ser contado (“For the peasantry to count, it has to be counted”) is the sixty-six page text of the
acción de tutela or legal protection presented by 1,770\textsuperscript{51} campesinas, campesinos and organizations. It was presented with the support of the research and advocacy organization DeJusticia and one of its main lawyers and associates Rodrigo Uprimny who was the representative lawyer to the Higher Court of Bogota District in November 2017\textsuperscript{52}. As mentioned earlier, it is directed against the Ministry of Interior and statistics agency DANE, for violating the fundamental right to material equality (Article 13 of the National Constitution). This affects the right of use of their economic, social and cultural rights, as well as the protection of their life project and differentiated cultural identity. Recall that by the time this tutela was presented to Court (November 2017), the ICANH technical and conceptual document (Saade et al. 2018) about campesinado had already been presented in February 2017 to the working groups which petitioned it in 2016: the interinstitutional technical table and the campesina/o table of Cauca\textsuperscript{53}. The ICANH document’s definition and recommendations about how to count the peasantry were to be included by DANE in the 2017 or 2018 national census.

The campesino organizations signing the tutela had repeatedly requested the state institutions mentioned above for the campesinado to be recognized in various official censuses. The text enumerates the diverse legal communications and tools used by campesino organizations to persistently ask the Colombian state to be included as a population initially in the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Agrarian Census (2014) and then in the National Census of 2018. It argues that the information from the 3\textsuperscript{rd} Agrarian Census does not compile the information needed to count the

\textsuperscript{51}https://www.dejusticia.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Tutela-censo-campesino-final-.pdf  The number of petitioners changes in the tutela text from 1,758 to 1,770.

\textsuperscript{52} Initiative led by: PUPSOC (Proceso de Unidad Popular del Suroccidente Colombiano), CIMA (Comité de Integración del Macizo Colombiano), FENSOAGRO (Federación Nacional Sindical Unitaria Agropecuaria), CNA (Coordinador Nacional Agrario), ANZORC (Asociación Nacional de Zonas de Reserva Campesina), and ANUC (Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos), http://agriculturafamiliar.co/el-campesinado-si-cuenta/

\textsuperscript{53} Mesa Campesina del Cauca is composed by the Popular Unity Process of the Colombian South-West (Pupsoc-Fensuagro), the Integration committee of the Colombian Macizo region (CIMA), the Campesina association of Inzá-Tierradentro (ACIT) which is also part of Pupsoc.
population and gather information about the living conditions of the campesinado. That agrarian census of 2014 did not count those millions of peasants displaced to the city due to the armed conflict and those who are landless—which is a condition of particular vulnerability among the campesino population. The tutela mentions how the National Center of Historic Memory affirms that the campesino life plan is in specific danger due to the uprooting caused by internal armed conflict (Uprimny 2017). Using the term descampesinización (depeasantization) this tutela exposes that 87% of displaced people in Colombia come from rural areas, meaning that close to 9 out of 10 displaced people have been forced out of the Colombian campo/rural areas/countryside. Clearly, the 3rd Agrarian Census’ categorization of resident producers does not reflect nor count in any way the complex realities of the Colombian campesinado. This tutela petitions that their social and economic conditions be censused “in order for public policies to take in consideration their specific social situation and special cultural identity” (this tutela/Uprimny 2017, 4). The document argues that this discrimination implies not only a violation of the right to material or substantive equality of the peasantry, but it also implies an effect on their equal use of social and economic rights, preventing the state to develop policies with a differential focus. It is also a violation of their cultural identity and of their cultural rights since the lack of state recognition of the campesinado in the census also frustrates the specific life project of this population. It ignores their specific cultural identity therefore affecting them in distributive and recognitive justice. Not displaying a statistical information system that can evidence the situation of this population impedes the possibility of developing policies directed

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54 See the reference to the 3rd Agrarian Census (2014) in Appendix 3 of this dissertation and its results of the population involved including only the possibilities of agrarian producers as resident producers or not.
55 The text suggests this last term and argument are inspired by the work of Nancy Fraser.
for them, especially when they are already protected by other constitutional articles (Articles 64-66).

In December 2017, the Higher Court of Bogotá ruled to protect the fundamental right to petition and denied all the other claims of the lawsuit filed against Ministry of Interior and DANE for the alleged violation of their fundamental rights. This response was contested by the tutela petitioners to the Penal Cassation Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice as the competent court to resolve and refute the ruling of the Higher Court of Bogotá.

The Supreme Court of Justice issued its decision in February 2018 ordering the state’s institutional attention in relation to defining “campesino”; counting the peasant men and women (“a los campesinos y las campesinas”); identify the socioeconomic situation of the campesino population, formulate and monitor the plans, programs and public policies for the Colombian campesinado. However, the Court’s decisions were late to order the National Population Census of 2018 to include questions that specify who are the campesinas and campesinos since its decision was issued in February 2018 when the national census had already begun. The Court’s decisions included what had already been done: ordering a technical and conceptual document with the definition of campesinado led by the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History (ICANH). That corresponds to Marta Saade ed. (2018) which I described in the previous section. With the ICANH document in hand –including a definition and specific questions to be

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56 The translation of the legalese of these legal documents from Colombian legalese terms to American English is a challenge since the legal terms and processes are different. The original texts in the Court’s sentence reads: “La Sala Penal del Tribunal Superior de Bogotá tuteló el derecho fundamental de petición y negó las demás pretensiones de la demanda de tutela interpuesta contra Min. Int y DANE por la presunta vulneración de sus derechos fundamentales.” (Pg2); “impugnación interpuesta contra el fallo proferido por la Sala Penal del Tribunal Superior de Bogotá”.

57 The technical and conceptual document provided by ICANH for this task is: Elementos para la conceptualización de lo campesino en Colombia. Documento técnico. This technical document for internal use of the working groups that petitioned it, DANE and Ministry of Interior was presented by ICANH in February 2017. The published version which also included the comments and reflections which will be analyzed in the next section were published in April 2018 with M. Saade -the scientific director of ICANH- as the main editor. This is why the text is referenced as Saade et al. 2018 throughout this dissertation.
included in the national census— the reasons of the state (DANE specifically) for still not including the campesinado in the census are diffuse and seem more related to bureaucratic response times, lack of clarity of institutional roles and responsibilities and political interest in supporting the petition, plus technical responses and budget related ones. Structural discrimination is argued in the tutela due to the historical, social and cultural traits subject of marginalization that prevents this population to access and enjoy the full use of their rights.

Other arguments for not including them in the 2018 national census went along the lines of not considering them an ethnic group—which they were not claiming in the first place—although they do claim a cultural identity.

About the question of self-recognition (autorreconocimiento), the director of DANE… highlighted that the National Government, for the effects if the 8th National Population Census and the 7th of Housing, would not treat the campesinado as a minority group at the same level as ethnic communities. On their side, the campesina/o organizations clarified that their petition did not seek that the campesinado were equated (equiparado) as an ethnic group, because their identity is not ethnic but cultural. This is why the campesina/o organizations highlighted that their request is based on the constitutional recognition of the cultural diversity of the country. (Uprimny 2017, 22. Refers to Fact # 20 in the tutela text)

This evidences the Colombian state’s difficulty in equating culture with something different to ethnicity and racial categories (Bocarejo 2015, Bocarejo and Ojeda 2015, Ojeda and Gonzalez, 2018). It also answers to how the campesinado is not claiming culture as an equivalent of ethnicity. As a result of the mismatch in timings and institutional denials to the petitions,

Right now, we do not know how the peasantry will be counted nor when. To agree on how the counting will be done, the Attorney General’s Office [Procuraduría] has called the peasant organizations, the ministries of Interior and Agriculture, DANE, Presidency, ICANH, academics and DeJusticia. Our task as peasantry is to continue demanding our rights and be attentive of the compliance of this Sentence. (handout in Vice Presidential Debate, April 11, 2018).

It is the state’s obligation to combat these extreme inequities and this is why it has created the category “subjects of special constitutional protection” that since 2002 and with diverse rulings
of the Constitutional Court (2012, 2015, 2016, 2017) has included individuals and groups of campesinos. This is also reiterated in the Supreme Court’s ruling (STP 2028-2018, 30). To guarantee the enforcement of rights of those in the special constitutional protection category, the three main paths of action are: differentiated public policies, affirmative actions and rights with differential focus (this tutela/Uprimny 2017, 29)\textsuperscript{58}.

In June 2019 the updates provided by DeJusticia about this case include the ICANH expert document about the concept of campesinado and related questions for the census; the creation of a Campesino Affairs Office in the Ministry of Interior – which has not shown advances in proposing public policy in favor of the campesinado; DANE will include questions about the peasantry derived from the ICANH expert document in the Political Culture Survey, the Great Survey of Homes and the Agrarian National Survey to be done during 2019\textsuperscript{59}.

To date (June 2020), as a result of the STP 2028-2018, DANE did the first of four surveys meant to respond to the tutela\textsuperscript{60}. It surveyed 43,156 individuals in 24 departmental regions of the country during July and August 2019. Relevant to the focus of this dissertation research it found that only 24.5\% of those between 18-25 years of age self-identify as campesina/os. In the next age range it organized (26-40 years) the self-identification as

\textsuperscript{58} The differences between these three concepts are: \textit{affirmative action} in Colombia refers to the policies or measures taken to favor determined persons or groups with the objective of eliminating or reducing the inequalities of social, cultural or economic type that affect them; \textit{rights with differential focus}: is a tool to delimit the mechanisms of responsibility and the guarantees for equality, no discrimination, participation, and giving power to those traditionally excluded and marginalized. Policies with differentiated focus are reflected in both definitions. See also: Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar - ICBF. 2017. Proceso de direccionamiento estratégico, modelo enfoque diferencial. Accessed in: https://www.icbf.gov.co/sites/default/files/procesos/md1_de_modelo_de_enfoque_diferencial_de_derechos_medd_v1.pdf


campesina/os corresponds to 31%. The highest percentage is in the above 65 years of age with 36.7%. This agrees with the recurring perception that the campesinado is ageing but can also mean that there is a generational difference in self-identification as will be explored in the chapter about youth. In terms of gendered division of labor, it portrays that those that self-identify as campesinos (men) spend 80% of their time working, while campesinas (women) invest 57% of their time in “house chores.” This does not tell us how the question was asked in order to divide work from house chores. In terms of the previously mentioned theme of race and ethnicity, 79.8% of the surveyed population that self-identified as campesina/o did not also self-identify in the Colombian ethnic category options. Those who did ethnically identify 13.5% identified as black/mulata-o/Afro-Colombian/Afro-descendant and 6.4% also as indigenous. This issue of race and ethnicity in Colombia and its campesinado will be discussed in different parts throughout the dissertation. For now, I mention that this result should not be read as the only way to “indigenize themselves.” It is not necessarily about a racial affiliation but about a claim that their practices are ancestral, situated, respectful and knowledgeable of nature, and that their culture is territorial (and not only farm centered), which are aspects traditionally attached to indigeneity.

An aspect that is meant to describe campesina/o culture is its organizational tendency. However, only 21% of the population self-identifying as campesina/o in the survey also belongs to an organization, the most common being the JAC. This is significant because in terms of the population that does not self-identify as campesina/o, only 14.5% belongs to any organization. A higher percentage of a population that organizes might be telling of a higher organizational culture within the campesina/o population. However, it would be even better to cross these results with the ethnic, gender, and age range statistics in order to distinguish if an organizational
culture is also more evident with the other categorization angles suggested in the survey. For instance, are older or younger people more prone to organize? Are women or men more visible in this organizational culture? Are ethnic organizations counted in this organizational culture reflected in this 21% result? The same is true for the other issues of the questions. If DANE provided more cross-information possibilities, we would be able to know if there is a generational difference on how women of different age ranges conceptualize house chores and what activities they consider “work.”

This first survey provides a better picture than the 3rd Agrarian Census of 2014 (see Appendix 3), but it is still far from providing enough relevant information to answer the objective of the tutela and the previous political petitions of the campesinado: for the state to implement measures to identify the current situation of the campesina/o population and support the wording, implementation and monitoring of plans, programs and public policies in their favor (DeJusticia). This objective is a clear response to why a collectivity would want to be legible to the state. However, social science scholars (Scott 1998, 2009; Li 2005) have argued that population legibility is an initiative of the state, not of the subjects since being legible implies being taxed. What I argue is that politically, it would be even better to be able to benefit as citizens of the state’s taxation in terms of state investment on their wellbeing in an agenda proposed by them, instead of being victims of its persecution and stigmatization with its different labels as has been a constant in Colombian history. The next section focuses on this academic discussion and inquiry of why to be legible to the state.

**Why would a collectivity want to be legible for the State?**

Standardized citizens were uniform in their needs and even interchangeable. What is striking, of course, is that such subjects -like the ‘unmarked citizens’ of liberal theory- have, for the purposes of the planning exercise, no gender, no tastes, no history, no values, no opinions,
or original ideas, no traditions, and no distinctive personalities to contribute to the enterprise. They have none of the particular, situated, and contextual attributes that one would expect of any population and that we, as a matter of course, always attribute to elites. (Scott 1998, 346)

The theme of demographic legibility to the state in a statistical language reminds us the work of James Scott *Seeing Like a State* (1998). Scott (1998, 345) suggests that modern state planning, includes planning for “abstract citizens.” For Scott, this means that “standardizing the subjects of development” is an elite project for a population mass as seen in this opening quote. He argues that in that elite logic of a planner, particular, situated and contextual attributes are only accessible to elites, not to the mass. Therefore, not all citizens are considered equal, even if that is what the state narrative claims. A modernist state project and production design “tend to diminish the skills, agility, initiative, and morale of their intended beneficiaries.” (349) Taking this into consideration, an anthropological description of the skills, initiative, morale that give shape to what the beneficiaries want the state to know about them, to count about them, is a political gain which is claiming a citizenship that recognizes their history, values, traditions – among others. This is the purpose of the tutela, a citizenship claim. As will be discussed later in this section, I argue that this citizenship claim also connects with Butler’s argument of particular formations of performativity within the social organization of economic life. This section challenges the views of some social science perspectives (Scott 1998, 2009, Li 2005) that declare that it is the state’s initiative to render people legible only for taxable and planning purposes. With the case of this tutela and its arguments, it expands the question of why a population would want to be legible to the state.

The campesinado claim in the tutela for a distinct population labelling aims to challenge Scott’s notion of a standard subject in state planning. Their petition is a statement for recognition and differentiation among the population mass that the state claims to plan for. The answer to
why the campesinado wants to be legible for the state is clearly expressed in the intentions stated by the petitioners in the tutela when they ask for their social and economic conditions to be censused “in order for public policies to take in consideration their specific social situation and special cultural identity” (Uprimny 2017, 4). The tutela text also exposes how not explicitly including them in the national census with their population characteristics is also a violation of their cultural identity and to their cultural rights.

By ignoring their specific cultural identity, the state frustrates the specific life project of this population affecting them in distributive and recognizable justice. But what is the culture that they claim as theirs? Among the cultural issues, the campesinado seeks to position issues such as its place in national history, politics, and economy, or their ways of doing territorial planning and management –including the conservation and management of nature. They propose these situated specificities in their relationship with the state. As a social group, they also claim that their ways of production with their specific skills, agility, initiative, adaptation to ecosystems, and morale are part of their history and culture and need to be respected. This includes for instance their argument that they are historic inhabitants of the páramo (tropical high-altitude peatlands) and that they have developed specific adapted cultural traits for its management and conservation, therefore they should be allowed to remain there, and not be labelled as páramo destroyers. Or the claim of contributing with biodiversity from the agricultural varieties that they produce, adapted to specific ecosystems. Respect from the state is about recognizing the specific needs through serving this population with adequate programs and finance. These petitions emerge and are constructed from a bottom-up dynamic where the household and the vereda level of organization are the basis, with their situated needs according to place specific situations. This way of social organization is also a cultural trait. Mentioned in the previous theory chapter, for
the Colombian case, recognition and respect also imply un-stigmatizing the campesinado as guerrilleros and producers of illegal economies (coca, poppy, marihuana) and begin recognizing them as historical, economic and political actors. All these issues speak of a historic and cultural identity.

This initiative of being so specifically legible to the state, challenges what is proposed by Scott: that the initiative of classifying subjects comes from the state, not from the people. In The Art of Not Being Governed (2009) about the Southeast Asian peoples of the highlands, mountainous Zomias who have historically managed to be state-less, Scott suggests that governments aim “to bring nonstate spaces and people to heel” and that the architecture of the modern state includes the “administrative, economic, and cultural standardization” (4). It is part of “an effort to integrate and monetize the people, lands, and resources of the periphery so that they become…rentable– auditable contributors to the gross national product and to foreign exchange.” (4) This incorporation “has been culturally styled as development, economic progress, literacy, and social integration.” (5) However, “[t]he objective has been less to make them productive than to ensure that their economic activity was legible, taxable, assessable and confiscatable” (5). If this is the state logic, then why did it not render the campesinado legible before? Why is the state so reluctant to do so? I argue that, contrary to Scott’s case where people do not want to be governed, the campesinado seeks to be legible— and therefore governed— in an attempt to seek protection from the state rather than persecution, and investment in the form of infrastructure, health, and education. This calls for a deeper consideration of what the state means and how it is conceptualized in different places and histories (e.g. a colonial state, versus a recent colony turned state). That project exceeds the focus of this chapter and dissertation but it in a way it will be resumed in chapter seven Environmental and peace-building subjectivities,
when I draw on Camargo and Ojeda’s (2018) political ecologies of the state and the ambivalent relations that populations have with the state, between feeling distrust and accessing the state for protection. The technologies of government need to be observed with the particularities in history, economic structure, political organization that differentiate nation-states in the Global North from the Global South, among other angles of difference.

I also argue that the state is reluctant to read them in the terms they propose (e.g. census questions proposed) because this implies later on, more demands for state attention—or in other terms—resources invested in their protection. A neoliberal state rather than attending a historically vulnerated population prefers to encourage their invisibility or label them bandits, terrorists, or environmental destroyers. The Colombian state has also chosen the investment on a war economy where it invests more in military equipment and personnel than in health and education. An easy target has been the “standardized campesino” under a war narrative as a bandit, a terrorist, a drug producer, an environmental destroyer, an incompetent producer unable to compete with agro-industrial initiatives. As Scott continues, states encourage “whenever possible, cash, monocropping, plantation-style agriculture in place of the more biodiverse forms of cultivation that prevailed earlier”(5). The campesino culture and economy represent the opposite: an agriculturally diverse, small scale production. This is something the state does not know how to read in its broad zoning logic of protected areas or productive areas. A complex system of diverse production, profitable in other terms that are not easily legible, taxable, assessable and confiscatable, escape the state logic and language.

It is also true that the campesinado of the tutela is often located in peripheral regions to the central state: the Amazon piedmont, and the “non-productive” ecosystems, or as Scott put it “from a state perspective, in geographically difficult terrain: mountains, marshlands, swamps,
arid steppes, and deserts.” (6) These are the places that in state topology (borrowing Bocarejo’s term), belong to national natural parks, to protection of vast places without people—in ideal national natural parks imaginaries (see also Ojeda 2012, Ojeda and Gonzalez 2018). The dispute of these places as historical campesino territory or as national park use is the constant and current debate. A question the state wants to avoid in these campesinado claims, is why did the campesinado settle there and not in the more productive ecosystems (valleys, plateaus, arable plains)? The answer lies in the colonial and current history: dispossession, land grabbing and the elite haciendas that are in these more productive soils and accessible territories, but are not often agriculturally productive but under speculation for urban uses. The tragic truth behind this state negation of reading its dire situation where the campesinado is estimated to produce 50% of food for Colombians in 4.8% of land (1.5 million hectares) while 41% of the land is in hands of 0.4% of landowners where many have more than one property. Of these lands, many are not even being productive in agrarian terms: 33.8 million hectares are dedicated to extensive cattle ranching (Fajardo and Salgado 2017, 13).

In the transition from Scott’s view of the modern state to Butler’s approach on social subjectivities and performative power, I bring to the discussion Tania M. Li’s (2007) observations of the “rendering technical” of complex social situations. Rendering technical is for instance about isolating facts with statistical data. It is the opposite of linking aspects and treating the ongoing complexities of lived realities, both individual and collective. It is also about putting boundaries to create a technical, partial knowledge that can be planned for so results can be

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61 For a glimpse of this dispute and its ongoing consequences, this article is illustrative: [https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/medio-ambiente/las-preguntas-incomodas-por-el-operativo-picachos-articulo-821798](https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/medio-ambiente/las-preguntas-incomodas-por-el-operativo-picachos-articulo-821798)

62 This distribution of property measured in a Gini coefficient situates Colombia between a 0.8 and 0.9, being 1 the scale of maximum concentration. Fajardo and Salgado (2017, 13)
framed as results of development schemes, achievable policies, project impacts. This obviously means excluding relevant facts. Clearly, asking for the complex realities of the campesinado to fit statistical questions is a case of rendering technical, and takes us back to the question: why would a collectivity want to be legible for the state if this implies reducing their complex realities, history, cultures, economic situations, relations with land and nature, social structures, to binary responses and multiple choice answers to a census or a survey? Butler’s notion of performative agency provides another perspective to answer this question.

Another way of answering why the campesinado wants to be legible for the state, resumes the arguments of Butler on performative power seen in the previous chapter, where “a set of relations and practices are constantly renewed” (2010, 150). There is one suggestion that calls my attention for this case in relation to the tutela about campesino being a statistical category recognized by the state. “[A] performative utterance (or practice) brings into being that of which it speaks… when authority has been delegated or assumed in such a way that given pronouncement of a state of affairs brings that state of affairs into being” (2010, 151). The pronouncement by a state institution of a population identified and counted as campesino with information about its social and economic situation “brings that state of affairs into being” potentially in different political spaces and through different state institutions (e.g. DANE, ICANH, Ministry of Agriculture). Recall Butler’s discussion about performative agency and the case of Masao Maruyama. Rendering oneself technical through a population category for a census is a translation and invention—in Maruyama’s terms—and a strategy in a struggle “for a democratic political form in the aftermath of war … to assume responsibility for a future.” (Butler 2010, 155, see previous chapter). This call to be counted is a kind of performative agency that remakes the subject and its understanding of freedom as an exercise of inventiveness of new
social forms, political norms and enunciations. In this collective intention of assuming responsibility for a future, one has to be able to communicate with the state apparatus. The ways of doing this is rendering one’s collectivity visible to the state in the language legitimate to the state: statistics and legal terms. Rendering technical the complexity of what it means to be campesina/o is taken as a strategic starting point in this historical time and context (post peace agreement) to begin a political positioning within a society that has historically rendered invisible and marginal those with no access to political and economic power. Another way of delegitimizing this marginal population has been by stigmatizing their political struggles. Profiling them as bandits (*bandoleros*), then as guerrilleros –which was then equated to terrorists in a contemporary hegemonic narrative– illegal colonos destroying the environment, has legitimized the state’s inattention to them too as this portrays them as “bad” or “evil”, and therefore not worthy of full citizenship. However, for the state they count as citizens for the obligations of providing physical labor for the military service, as discussed in part one. The state can comfortably use their labor for war as a citizen duty, but is not willing to recognize their citizen rights for state protection when they do not enter a valid statistical categorization – for instance ethnic– that determines a specific legibility, but which historically has not received the state’s respect in many ways either. Recall that the moral value of “respect” from an entity such as the state is to be translated in state investment in specific policies, laws and projects which are consistent with the social claims.

Seeking to be named, to be counted, to have the state explicitly name the campesina/o political subject, also recognizing them as historically-situated subjects, is an attempt to relate with –and be visible to– the spheres of political and economic power. It is a performance of negotiation. Initially there is the attempt to generate visibility using tools (categories) through the
state language of statistics (the census as its vehicle) and legal tools. Through these state languages, enunciation is achieved when they are named as political and economic subjects with specific relations to production, land and territory. Then, they can access a full citizenship, a full access to rights and protection which has been historically denied because the campesinado had not been defined and included in these explicit ways in state languages (statistics, legal). Also, through territorial belonging and management – similar to the constitutional status that indigenous people have linked to recognition of territorial appropriation and management rights as public entities – this campesino strategy seeks recognition of its territorial governance through the legitimization of its organizational and political structures as well as its cultural markers (e.g. minga, JAC). I conclude that this case of being a census category describes what Butler named “particular formations of performativity within the social organization of economic life”. It offers an account of performativity that succeeds (in contrast to fails) in including the economic positioning of this political subject.

I attended a discussion forum organized by the Ombudsman Office in November 2018 where the exclusion of the campesinado category from the national census was exposed and discussed by different actors. All the state institutions present were full of good intentions and readings of the situations of the campesinado. They at least partially repeated some of the historic campesinado claims (e.g. lack of land titling, lack of access to the market, social marginalization). Also, the new director of DANE had been recently appointed so he could only assert that DANE had not included the recommendations of ICANH and the peasant claims in the 2018 national census but that they would be attentive to include them in other statistical exercises. A representative of LVC described how the past 39th session of the UN (Sept. 2018)

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63 Translation of Defensoria del Pueblo, state institution.
had adopted the Declaration on the rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas with 121 votes in favor from member States, 8 against and 54 abstentions where Colombia was one of them. Abstaining from a global recognition of the campesinado as a political subject is in itself a political result, intention, inaction, or lack of interest. Abstaining is also a performative enunciation – using Butler’s terminology – with political intentions. It exceeds the focus of this chapter to delve into the politics surrounding this political decision, but it is showing and coherent with the current government’s (2018-2022) neglect of the campesinado claims. It could also be due to the lobbying of agro-industrial private powers, often closely linked to the national government. In response to why Colombia abstained from voting for this Declaration in the UN Assembly Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs argued that Colombia’s position followed a technical sectorial concept note where several state entities were consulted. Another source, includes a section of the official response from the Ministry arguing its position due to ‘technical considerations that do not apply to the Colombian state, for example some elements of the Declaration are divergent to obligations of the state with commercial agreements and intellectual property, among others’.

I want to highlight two statements heard in the forum which will be useful in further discussions of this dissertation: 1) the peasant historicity has been portrayed in some spaces as an agrarian historicity, but it should also be read as an identity historicity. 2) we must stop saying that the peasantry ‘has stayed behind’ in development, rather, it has been left behind by the state. They are not vulnerable, they have been made vulnerable. These discussion points round up the

64 http://agriculturafamiliar.co/memorias-foro-la-declaracion-de-la-onu-sobre-los-derechos-del-campesinado-propuestas-y-desafios-en-colombia/
65 https://www.elespectador.com/noticias/economia/colombia-no-voto-a-favor-de-la-declaracion-de-los-derechos-campesinos-en-la-onu/
66 https://www.aa.com.tr/es/pol%C3%ADtica/gobierno-de-colombia-responde-por-qu%C3%A9-no-vot%C3%B3-declaraci%C3%B3n-de-derechos-campesinos-de-la-onu/1364673 . I have not been able to access the official note from the Ministry since it is not posted in its official communications page: https://www.cancilleria.gov.co/newsroom/publiques/2018
discussion of this section. The tutela claim and the questions suggested by ICANH (Saade ed. 2018) are not asking for agrarian focused statistical questions, rather, they propose identity questions that situate the campesinado in their complex realities. They aim to generate information that is relevant for their political agenda. Of course, seeking statistics reduces a complex reality and renders it technical. However, this action has a political calculation for them, and this is what is relevant in their bet of new ways of relating with the state.

**Conclusion**

This chapter argues that campesina/o identity is mobilized for political and economic purposes. It seeks political spaces that have incidence in land rights, access to social services, to subsidies, recognition of citizenship in various ways that give a sense of protection, dignity and stability in the historical moment that gave hope of a different investment and attention to rural society in the aftermath of the peace agreements (2015-2018). This of course, is a partial conclusion focusing in the intention of the tutela/legal protection described and the technical document elaborated by a state institution (ICANH) during the peace agreement period. The questions provided by the ICANH technical document (Saade et al. 2018) are now beginning to be translated to statistical exercises with the surveys. How faithful they are to the technical document recommendations is a matter of discussion. The surveys are beginning to generate comprehensive information, accessible in statistical terms to the state and to the campesina/os and their organizations. Can this be called a victory in a long struggle for recognition and legibility? What will be done afterwards with the information that the surveys are generating is right now a matter of speculation. The current calculation of the organized peasantry is that it can serve as the basis for assertive public policy for them. However, it can be argued that it is using the master’s tools, and Audre Lorde (1984) signaled that “the master’s tools will never dismantle
the master’s house.” It was not through the national census that the information was generated. The category campesino was not included in the 2018 census. It is with an alternative strategy of a series of smaller surveys that the state now proposes to render visible the campesinado. Is this a sign that the enterprise of submitting to and using the state/master’s tools through being legible in statistical and legal terms is deemed to fail? Are they failing again to negotiate with power? Currently this is not a finished struggle and the achievements are yet to be seen.

The group of campesina/os who organized the tutela with DeJusticia mobilize identity as historic and cultural. Claiming cultural identity that is not ethnic is not easily understood from a state logic that contemplates through its Constitution, that spiritual, emotional and ancestral relation to land can only be through the ethnic and racial markers of indigeneity and Afro-descendant identity which is also equated as culture. Although some campesina/os might also have an ethnic and racial identity to intersect in other political spaces, this is not the cultural identity driven in the tutela, nor analyzed in the ICANH technical document (Saade ed. 2018) about what the campesinado is about. Even the first survey results show that few of those who self-identify as campesina/os also identify ethnically. The Supreme Court of Justice as an external actor recognizes and protects the campesinado as a cultural subject under the category of special constitutional protection due to their historic marginalization and vulnerability but not easily for other relations to land, territory or nature.

The scenarios where this campesina/o subjectivity reflected in the technical document and the tutela is meant to be legitimate and useful is in legal scenarios, public investment and eventually in policy and development scheme scenarios (yet to be discussed in further chapters). However, this information does not tell us if and how it transcends in other spaces such as in territories. The purpose of the legal recognition after the tutela is protection by the courts and
attention from the state institutions in the recognized state languages of statistics and legal terms. As bearers of specific protection rights due to the historical discrimination and political-economic-territorial armed conflict, the next step would be for these legal protections to be effective in changing the historical marginalization and vulnerability through other instruments: policy (including land titling and protection of property rights), funding, representation in political and economic spaces, changing imagery in public communications among others.

This chapter approached answers to the question: *why would people want to be legible for the state and why do they want to render technical their social reality?* The remainder of this part will continue questioning the campesina/o intentions for relating with the state, seeking to continue answering the research questions: *For what purposes is campesino identity and subjectivity mobilized by those who self-relate, self-recognize with that label? In what spaces or scenarios is this identity mobilized?* The following chapters of this part two will provide more material from other sources for a deeper analysis on the subjectivity of the contemporary Colombian peasantry. Linking to the last section which mentions gender sensitive and feminist reflections about the conceptualization of the Colombian peasantry of the ICANH technical document, the next chapter focuses on other gendered and feminist focuses of this wide question of peasant subjectivity by presenting organizational and an institutional regards of this issue.
Chapter five: Claiming Political Space as Women.

Institutional and feminist perceptions on the needs and subjectivities of rural women and campesinas.

Many women from different regions of the country entered the organization [ANMUCIC] and as you know, the country is really complex and it is not the same to be a campesina from Nariño as one from Tumaco being in the same department. One is an agriculturalist, the other is a fisher-woman. Also, in some regions machismo is expressed in one way, in another, in another way. And about land, worse. For campesinas, land is one thing, a need, and for indigenous women too, but they talk from a collective point of view. Beginning to build this from such diversity was not easy. Add to this that men did not see us with credibility. (Interview to ANMUCIC leader in 2013, in Sañudo Pazos 2015, 110, my translation)

Strategically, although the vision and action principles of women had been transformed… they continued appealing to the traditional roles as a way to position little-by-little their interests in the [political] agenda. A self-representation persisted in relation to their role as caregivers. This is a way of essentializing the caring feminine subject (mother, wife, sister, partner) and from this focus, constructing an agent that carries-out practices directed to change and socially transform her immediate surroundings (one could say, of the practical needs). (Sañudo Pazos 2015, 112, my translation)

“Strategically” is an important word to consider in this chapter since subject representation, performativity and identity –the focus of this part of the dissertation– can be interpreted as strategies in social and political relations. The issues of representation (self or collective), agenda interests, social change and transformation, and feminine subjectivities are the main themes of this chapter. The objective is to trace influences, such as development narratives and explore how some of these themes –and the ways they are mobilized by campesina organizations– have shaped the paths of legislation and state planning for rural women and campesinas. I contrast these institutional narratives and policies, with another perspective about campesinas, constructed through the concept of Campesina and Popular Feminism (FCP). FCP appears in my fieldwork appropriated by some organization members. I also explore its roots, influences and
This chapter is a continuation of the discussion begun in part one about gender in agrarian studies complementing those previously addressed perspectives of gender in agrarian studies in part one. It contributes to address the research question *In what ways is campesina/o identity and subject formation mobilized by campesina/os and external actors respectively?* I begin by presenting the section on gender-inclusive recommendations in the ICANH document “Elements for a conceptualization of the campesinado” (Saade et al. 2018) presented in the previous chapter. The insights provided by women scholars in Saade et al. (2018) coincide in several aspects to the contentions provided by Razavi (2009). All these perspectives will be further used and discussed in the section which comprises viewpoints of campesinas (peasant women) and/or rural women. I present the concept of Campesina and Popular Feminism (FCP) in the origins I traced of its emergence in Brazil and how it is now present in a campesino organization in Colombia through the structure of La Via Campesina (LVC). I show how the concept is explained by a staff member of a campesino organization and explore the feminist views for agrarian studies provided by FCP. This exploration of FCP leads to proposing an argument for essentialisms as strategic political tools for certain scenarios and negotiations. It also leads to proposing how FCP as a situated feminism, can also be called a “territorial feminism” that claims the local environmental knowledges and practices of campesinas as seed keepers as a political claim for food sovereignty. Food sovereignty – in contrast to the state promoted “food security” – implies an environmental, economic and social control of what is planted, what is consumed, where and who it benefits. This chapter then takes the institutional positions of Law 731 of 2002 with the brand new Direction of Rural Women in the Ministry of
Agriculture resulting from the Decree 2369 of 2015 that restructures the Ministry and in this new structure creates that Direction. It examines one of the first technologies produced by this Direction, the database of rural women. In contrast to FCP, the policy developments for rural women in Colombia in the recent decades propose a neoliberal subjectivity where rural women are meant to access modernity through access to credits, private insurances as independent workers, train in technical skills, access recreation as a service, and become neoliberal subjects as entrepreneurs\(^\text{67}\). The current policies fall short in mentioning and addressing the structural situations that have historically prevented rural women—and among them campesinas—from accessing basic rights and state protection. Protection in these policies is framed as a prioritized attention once women have become victims of armed conflict. In this way, once rural women can be categorized as vulnerable subjects, they can access some state services. This passes by navigating the technocracies and bureaucracies of state agencies to be recognized as a vulnerable, gendered subject.

To situate this chapter in the wider map of this dissertation, recall the section in part one, chapter one: “\textit{Campo para las jóvenes? En-gendering the Agrarian Question}” where a feminist view of agrarian studies was mentioned and other perspectives of gender in agrarian studies were promised for subsequent parts of the dissertation. In chapter two of part one, I presented another angle of gender in el campo, with the section “\textit{Compulsory Military Service as Gendered and Classed Labor}” arguing for a gendered view of how young campesino men become cheap, gendered, classed and aged labor in service of the state’s warfare and/or military defense projects. Their conscription constitutes them initially as a vulnerable group that cannot easily

\(^{67}\) With recreation as a service I refer to the family compensation funds (\textit{cajas de compensación familiar}) which are private entities with social security roles and public interest obligations and regulations. Among their services is recreation, offering sport facilities, leisure possibilities (e.g. short courses), and vacation resorts.
escape this forced war labor. As part of the army they then become the perpetrators of another
gendered violence, that against girls, women and feminized bodies. Sexual violence becomes one
of the most common and least named of the gendered violences in el campo.

In *Campo para las jóvenes?* I presented how feminists have expanded the notion of class
to include the mode of reproduction, arguing—for example—the unpaid domestic labor performed
by women in the home (see Wills 1999, 32 in McDowell and Sharp eds. 1999 in chapter one). In
this perspective, not only unpaid domestic labor but other aspects of agrarian-related and rural
un-commodified labor are evidenced. For instance, this has been portrayed in much Feminist
Political Ecology research with issues such as access to water (Sultana 2009), or other uses of
ecosystems for fire wood, medicines, food, fodder—among others. Recall from that section the
mention of how Razavi (2009) suggests three contentions to be studied as part of *Engendering
the Political Economy of Agrarian Change*: 1) the household and its gender relations; 2)
women’s contractual inferiority in labor markets; 3) “participation” and other “additional unpaid
work burdens for particular categories of people who are deemed to be more suitable stewards of
the family and the environment” (see Razavi 1999: 209 in part one chapters one and two). These
three contentions for agrarian studies and others will be summarized and reviewed in this chapter
from the angles of their treatment in resulting policies in Colombia. Additional angles of gender
in agrarian studies emerge such as the technocracies of the state apparatus that profile gendered
subjects according to their vulnerability, not to their previous access to rights and state services
(e.g. public health, education, and equity to access land.)

Of the definition of gender used in part one, I highlight here a specific part on how
gender is “constructed and maintained through discourse and everyday actions” (see McDowell
1994 in chapter one). With this I bring not only how gender is performed by campesinas or
portrayed institutionally for rural women – as will be seen throughout this chapter – but also how the researcher’s gender is part of what should be analyzed, as seen in the section “Elements for Positionality” about the positionality of the researcher in chapter three of this part two. Also, as mentioned in the opening quote of this chapter, Sañudo suggests that women in certain political scenarios use a strategic essentialism as caregivers to construct a subjectivity that can be politically mobilized and has been used for public policy legislation for rural women as this chapter portrays. The opening quote explains how essentialisms can be a result of negotiations among a diversity of realities and interests that group campesinas and rural women in an organization. I argue that essentialism can be a strategic political tool for certain scenarios and negotiations. Unfortunately, I do not have interviews with women who participated in the creation of the policies mentioned in this chapter, to have an insider’s perspective of what was negotiated and what has resulted. I tried accessing representatives from ANMUCIC but I did not succeed in achieving an interview to have this view. Sañudo (2015) presents testimonies related to this experience in public policy from some who participated in it.

**Elements for gender inclusive perspectives of the campesinado**

I resume the technical document (Saade ed. 2018) here to connect its section of gender inclusive elements for a perspective of the campesinado, to link it with the subject of this chapter: gender, rural women and campesinas from institutional and self-identifying perspectives. I choose four of the five commentaries from the technical document, those of women scholars who in different ways mention gendered aspects of the technical concept of campesinado from its male-majority panel. I highlight in this section the most relevant points for this regard, seeking to contribute to the wider question of what feminist agrarian studies perspectives propose. These points are not the only ones commented by these scholars about the conceptual technical paper.
1. Gender inclusive language (Meertens).

2. The variability in family composition (Camacho and Robledo).

3. The household—rather than the family—as a unity of consumption-production, reproduction and care (Meertens).

4. Labor inputs from the family. This relates to the fact that some members of the household maintain a direct relation of work with land, water or “nature” that is not remunerated. (Meertens). The importance of differentiating gendered division of labor (Camacho and Robledo).

5. Inseparability of productive work from care work in the campesino/a family unit (Meertens); care work which tends to be non-remunerated and undervalued socially (Camacho and Robledo).

6. The feminization of agriculture due to male migration and displacement and the importance of inquiring about and naming the situation of rural women as well as their necessities and aspirations (Camacho and Robledo).

7. Emotional relations to a past in el campo. In the current Colombian context of post peace agreements signature (Nov. 2016) a census will find plenty of campesinos who are not living in el campo but keep emotional relationships, affection and hopeful feelings of going back. (Lara)

8. Intersectionality. Mentioning a pluriethnic and multicultural constitutional description of Colombian society does not automatically equate with intersectionalities of ethnic or racial identities (Meertens).

Naming the domination and subordination in its conformation relates among other issues to naming the struggles and the basic rights that this struggle is about: land, citizenship—and more
recently—water and territory. Gender inclusive language refers to how in Spanish *el campesino* implies a masculine subject. This takes us back to the discussion mentioned in the previous theory chapter of this party about Irigaray—brought by Butler and Scott (1992, xv)—on how the subject is already masculine. In many spaces there is the discussion of gender inclusive language, how it sounds, how it reads and what it implies. Here it is not only about how it reads and how the campesino subject has been traditionally been regarded as male—and I would add, mestizo, able-bodied, heterosexual—already married—with children, Catholic, middle-aged—but also on how the questions could also make explicit a campesino subject. Questions that reflect the campesina women realities in their roles and relations to production and care intrinsically related to campesina/o forms of production. About the home—rather than “the family”—as a unity of consumption—production, reproduction and care where multiple forms of families and family arrangements should be emphasized. Labor inputs from the family relates to the fact that some members of the household work on care of other household members. Additionally, they have other work occupations that are not remunerated but benefit other family members for social reproduction and/or in systems of production. These additional tasks may include fetching water, gathering fodder, and other relations with “nature.”

A.M Lara’s commentary also calls to consider the recent UN Declaration of the “Rights of Peasants and Other People who Work in Rural Areas” where its first article establishes that “the term campesino also refers to people without land.” Lara invites the reader to acknowledge how this implies that the notion campesino is traversed by the agrarian question of inequality of

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68 At the time of the writing and publication of the ICANH technical document (Saade ed. 2018) the UN Declaration had still not been voted by the parts. I mentioned this issue in the previous chapter when in a panel, the LVC representative mentions how Colombia—to the date of writing this chapter—had not voted favoring the Declaration but had abstained. The adoption of the Declaration is part of the points of negotiation of the Minga 2019 mentioned in the opening vignette of this part.
access to land. In Colombia this led to the view that campesino identity is not only determined by the type of land tenure but also by the lack of it and the transformation of their livelihoods due to displacement and dispossesssion. In this sense, one can be campesino because one has land, but also because one had land and keeps a relationship with it even after its loss, displacement from it, or is awaiting the state’s attention for land acquisition or recovery. “The city is full of campesinos without land” (Lara in Saade ed. 2018, 44). Lara then poses the question: “What is their identity with respect to land tenure?” In the current Colombian context of “post-conflict” (or post peace agreements signature) a census will find plenty of campesinos who are not living in el campo but keep emotional relationships, affection and hopeful feelings of going back. However the emotional issues are hardly rendered technical as a statistic. How can they be taken in consideration? Is the label of “victim” enough or appropriate for all the emotional situations about diverse relations and emotional attachments to land and territory?

Camacho and Robledo include contributions such as the importance of differentiating gendered division of labor, care work which tends to be non-remunerated and undervalued socially; the variability in family composition; the feminization of agriculture due to male migration and displacement and the importance of inquiring and naming the situation of rural women as well as their necessities and aspirations. This is related to the Direction of Rural Women which is developed in a section of this chapter on how to “count”, that is, identify rural women and their situations and needs. They also discuss mobility in ways similar to how I name them in the first part of this dissertation, on how it can also be understood as individual and collective strategies to escape precarity and rural poverty through other productive options and labor markets. Facing all these transformations they speak of “hybrid and plural identities” reinvented according to circumstances and interests. Although they recognize these new forms of
identity and political mobilization as cultural subjects the authors also question how fixing an identity to some attributes can tie the campesinado to certain markers of difference recognized by the state and how this is counter to the heterogeneity and internal differentiation aimed to be recognized with its agency, autonomy and self-determination.

These contributions of gender-inclusive perspectives to the conceptualization of campesinado, reinforce Razavi’s and other previously mentioned studies about labor and gender in agrarian societies. However, they also contribute with new perspectives that will be further discussed in this chapter, such as the “hybrid and plural identities” reinvented according to circumstances and interests. This contribution ties in with the following section that explores how campesinas and other rural women appropriate and transform gender inclusive and feminist discourses to accommodate them to their needs, struggles and ontologies.

“A feminism that grows in the garden”

Conscious of the rare encounters between feminisms and agrarian studies and aiming to make these paths cross, Silveira Paulilo (2016) describes the feminism that the Brazilian Movement of Peasant Women (MMC for its acronym in Portuguese) identify with since 2010. She situates this peasant feminism in the trajectories of Brazilian feminisms and Latin American ones.

The author cautions against White, urban, North, elite, bourgeois, academic feminisms that can dismiss and judge this peasant feminism because it is not interested in postmodern issues of identity, technology, queerness, cyberfeminism or abortion rights in their agenda, as if these were end-points in an evolutionist regard of how feminism has to be, and the trajectories it has to have in a dogmatic, disciplined authority, a hierarchical view of feminisms. The author prefers

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69 This title is borrowed from Silveira Paulilo’s article.
70 The Movimento de Mulheres Camponesas (MMC) dates back to 1983 but adopted a feminist identity in in 2010 (Silveira Paulilo 2016).
“transmodernity” (from Rodriguez Magda 1989) as a theoretical category, a heuristic possibility which prolongs, continues and transcends Modernity, a return to some lines and ideas – perhaps the most naïve – but also the most universal […]. But it is a distanced, ironic return, one that accepts its useful fiction… [transmodernity] is the abandonment of representation, the realm of simulation, a simulation that knows itself real. (my translation of Rodriguez Magda 2007 in Silveira Paulilo 2016, 298).

This notion will be useful later in the discussion when examining “strategic essentialisms” and how they can be “necessary for intervening in power on behalf of the marginalized” (Sandoval 2000, 60,1). Or as I argue, it serves a purpose for specific negotiations, for instance with state institutions and its legal language. One among many tools that need to be used to advance a political agenda and to claim positions within a society.

Using transmodernity as an analytical lens, Silveira describes how this peasant feminism uses elements of “previous” feminisms – in contrast to the “current” urban postmodern tendencies, concepts and agendas – such as class struggles, issues of inequities in the distribution of rent and property; draw from essentialisms such as the closeness of women and nature in the struggle for native seed production and protection; as well as in the defense of life and life-giving possibilities of women, in their struggles against capitalist agroindustry, extraction, population control and land-grabbing. Silveira suggests focusing on those ideas and theories that are useful and used in the practices of MMC feminism, conscious of the difficulties and journeys for “feminist” to be an adjective used together with campesina (camponesa in Portuguese) since campesinas do not necessarily identify with mainstream, current, urban, feminist agendas. This is where, in the brief genealogy of feminist thought that she presents, this peasant feminism is situated as a feminism of difference, a Third World feminism, influenced by socialist ideas and anti-capitalism, as well as by ecofeminist ideas. Mixing socialist ideas with ecofeminist concepts
is what can be called a “hybrid and plural identity” (see Camacho and Robledo in previous section) and speaks to what Chela Sandoval calls the *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000) which create strategies and identities that speak to, against and through power (Angela Davis in Sandoval 2000, xi). Taking this into consideration, it reinforces the notion of “strategically” mentioned by Sañudo in the opening quote of this chapter when care of others can also be transposed for care of nature. An intimate, instinctive and ancient knowledge of how to take care of the world against the abuses and atrocities brought by capitalist, patriarchal, military and violent ways of doing things.

Aware of the strategic essentialism and “useful fictions” (from Rodriguez Magda above, in Silveira Paulilo 2016), Silveira describes the peasant feminism of MMC as based on daily experience, strategic, practical, aware of its experience in worldly matters and the paths that have been walked. I mention the MMC feminism and its description by Silveira Paulilo as a predecessor of the *Feminismo Campesino y Popular*71 (FCP) that I found in Colombia doing this research, and as a theoretical framework that will be useful when analyzing the case I portray with the interview about FCP that I present below with Luz as my interviewee.

The origins of the term FCP used by Luz during the interview, seem to come from the adoption of the term in 2015 by the Latin-American Coordinator of Campesino Organizations (CLOC72) to which Luz’s campesino organization belongs to. Going back to the texts of La Vía Campesina (LVC) which introduce FCP, Iridiane Seibert appears as the main author73. She

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71 Popular in Spanish has the same spelling as in English but a slightly different meaning. In Spanish it refers to something of the people, of the folk, similar to the meaning of folkloric. Also, something from or belonging to the working class. For example, a ‘barrio popular’ refers to a working class neighborhood. In this same way, ‘feminismo popular’ implies a working class feminism.

72 CLOC: *Coordinadora Latinoamericana de organizaciones del campo* translated as Latin-American Coordination of Organizations of el campo.

describes herself as a Brazilian campesina who since her fourteen years of age has been active in campesino activism, first accompanying her mom and then through her own trajectory which now has her as the coordinator of the MMC. The text that describes the concept of “Campesina and Popular Feminism” proposes: “gender just because of gender, without the relation to class is not the struggle of campesina women”; “Since it is a feminism that comes from el campo it is campesino, and it is popular because it is about class, it comes from the working class.” We see here three identity markers: gender, class and identification with el campo. Telling the story of how this is a concept emerging from Latin America, it discusses the origin in 1994 during the 1st CLOC Congress where they noticed a low presence of women and a lack of perspectives from campesinas about the themes discussed in the congress such as access to land, seeds, agrarian reform, or access to credits. “In some way what happens is a demand for parity and gender focus.” In 1997 in the CLOC Congress, women had their own assembly and proposed parity and gender to be a transversal theme along the movement. It was the same time –as mentioned in the text– when governments and NGOs were incorporating gender-based approaches. “Campesina and Popular Feminism is a construction of grassroots women signaling our own demands and our shared forms of struggle”. From an initial demand for parity in organizational spaces, the claims have developed into deeper, more structural claims for the campesina/o movement in general. This is also what I want to grasp when comparing FCP to what the Colombian policy

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34 The Brazilian Movement of Campesina Women (MMC) is the same Movement described by Silveira Paulilo above.

75 Translated from: “El género por el género, sin la relación con la clase, no es la lucha de las mujeres campesinas.” “Puesto que es un feminismo que viene del campo, es campesino. Y es popular porque es de clase, viene de la clase trabajadora.” In: https://viacampesina.org/es/feminismo-campesino-y-popular-una-propuesta-de-las-campesinas-para-el-mundo/

76 Ibid.
legislation for rural women has achieved (or what has survived of it). The following sections shed light on these trajectories and negotiations.

**Seeds of Campesina and Popular Feminism (FCP) in Colombia**

I met Luz in an informal panel or dialogue about care economy and economic violence which took place in Bogotá in the *Café de la Reserva*\(^{77}\). This panel brought together women from different peasant organizations\(^{78}\). I had been trying to communicate with a woman leader of this organization for the past months but her involvement as a country representative in La Vía Campesina (LVC) had her with a tight agenda, and I had already been left waiting in her office for hours when I had finally settled an appointment with her to propose the interview about *Feminismo Campesino Popular*. After that I had stopped trying to get another appointment with her but I was hoping to meet her in this informal panel. She was not present either in this panel but there was Luz, who is another woman representative from the same organization. Younger and with a more internal, national role within the organization, Luz had been recently promoted from a regional office to the national headquarters in Bogotá. When the panel ended and I approached her, she was very open and willing to do the interview. We scheduled the interview for the next day. We had a long interview. She seemed very enthusiastic to talk about the topic, and eager to tell me about how it was being worked and thought out in her organization. Her story began with her involvement in this peasant organization and her own story and conceptual journey.

Luz talks from her personal experience beginning from her grassroots work involvement, then passing to regional (departmental) coordination work and later participating in LVC’s

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\(^{77}\) This café of the Peasant Reserve Peasant Association offered coffee and other produce of these zones, and organized conversations, small, informal discussions or panels about topics of interest in rural Colombia.

\(^{78}\) Due to the persecution that grassroots leaders, defenders of human rights, educators and environmentalists among others are having in Colombia during the presidency of Ivan Duque when I am writing this dissertation, I have decided not to mention their names as a matter of protection to them.
international gatherings. Her family was established in the town area where her mother had a shop, sold bread she baked, sweets she prepared, and with this and other commercial activities her parents were able to pay her a technical degree. They had a rural livelihood but not a campesino one in terms of not developing or depending directly of agrarian production as the main economy of the family. She returned home unemployed after her technical training degree to help out in the family business and this is when she meets and gets involved with a local campesino local organization and begins working as the secretary. This led to going to other municipalities in the department and learning by comparing, contrasting and discussing approaches to similar situations. They assign her the responsibilities of linking initiatives.

We in [the organization] do not promote women’s organizations as women. We do not consider it necessary because the grassroots organizations that arrive to [our organization] are of mixed character and therefore the structure of each grassroots organization is of secretaries or committees and within it there is a women’s committee, so what we do, what we did was strengthen those campesina woman and family committees within those grassroots organizations. (Luz - 29 years old, July 2018, Bogotá, my translation)

These are the ways Luz portrays how her organization began thinking about and engaging with FCP and what this is currently leading to.

I remember that before I began to encourage the committees there was a compañera [a female colleague] that ran some workshops for women in the frame of food sovereignty. There was for example one of how to prepare cidra79, what it was for, what products could be elaborated from it; others about crafts, which was what the compañeras asked for at that moment. Those were the things that they wanted to learn. And in the coordinating activities with other compañeras... we said ‘sometimes workshops do not have more reach, the compañeras learn but there is no space for compañeras to discuss and debate. And let’s say we needed to go further and bring the political, right?’ That was the critique we did. Like going further than if women want to learn crafts –yes, they are important– but how can we set the scene for there to be a little bit more –or not a little more– that turns it political. In that moment we did not position it as a critique, as if that was not political. And let’s say that experience makes one return to these issues and reflect that women’s daily chores are political. And how to take it from there –or to recognize ourselves from there– how can we vindicate it as a labor that we as women pursue daily, and from there construct politics. Then for example, how to reclaim food sovereignty from the knowledge of women? We have done the effort to rescue the knowledge that women have about medicinal plants.

79 Sechium edule is a Cucurbitaceae vine fruit native of Central America of simple production and preparation.
This, together with the training processes for women went on three ways: 1) sensitizing the social problematic, or let’s say the general problematic that makes us be… or let’s say the politics that has developed around an economic system that ties us. But it is also related to that reality that you can evidence in the territories and politics, realities, articulating that with the productive.

And how, and where can women participate actively? Because it is part of her everyday life that is there. Let’s say to call her to build is to recognize her in the role she plays there as a woman immersed daily. That is the exercise we have currently, to value that role and from there build policy –and we should mention that that is also framed in the Peace Agreement– and there is a specific point in the Comprehensive Rural Reform\(^{80}\) where the role of women is recognized; but also our debate is–or our struggle is– for food sovereignty, but the government talks of food security which is a different thing.

When we pass to talk about Feminismo Campesino y Popular, it is because from the perspective of popular/grassroots women –let’s say giving it a classed sense– that means, a feminism that responds to campesina women, indigenous, black, laborers, luchadoras, then you claim there a class identity. Campesina because it is about asserting that role we play in el campo, in the labor of seeding the land, protecting the seeds. Beginning to give an identity to that feminism since many feminisms have been developed from academia or from the urban. (Luz, July 2018)

From the interview I identify that the FCP described by Luz stands on the following statements:

1. We distance ourselves from other feminisms that promote the idea that men are women’s oppressor. We understand this as a media strategy to underestimate oppressive and violent issues of the state, of an economic model, the whole structure of a violent system that keeps women subordinated and oppressed.

2. As women we also have machismos within us that we need to identify and work on.

3. Many women have fought against oppression and subordination long before the term “feminism” was coined. They have not fought “as women” or “for women” but for their

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\(^{80}\) RRJ in Spanish, is item 1 of the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building Stable and Lasting Peace, titled: Towards a new Colombian countryside: comprehensive rural reform (p.9) 
Throughout the document and specifically for this section, the principles established in this first item, mention equity and opportunities for women in all their life cycle in various issues from land tenure, credits, participation, health programs, among others. Document version in English found in: https://unmc.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/s-2017-272_e.pdf
People, in historical struggles against systemic oppression. In Latin America such is the case of women who fought against the Spanish barbarism.

4. The struggle against the violence to women, the defense of territory, the vindication of women’s role in food sovereignty, shall not be only women’s struggles but organizational revindications of struggle.

In order to later contrast the claims and views from FCP in relation to the legislative development for rural women in Colombia, I refer back to Silveira Paulilo’s description and situatedness of MMC peasant, popular feminism in Brazil –due to both organizations’ affiliation to LVC and common discussions. I suggest the following situatedness and connotations of this FCP found in the interview with Luz.

FCP is a feminism of difference, in contrast to urban, white, middle-class feminisms and their agendas which are more mainstream interpretations of what feminism can be. This means that the FCP agenda is not a mainstream feminist agenda and seeks its own place in feminist discourses and constructions, for its own use of feminist ideas, and making sense in a world and ontology that is their own, and that is based on their situated, territorial, ecosystemic knowledge. It is based in a notion of socio-economic class which is not exclusive to campesina realities, it can also be found for fisher-women, indigenous women amongst others. The common notion of socio-economic identity is why it is “popular” –of the people– and therefore its agenda is related to the claims of class struggle against but within a wider capitalist system. In this sense it is also influenced by socialist views in its claims where there is a struggle for better working conditions (e.g. conscious of a care economy and active in its conditions), against class inequity (e.g. in property rights, land rights among them); seeking for a state that protects its citizens (e.g. which

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81 Manuela Sáenz, Manuela Beltrán, Policarpa Salavarrieta, Juana Azurduy, are among those mentioned.
is conscious and active on food sovereignty). Their gender view and identity as campesinas is relevant in its contingent relation to class identity and struggle. I argue it can also be called a territorial and environmental feminism because it emerges from a lived reality in a certain place, a historical context and has its environmental knowledge in issues such as the seed variety adaptations, but it could also be explored for other food harvests for nutritional sovereignty based on specific ecosystems such as mangroves, forests, etc. Knowledges of climate dynamics and fauna migrations that can also be related to life and livelihood sustenance.

FCP is a feminism that considers that campesina’s daily chores are political, as mentioned by Luz. The domestic and daily roles are a starting point for a political agenda. In this sense, seeding the land, or protecting the seeds are a situated knowledge and a territorial claim that is important in their political agenda about the importance of food sovereignty, in contrast to a state narrative and agenda on food security. Food sovereignty is about having control over the productive system in issues such as deciding what seeds to plant, what to eat, what inputs it has, who can access it, how it nourishes and sustains a society. Food security is about having food for a population, but it does not refer to controlling the whole production chain, nor in the quality of the food, or the prices paid for it. In this sense, food sovereignty in a FCP agenda is a political and economic claim and it is also related to territorial control and by extent to the use, management and control of the environment through the control of seeds, soils, lands, ways of production, agrarian labor. In this line of thought, I argue that the situated knowledge that campesinas have on the production of food is claimed as political, territorial and economic knowledge. It can also be related to their knowledge of nature which can be turned into a subjectivity of a scientific knowledge claim or can be a construction of an essentialist subject, a women-close-to-nature subjectivity. The option of what subjectivity to claim can depend on
context of negotiation which is also a practical view of how to construct, use, and perform subjectivities. This is how a strategic essentialism is used and how fluid identities can be used as political tools for wider political agendas. With these initial reflections about what FPC is and what it claims, I now turn to a detailed history of the development of Colombian policy legislation concerning rural women. The intention is to be attentive to the subject formation of the Colombian rural women portrayed and constructed through this legislative history and the agendas of rural women and how their agendas are negotiated and eventually included or not in this legislation. After that section I offer a discussion that juxtaposes these two aspects of rural women and campesina subjectivities and where they are currently leading.

Development theory influences of Colombian legislation on rural women

In 1984 the National Policy for the Campesina Woman was created and given financial legitimacy through a CONPES\textsuperscript{82}. According to Meertens (2006, 19 in Ministry of Agriculture 2017, 9), although that policy did not emphasize access and titling of land for women, it did have a more positive effect for women benefiting from agrarian reform than in the previous 25 years. It also rendered visible their struggle and supported the creation of the National Association of Campesina and Indigenous Women (ANMUCIC), the organization mentioned in the opening quotes of this chapter. Ten years later in 1994, a Policy for Rural Women was generated with the participation of rural and women grassroots organizations. Its gender focus was the recognition that men and women have different needs, a product of cultural patterns assigned by society. It signaled as the fundamental problem that women do not have social recognition to access the resources needed for production, or to directly enjoy benefiting from their own labor. Therefore

\textsuperscript{82} CONPES: National Council of Economic and Social Policy. When an issue merits attention in the state budget, a CONPES document is established and included for it in the state’s use of its budget.
this policy highlights the need to adjust the plans, programs and projects of the agrarian sector to
the needs and specifications of the rural feminine population. As a coordination office for this
matter, the Office for Rural Women was created in December 1993 within the Ministry of
Agriculture’s structure and this also favored the creation of several municipal and regional
(departmental) Rural Women’s Offices. The selection of the personnel of the main office was
done by UNDP which also had a strong technical grip. With the change of presidential
government in 1998 (from a Liberal to a Conservative parties change), the office lost its high
quality personnel and the documents and results of its work were lost. The Strategic Plan
document for the new Direction of Rural Women (2017, 10) recapitulates and conceptualizes the
period of 1994-99 of this policy:

The gender focus was not understood becoming an isolated theme and responsibility of a few women. Additionally, its strategies and instruments were done under the
discourse of ‘Women in Development’[WID] where an assistance-related and
instrumental conception predominated, about the role of women in food production,
income generation and intrafamily distribution of benefits to development programs.
This generated a regression in the value construction of social justice and equity in the rural sector. (Muñoz 2003 in Ministry of Agriculture 2017, 10 my translation)

A similar regard is described by Luz when referring to other institutional, dependency-creating visions (asistencialistas) exported from international aid platforms with which they as
campesinas do not feel identified, and which began in the 1990s when governments and NGOs were incorporating gender-based approaches

[O]r more precisely, a specific work with women but designed without women or with
their own guidelines from IMF or World Bank. This was not the perspective of
campesina women from CLOC. They understood that it was about a struggle against
capital and they are clear in that they cannot collaborate with NGOs that say they work
gender, that work with women but impede –for example– land occupation. (Luz, July
2018, representative of campesino organization)

Kriemild Saunders (2004) offers a deconstructive criticism analysis of post-development which
supports Luz’ distrust of the approaches offered by NGOs and multilateral sectors, as a distrust
particularly of a WID perspective. A Women-In-Development (WID) perspective seek to make modernity accessible to women (credits, technology, training, private land titles) through the notions of competitiveness and empowerment which are based on a liberal logic of “everyone can be an entrepreneur” and “everyone can be at the same ground level to compete economically and achieve capitalist accumulation.” In this narrative, if women can access this same starting level of modern tools, the path shows itself out of inequity. A Women-and-Development (WAD) perspective includes more analysis on domination and violence based on the capitalist system, therefore it privileges class over gender and frames inequalities “in terms of the accumulation process of global capitalism rather than patriarchal domination per se.” (Saunders 2004, 8). GAD Gender-and-Development is a perspective “concerned to unearth gender as an ideological construct in its culturally varied expressions” (11) and class relations with the broad interconnected relationships that generate subordinations, access to resources and labor burdens. For Saunders, GAD seeks a “socialistic (state welfare) orientation” seeking redistributive roles, state subsidies in areas such as education, health, housing and pensions as a responsibility of the state to support social reproduction. This however is “an unquestioned commitment to an enlightened vision of socialistic development, entailing industrialization and modernity for the South.” (Saunders 2004: 11)

In relation to the representations of rural women in Colombian legislation, according to Sañudo Pazos (2015) gender subjectivities have been negotiated in different ways in Colombian rural and agrarian laws focusing in the last 30 years. The law 30 of 1988 had very specific imaginaries of the gendered roles in rural spheres in relation to the productive and the reproductive. Law 30 consolidated a view of difference in social production between women and men, production and reproduction as two hierarchical social essences, strengthening the type of
relations that this difference projects: caring woman - productive man; woman as complement of man, among others (152). Sañudo continues on how both the fields of signification and action were mediated by the differential opposition between feminine and masculine and by the naturalization of the relation between dominant and dominated. In this way, the representations of gender were constituted not only in the product of such division but in the way how through its circulations, difference was naturalized (152). This had implications for generating organizing principles of perceptions and of actions both of men in peasant organizations, and in women, since the gender representations in Law 30 suggested a masculine position over a feminine one, naturalizing a question that is then constituted as part of the political habitus83 (152).

It is with this background that Sañudo suggests that the rights of women to land were not conceived as a matter of affirmative character but a social policy when the still prevailing Law 160 of 1994, Law of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development was constructed. According to Sañudo it was possible for rural women’s organizations to get state cooperation for this 1994 law since what they wanted did not abruptly change what was previously in the 1988 law. Their only innovations were to include the participation of women in planning processes of rural development, and the extension as subjects with rights in the agrarian reform of widowed women and women victims of war. This privileges women who are in an unprotected status due to situations of violence in procedures for access to land. It is in this sense that access to land is conceived by the state as a social policy. Through this targeting, subjects are given the necessary conditions to incorporate themselves in the new model helping them in their strengthening. By prioritizing these vulnerable sectors and subjects they could be incorporated in national

83 Sañudo takes the concept of habitus from sociologist Pierre Bourdieu who proposes that we are all immersed in a series of socially structured behaviors. We interiorize these social behaviors, cultural practices and representations and with these elements, configure and understand our realities. Habitus is a “structuring structure” (Gutierrez in Sañudo 2015.)
productivity (153). This is how the consolidating neoliberal state of the 1990s conceived rural women. Recalling the opening quotes in this chapter about the diversity of rural realities of women who organized under ANMUCIC, joint land titling with the husband/partner was an initial strategic claim that all could benefit from even if some within the organization were seeking more specific access to individual land rights.

Sañudo (151) reconstructs how in the Coalition Block of Agrarian Unions, Organizations, and Indigenous Communities (CONAIC) the National Association of Peasant, Black and Indigenous Women of Colombia (ANMUCIC) found a space to include their petitions, but they still found that the vast majority of the organized peasantry still perceived women as caregivers and wives, as companions in the struggles with some needs over land that should be subsumed to the needs of the peasantry as a class. Complementing the previously presented views of institutional gender approach where campesina women did not feel recognized (see Luz in previous section), Sañudo says that institutional agents such as officers of the Ministries of Agriculture or FAO consultants were more willing to include gender differently in rural development planning.

The gender representations embodied by the institutional agents with regards to rural women, besides being configured by patriarchal principles of vision and action where women are perceived as key subjects in care, evidenced an innovation. Now women are shown as vulnerable subjects that need to be taken care of to make possible their insertion to the new model and specifically to the productive realm, an instance privileged in the law and neoliberal politics. (Sañudo 2015, 154, my translation).

Moving from delicate subjects naturalized for the realm of care, to vulnerable subjects that must be protected by the state for their effective insertion as productive subjects in the national economy, Sañudo shows the changing subjectivities of rural and campesina women as mobilized by the state through the different economic and development schemes that influence it. The following law (731 of 2002) “by which norms are dictated to favor rural women“ can also be
analyzed through the lens of subject formation, subject design and its influences from
development and economic frames.

**Colombian legislation about rural women, Law 731 of 2002. A Neoliberal Portrayal of Rural Women?**

The background context of the current Direction of Rural Women and the route for its functioning is the Strategic Plan of the Direction of Rural Women 2017-2020 (Ministry of Agriculture 2017). Its origins were in the 1980s emerging with the struggles of rural women in Colombia for their economic, political, social and cultural rights to become visible was presented in the previous sub-section. When analyzing the next law related to rural women (after 1984, 1994 seen above), Law 731 of 2002 “dictates norms to favor rural women.” It is a law specifically tailored for rural women. According to the public servants interviewed in the Direction for Rural Women in the Ministry of Agriculture, this law and the Direction are the result of a hard struggle and effort of ANMUCIC and other women’s organizations. However, the Strategic Plan (Min. Agriculture 2017) describes Law 731 framing it as a less ambitious policy than that of 1994.

It is a law that presents an amplified dimension of the new rurality contemplating relations that are knit on the urban-rural context, examining women not only in their agrarian activities but in all those inserted in the rural context… In this sense it considers a normative frame directed to promote the participation of women in finance funds for the rural sector, decision bodies; strengthening their education, capacities and recreation; and promote in an equitable manner their participation in the agrarian reform. (Ministry of Agriculture 2017, 10 my translation)

The object of this law is to improve the life quality of rural women, prioritizing those of scarce resources and take measures “enrooted to accelerate the equity between rural men and women.” (Art.1). Rural woman is defined as:

All who—without any distinction of any nature, and independently of the place where she lives—her productive activity is directly related to the rural, even if that activity is not recognized by the information and measurement systems of the State or is not paid.
Within the definition of rural activities the law names “traditional ones such as agrarian, forestry, fishing and mining, as well as non-traditional like the development of agroindustry and micro-enterprises”. It also includes a wider perspective of rurality and mentions agro-productive and commercial chains, tourism, handicrafts, mineral transformation, “and other new fields of opportunity including market activities, product transformation and service provision” (Art.3).

In this first section of the law a new language can be observed which can suggest new subjectivities in a neoliberal policy era. The idea of “empowerment” is introduced by expressing that rural women in “the new rurality” have mobility, meaning they move between the rural and the urban to construct a livelihood. Their economy is more than agrarian, and –the narrative goes– with adequate finance funding, education, capacities and recreation, they can be fulfilled and empowered to participate in … “the agrarian reform.” Reviewing the agrarian and land related history of Colombia one wonders, what agrarian reform? Looking at the date when this law was signed by state institutions, it was in January 2002, the last part of Andres Pastrana’s presidency (Conservative Party), and the year that Alvaro Uribe came to power for eight years (right wing government). Anything but an agrarian reform happened in those eight years. It was the period when the paramilitary forces strengthened their power in the territories with a legitimization from the national government; when Agro-Ingreso Seguro (AIS or Secured Agricultural Income) was launched through the Ministry of Agriculture benefiting the landlords

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84 Marnia Lazreg (in Saunders ed. 2004: 125-6) suggests that the concept of ‘empowerment’ as it is used in postmodern feminism, implies giving women from formerly colonized societies, or countries of the ‘South’, a voice, their voice, and carries implicit a romantic idea of creationism, of “giving social birth to women, engendering their being, imbuing them with self-presence through the act of speaking”. This for Lazreg is more of “a ‘Western’ act of soul-cleansing, as a form of normalization of power over those who had previously been silenced. Giving women a voice presumes that these women were/are mute.” Lazreg argues these women have always had their own voice and have voiced their miseries and happiness but “[m]any of those who did not listen were academic feminists whose profession was to translate these women’s reality, and construct their subjectivity to fit theoretical models now about to fall under the axe of deconstruction.”
and agro-industrials that financed Uribe’s 2002 campaign\textsuperscript{85}; and when territorial designations such as the Peasant Reserve Zones (ZRC) –seeking to continue agrarian reform initiatives such as the Agrarian Law of 1994– where suspended, its leaders threatened and its national organization stigmatized as being part of the guerrillas\textsuperscript{86}.

Chapter Two of the Law is about “Participation of Rural Women in the Finance Funds for the Rural Sector” and seeks that funds, plans, programs, projects and entities around rural activities must adjust their procedures and requirements so that any possible obstacle that is eliminated that impedes the access of rural women to them. They should provide dissemination, capacity building, technical assistance so that rural women can access them. Credits and quota are described with the institutions in charge of them, percentages, and the creation of a Fund for the Support of Rural Women (FOMMUR). This fund is meant to “incentivize the creation, promotion and strengthening of associative forms, the granting of associative credits with the purpose of achieving an organized and direct connection of rural women to the markets.” This reminds us of Saunders’ explanation of WID with women’s access to modernity through credits and brings the question of why the emphasis on associativity for women to access these funds.

In this initial section of Law 731 the idea of the rural woman as an entrepreneur is also introduced when mentioning how rural activities these women perform also include agroindustry and microenterprises, and how there are “fields of opportunity” in market activities, product transformation and service provision. These new catchphrases suggest the creation or visibility of the entrepreneurial subject, implying all rural women can be entrepreneurs from miners to


\textsuperscript{86} See this article for a brief history of the ZRC and its stigmatization during Uribe’s presidency. https://prensarural.org/spip/spip.php?article5172
tourist guides only if given the right capacity building, finance funding and access to the markets. Continuing the narrative of the entrepreneurial subject, rural women will be competitive actors in direct relation with “the markets.” This is a narrative that will also be examined for rural youth in a following chapter, and which follows Saunder’s previously mentioned description of WID’s perspective about what women need is modernity accessible to them – and I add– to become a productive economic subject, working individually as a micro-enterprise. I argue this is a neoliberal portrayal of the rural woman. It is more a creation of a gendered economic subjectivity meant to align to current national macro-economic dynamics, than a policy that aims to respond to the claims of the women it is meant to support. It shows the ways Development (with a capital D as a progress paradigm) functions. It does not challenge the macro-economic status quo but rather adjusts the narrative in the name of progress, in this case for rural women to fit in as economic subjects, avoiding to mention the structural inequities that will prevent women under these conditions of economic poverty and disadvantage to reach and maintain a level of economic prosperity. The faults can then be blamed on the individual’s lack of “entrepreneurial stamina” or something of the sort.

Chapter Three is about “Norms Related to the Regime of Social Security for Rural Women”. It mentions the routes that should facilitate rural women to affiliate to the general system of professional risk as independent workers even if they do not have paid work, and will promote studies, campaigns and actions of prevention, promotion and education about their activities at home or in rural settings. There is no mention of retirement or health care system. The mention of the system of professional risk as independent workers refers to the (usually private) insurance you have to pay as an independent worker in Colombia. A quantity depending of the level of risk your economic activity implies. It is an example of the labor precarity in
neoliberal states where you pay private insurance companies for the risks involved in your economic activity, your contractor remaining free of responsibility. Additionally, if the health system is not even mentioned, how are rural women, independent workers supposed to recover after a work accident? This shows another convenient narrative of the neoliberal subject, who has to pay private insurances without an adequate health system that supports them.

Chapter Four is titled “Norms Related with Education, Capacity and Recreation of Rural Women.” It says the national government and territorial entities will promote the service of rural and campesina education –formal, informal and non-formal– that in an equitable manner will amplify technical skills of rural men and women in the rural activities mentioned by this law. SENA will also offer professional training programs that follow the initiatives and needs of rural women, according to their education level, roles and ways of life, and guarantee their access without discrimination. It also states the stimulation of social and communal sport practice for the comprehensive development of rural women by municipalities and regional governments. It is important to highlight how education and recreation are portrayed as services and not as rights, and how the highest level to be achieved in education is in technical skills, and training programs. The possibility of academic access is not even mentioned, reinforcing an idea of a rural subject who only needs access to the service of education to qualify technical skills. There is no mention of scholarships for university level education. What does this mean in terms of the productive subject that the state models? That a campesina or a rural woman cannot become a professional? Clearly, it suggests that the state is a facilitator so that these subjects can access the services increasingly provided by the private sector (e.g. health system, risk insurances, capacity training) once they have accessed the capital –through credits and loans– to buy these services. The state can then claim that it supported the creation of a modern, liberal, rural, subject,
properly inserted in the market system. They are apt for providing technical labor-force in the best of scenarios. The lack of possibilities in other fields –and specially in academia– also tells how the state portrays these gendered, rural subjects in terms of their social and economic participation in society.

Chapter Five “Participation of Rural Women in Decision Bodies” states that rural women will have equitable participation on the Municipal Rural Development Councils and Territorial Planning Councils as well as in other spaces created to coordinate actions for resource uses for rural development and in education committees (municipal, district, department).

“Representatives of rural women will be chosen in a democratic form by their own organizations in the conditions signaled by law.” This equitable participation sounds like an “add women and stir” formula and is also reminiscent of Razavi’s third contention for a gendered perspective of agrarian studies (see chapter one) where equity in participation is not examined as a possible additional work burden where no effective compensation is visible.

Chapter six “Norms Related with Agrarian Reform”, “Titling of land from agrarian reform which had been titled to a permanent partner or spouse who has now abandoned the household” (Art.24). The land rights will be passed on to the one who can demonstrate the condition of abandonment. Titling of land to communal enterprises or associative groups of rural women, as well as to women heads of households, or those who are socially and economically unprotected, due to violence, abandonment or widowing. More than being related to initiatives of agrarian reform, this chapter seems to be about the technicalities for women to access an already gendered (male) access to land tenure. This reminds us how in the 1980s –as Sañudo explains– due to the diversity of women and situations, what they agreed as ANMUCIC was to claim joint titling to the couple as a strategy to access property rights within marriage and other common-
law relationship status. In the development of armed conflict in Colombia since the 1990s one can argue that now an important claim is to not lose these shared property rights in the scenarios of forced displacement and the different types of violences (sexual, military, land-grabbing, economic) faced by women in these cruel and crude situations. No advance in individual titling is explicitly developed in this law. Its closest mention is in Articles 25 and 26

Article 25. Titling of plots of agrarian reform to communal enterprises or associative groups of rural women. Beneficiaries of titling of plots of agrarian reform to communal enterprises or associative groups of rural women that comply with all the other requirements demanded by the law. Equally, preferential access to land will be guaranteed to women head-of-household and those who are in social and economic unprotection or by causes of violence, abandonment or widowhood.

Article 26. Equitable participation for rural women in the procedures of adjudication and uses of the plots from agrarian reform. In all procedures of adjudication and use of plots from agrarian reform that allow the participation in decision-taking, capacity building, technical assistance and negotiation of plots, both rural men and women that are beneficiaries shall intervene in an equitable manner with the object of guaranteeing transparency and equality in such procedures. (my translation)

Article 25 reinforces the notion that a rural woman has to be a vulnerable subject or associated with other women in order to access land or not lose her already gained rights. Article 26 assumes women already have even and equitable rights as rural men to access land, participate in decisions, receive technical assistance, and related issues to agrarian reform. A sense of affirmative action is implicit for vulnerable rural women, but for those who cannot claim this status –with all the paperwork, time and resources involved in proving it– it is assumed that they always had the same opportunities as rural men and therefore can access “agrarian reform” benefits in equal conditions. And this is the law “By Which Norms Favoring Rural Women are Dictated87”. It is telling that “favoring” is full of gaps for a comprehensive approach to the situations of rural women, and/or is the result of contrasting visions with different moments of

87 The original title and opening of this law in Spanish says: “Ley 731 de 2002 (enero 14)… Por la cual se dictan normas para favorecer a las mujeres rurales.”
negotiation that result in incoherent, incomplete or incompetent policies for those meant to be benefitted.

Chapter seven. On various issues such as family subsidies for rural social housing to prioritize women head of household over other applicants; in reforestation projects, at least 30% of the labor force should be of the women that inhabit the place and environmental authorities should be consulted about the appropriate plant according to the ecosystem. The chapter also mentions that the national government will generate instruments and mechanisms to assure effective and timely claim of the right to equal remuneration and labor conditions for rural women. Finally, Chapter eight on final issues mentions that state statistics should generate indices for evaluating policies, plans, programs and projects in the rural sector discriminated by men and women. The state will do workdays of national identification providing national identification cards for rural women so they can have “full identification, be able to exercise their citizen rights and access services, obtain credits and special subsidies.” The government will disseminate the information about the legislation that favors rural women through different communication media, written and didactical material. The government will design a plan to revise, evaluate and follow the programs and laws that favor rural women through a Council Body for the Equity of Women, collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. This takes us back to the argument of the tutela presented in the previous chapter, “For the peasantry to count, it has to be counted”, arguing for adequate questions in statistic exercises of what the campesinado’s living conditions are and subsequent appropriate measures that respond to the needs for a dignified livelihood. However, that tutela comes eighteen years after the creation of this law for rural women.
In general, Law 731 proposes a “neoliberal subjectivity” (Schwiter 2013) for rural women. Under the narrative of empowerment and mobility as positive individual and desirable traits in “fields of opportunity”, it proposes solutions to the needs of rural women which focus on access to private services and not to public, social security measures and protection. With solutions such as access to credit and investment to be competitive players in the market; affiliation to general professional risk insurance (usually with private companies) as independent workers; access to education and recreation as services and not as rights, and proposing technical skills as education but never mentioning access to academic professionalization; assuming an already existing equity to access private land titles, it proposes a series of neoliberal solutions.

Although approved eighteen years ago, the law has not been fully implemented nor regulated. Since Law 731 did not achieve the official creation and budgeting of the office for the Direction of Rural Women, in 2008 several organizations have formed the Political Impact Roundtable for Colombian Rural Women to pressure on its regulation and implementation. Since 2015 they have also formed the Political Impact Platform of Colombian Rural Women that unites 26 organizational spaces and 800 grassroots organizations (Ministerio de Agricultura 2017, 11). It was through the pressure of this platform, the support of international cooperation, congress representatives of different parties and the Presidential Council Office of the Equity of Women that the Decree 2369 of 2015 and the creation of the Direction of Rural Women office was finally officialized.

It was only in 2015, thirteen years after the law was signed, that the Decree 2369 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development mentioned –but did not develop– that the Ministry will formulate polices for the improvement of zones affected by armed conflict and for the harnessing of genetic, animal and vegetable resources. However, the most important result of
this Decree is the creation of the office of Direction of Rural Women (DMR for its acronym in Spanish), assigning its location within the Ministry’s structure and naming the functions the office will have. They are basically generating, providing and analyzing information; coordinating with legal offices and institutions; designing policies, plans and projects for rural women. Perhaps due to the juncture of the peace process between the Colombian Government and the FARC guerrilla, the recognition of the existence of armed conflict and its impacts on rural populations that this office was finally given life. During the period of Uribe’s presidencies (2002-2010), the government narrative denied armed conflict and framed it rather as a war on terrorism, with the FARC being the main terrorists.88

When I interviewed the personnel delegated, the office had been recently created some months ago (in Nov. 2017). It was led by an Afro-Colombian woman, and one of the staff delegated for the interview was also an Afro-Colombian woman. This is not common in national public offices of Colombia, since the marginalization of the Afro-Colombian population, and within it, Afro-Colombian women is a historical tendency. As I write this chapter, the political scenario has turned. Now the political forces who opposed the peace agreements are in power. I argue this has impacted the DMR which is no longer led by women who come from rural women’s organizational processes. Now it is led by an urban economist graduated from the country’s most expensive private university. Nonetheless, she is a woman, since Duque’s presidency has the goal of gender parity. In the “add women and stir” perspective, it is the same equation: a woman continues to lead the office. In a more political perspective, it is a great difference the socio-economic, political and racial origin of the women leading this recently created office. I did not go back for another interview with the change of directors and of

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88 See Olave 2014 on rhetorical approaches of the Colombian armed conflict.
government. However, the change of direction is a reflection of the instability and political fragility of this office as part of a state institution. The next sub-section focuses on part of the interview with the officers about one of the main tasks they highlighted that the DMR was doing: an on-line profiling application form to register rural women.

Technocracies and rural women. Data and profiling application form to register rural women.

One of the main questions I had for the Direction for Rural Women (DMR), was: How does this Direction select the rural women with whom it will work? I was thinking of organizational, regional terms, by poverty index populations just to mention a few. However, this is how the officers answered the question:

Officer 1: Right now we are organizing a database of rural women. We have the inputs from other entities, from municipal agriculture offices (secretarías) and from municipal offices for women issues to have a consolidated database about rural women. To know where they are, what they are doing, and each of their actions. Having this information and looking at the institutional offers available, according to what they [the women] are working, we can also give the institutions this information. So if we know that in Cauca there is a woman working yuca (manioc), and we know about the undertaking of a manioc project, then we know the women who can access and benefit from this. So what we do is hand this information to these women and what each one is doing for her community.

[Interviewer: Do you arrive to a level of individual identification or through organizational affiliations?]

Officer 1: In the interest of generating opportunities, this Direction decided to first collect information of women served by different directions and entities ascribed and related to the Ministry of Agriculture. Each one of these entities has been reporting about women’s organizations but the information is not totally unified. The same information is not in the database but at least we have identified some women. Both individual women and women associated to these databases. What happens is that in this situation, this Direction has decided to advance a process of registering women on-line with the help and articulation of some departmental (regional) offices of agriculture, women and gender, and with the UMATA\(^89\)s so they can support women in the registration process. This on-line registration form is very simple, and every rural woman can register through the Ministry of Agriculture page, to be part of the Direction’s data base for basically two objectives. One, to maintain them informed of what is being done and the offers that are being developed to

\(^{89}\) Colombian acronym for Municipal Units for Agrarian Technical Support (Unidades Municipales de Asistencia Técnica Agropecuaria in Spanish). These municipal offices are managed and sponsored by municipal administrations but are regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture through departmental (regional) authorities.
favor them; and two, to have a direct communication with them about what is happening in the territories, what they need in their territories. So the idea with this database is that with the information we gather about them we can somehow characterize/define/profile rural women and for this profiling and with the articulation with different entities, more specific offers can be generated or to help those entities so that the benefits they are creating can truly benefit the specific population groups according to what they plan to do.

Officer 2: About the registration to access the opportunities, it is not mandatory that they are registered to access them. It is only about meeting the requirements for the entity that is offering the opportunity. (Interview, Direction of Rural Women officers, Nov. 2017, my translation)

When we had the interview, the format was not yet online. As I write this chapter, the format is now available90. In addition to the basic personal information the questions of the application form include their civil status, number of children and of people that compose their household, if they are head of household, level of schooling, ethnicity, affiliation to an organization, “do you consider yourself a campesina woman?”, rural activities (space to add description), and plot information (name and municipality).

I had asked during the interview about the access to internet connection that rural women have. The answer was about involving the Ministry of Communication and the Secretaries of Agriculture of the departments to support the registrations of women and about the simplicity of the application form. My general impression from the interview with DMR was that the first year of its existence was largely focused in the design and launch of the application form for rural women and systematizing information about organizations related to rural women. The times were tense due to the results of the peace process plebiscite with the winning of the vote against the peace process and the presidential elections were coming in a few months, restricting the possibilities of action on a longer term for those in governmental offices.

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90 https://formularios.minagricultura.gov.co/MujerRural/PersonaPublico/Principal
It can be argued that the DMR database could be a first step to answer to the recent CEDAW\textsuperscript{91} report for Colombia which signals the persistent lack of data about women and men in rural areas and specifically the lack of qualitative information about discriminations in the agrarian and rural sectors. According to the report, this generates a “persistent invisibility” of rural, Afro and indigenous women in statistics due to the absence of gender focus (2019, 21). It mentions the methodological imprecisions of focusing on an “agrarian producer” when many rural and agrarian forms of production are not recognized and are developed by women and children. The report also denounces how the current indices of life quality and fulfilment of human rights proposed by the national government continue lacking an evidence of the structural causes and barriers that generate discrimination of rural women. The reports provided by the government do not show improvements in life conditions for rural women head of households, nor is there a baseline disaggregated by sex to compile in terms of access to infrastructure, potable water, electricity quality or new technologies. These recommendations are in line with the sub-section on “Context of age and rurality in contemporary Colombia” in part one of this dissertation about the reduced population that comprises a state-recognized agrarian population in Colombia. The online application form finally launched by DMR does not include crucial data to answer the diagnosis of the CEDAW report in issues such as access to infrastructure, potable water, electricity quality or new technologies. Precisely the lack of access to some of these factors can actually limit the possibilities of such a database since many rural women may be unaware of the existence of the DMR’s database and its utility for their eventual benefit. The call of the CEDAW report and its diagnosis also points to the issues treated in the previous chapter about the national census and the tutela “For the peasantry to count it has to be counted.”

\textsuperscript{91} CEDAW is the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women is an international treaty adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly.
The Strategic Plan of the Direction for Rural Women 2017-2020 states it is the product of consulting four types of actors: rural women, institutional personnel of agrarian state agencies, other government institutions, and the international aid sector. It declares the 47 page document—plus bibliography and annexes—is the product of a participatory and concerted process. When the document was finalized and launched, Colombia had just passed the traumatizing moment of the winning of the No vote in October 2016, a vote against the recently signed peace agreements between the national government led by Juan Manuel Santos and the FARC guerrilla. The Strategic Plan can be read through the historical moment of its production highlighting the issues of peace subject formation that are evident along other subject formation and descriptions. I will further this focus of the rural peace subject in chapter seven. In this section I focus on the scenario that the Strategic Plan was meant to respond to as follows:

Rural women around the world play a fundamental role in campesina/o economy, food and nutritional security, generating income, in the welfare of their homes, the management of their communities and in territorial development. It is undeniable that the discrimination towards them for being women, for living in rural zones, or because they belong to any ethnic group, is still active because they have not been offered real opportunities to access—in an equity of conditions and opportunities—different economic, productive, social and political spaces, that allow them to effectively improve their life conditions. (Ministry of Agriculture 2017, 5, my translation)

The document cites in its justification the Mission for the Transformation of el Campo, a research document of the National Department of Planning (2015 in Ministry of Agriculture 2017: 6) which states:

within the rural population, women face additional disadvantages because they have greater probability of being poor, are more poorly remunerated, and in their majority have an informal job, with low mechanisms of protection in issues such as maternity, disability or sickness. Furthermore, the effort of achieving higher education than men has not translated in better work opportunities, on the contrary, they have an excessive load of care activities without remuneration nor recognition, even higher that urban women.
… rural women suffer double discrimination: for being women and for being rural. This gender discrimination is one of the causes of the high levels of migration to the cities. Added to this are the problems that women face in relation to the access to land, productive assets, information technologies, and environmental phenomenon (climate change, desertification, floods). This happens specially in the territories they inhabit, generally corresponding to flooding terrains, steep zones, areas of marine influence, where for instance fisher-women develop their productive activities. The problematic worsens because it is rural women that are usually in charge of food security, the care of the young and the elder, and in this context, they depend on natural resources for their families and their own subsistence. (8)

This is an interesting framing of the problematic since it describes how gender and environmental vulnerability are related in rural areas. The first quote of the Rural Mission document (2015) is reminiscent of Razavi’s point regarding the contractual inferiority of women in labor markets and the household as an initial space of labor burdens and discrimination. The second quote includes new axis of analysis intersecting care work and differentiated environmental effects and burdens related to these effects, both carried because they are women—and tend to have care work assigned—and because they are rural, which exposes them closely and daily to several environmental hazards and risks. This will be further explored in a following chapter on environmental campesina/o subjectivity.

The Strategic Plan continues by framing how these policies are in harmony with the United Nations’ global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly Goal 5 which seeks to achieve gender equity and empower women and girls92. This situates the plan as a tool within a wider global discourse of poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Besides the definition of rural woman established in Law 731 of 2002, the Strategic Plan mentions the categories of rural women established by FAO (2002: 18) which include: 1) non-intensive producers; 2) intensive producers; 3) rural inhabitants that do not own land and sell their labor force particularly in services; 4) related to fishing and seafood recollection; 5) permanent

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agrarian wage; 6) temporary agrarian wage; 7) handicraft makers, or craftswoman; 8) micro-entrepreneurs; 9) gatherers of wild fruits and products.

When I try to fit Esperanza (see chapter two) in one of these categories, I can only fit her in several. This reinforces the argument that rural livelihoods are multi-dynamic in their approaches to labor, particularly for women. She is a producer both in intensive and in non-intensive ways although her intensive production is done in her mother’s and not her own plot. She is also a “rural inhabitant” because she does not own land; she produces food for aquaculture; she sells her labor temporarily; she is beginning a micro-enterprise. This leads to questioning this box-fitting categorization of the variety of situations, in terms of labor relations, access to land and skill training. How is this categorization useful for rural women who have diverse and accumulating types of labor along these categories? What does this categorization solve?

The conceptualization of the Strategic Plan—from critical geography, political ecology, theories of development analysis—reads as a narrative of “before we did not have the right governance structure. It was rigid, based on order, forethought, programming and external directing. Now we get governance correctly because it is finally understood as a dynamic, systemic and participative process where different actors are listened to, and we are not hierarchical but horizontal. Therefore we now have efficiency, efficacy and can assure quality in the goods and services that a policy should offer.” It does not however, take into account the power behind a governance structure, nor does it question a development scheme. It reads like “we have always had the same objectives, just that before we didn’t get them right, nor were we acting in the most efficient way since there was no equitable participation and rural women lacked empowerment.” The Strategic Plan may be a beautifully built participatory document,
however, two years after its production, the nation is being governed by other political powers not interested in the same kind of conceptualization and welfare of rural women, nor interested in the institutional subject construction of a peace-constructing empowered rural woman. This is when we are reminded of why the minga of 2019 blocked the Pan-American highway for 21 days. At the end of the minga the government argued that the President was threatened and a face-to-face meeting was not held despite the scarce 200 meters separating the President from the general assembly waiting for him in the central plaza of Caldono (see opening vignette of part two). This situation speaks to the fragility of public policy, the continuous deception of what relating to the state is about, and about how no matter how campesina and rural women are portrayed (e.g. care-givers, vulnerable, fragile subjects, empowered women, entrepreneurs, peace-constructors) life conditions and access to land have not changed in decades or even centuries. When contrasting these state policies for rural women versus the claims of FCP, what is found is a deep gap between structural demands for change from FCP about the economy, political power, and other issues such as welfare through food sovereignty, versus technocratic responses that are insufficient and often contradictory to these demands, strengthening a neoliberal narrative that only deepens the lack of state attention to this population, who is not even adequately counted by the same state.

**Conclusion**

The intention of presenting these two perspectives on rural and campesina women (policy development and popular views from FCP) was to compare and contrast how the two views generate and portray different subjectivities of rural women and campesinas. A linking interview with women who come from campesina/o organizations and participated in the construction of these policies would have been a key element to understand what had been negotiated and the
trajectories of these policies. I did search for interviews with representatives from ANMUCIC but was not able to do even one with them. From the research material available from this study, there is no evident trajectory and influence of FCP in the current policies for rural women. This can also be because FCP has a more recent conceptual development than the ideologies and conceptualizations that influenced the organizations that worked for these policies.

It is important to highlight that not all rural women are campesinas. For instance, Luz grew up in a rural scenario but not a campesino one. Her family was engaged in petty commerce and owned a bakery in a small town and this is perhaps the family productive asset through which she was able to access a technical education that eventually became for her an asset to work in the secretarial section of a campesino organization. It was her work in this organization which led to clearer connections to campesino realities and to reflect on these politically, leading her to a FCP approach. Her background as a rural woman contrasts with that of Esperanza (see part one, chapter two) who grew up in an agrarian laboring, landless family where access to education was more scarce and where she sacrificed education in an early age due to care roles in the family. It is interesting to see how from a rural (not campesino origin), Luz has developed administrative roles, organizational roles, her education paths are leading to more conceptual approaches, and she is not married nor has children, while Esperanza –from a campesino origin– seeks to continue developing an agrarian production life with better conditions (owning the land, having better tools and facilities, housing structure, transportation) and her educational paths are more scientific, economic and technically directed and related to agrarian production and commercialization. She has already lived with a partner, raised children, and cared for the elderly (currently too living with her mother).
I do not intend to transpose their realities (or rather my interpretation of them) to a generalization of the realities of rural women versus campesinas. Actually they can be rare cases considering they are within the few recorded interviews I was able to do with women in the population range I was seeking to access in this research. Rather, I want to bring salient elements of the differences in access to different livelihood assets from being a rural woman than from being a campesina that I see from their interviews and oral narratives of their lives. Resuming the livelihoods perspective and discussion from part one, this analysis feeds the discussion about livelihood assets and how they are accessed and used to generate life conditions.

However, if looked at from the angle and of the economic and political claims and positions, one can observe that the policies focused on rural women, seek to build a neoliberal economic productive subjectivity. A gendered subject who can perform within a market economy, offering products: food, handicrafts, tourism, technical labor; and can then buy services such as (private) health system access, recreation, risk insurance, education (but only to a technical level), banking services (credits, loans, accounts). This rural woman subject is neatly portrayed in an article in *Semana Rural*, a sustainability magazine, where –to celebrate the Global Day of Rural Women– we are introduced to Angelica. The article begins with this sentence which already summarizes the text and its message:

In her condition of mother, head-of-household, Angelica Valbuena began from zero to sustain her three children. After knocking on several doors, she organized an entrepreneurship that conserves her family tradition but that also adapts to climate change⁹³ *(Semana Rural, Oct. 2019, web version, my translation)*

In the narrative of this homage to rural women, Angelica is praised for rising at 5:30 a.m., packing the vegetables from her greenhouse and tour the town of Ubaté until 4p.m. selling her produce (11 hours of labor, without counting the preparation for the next working day, nor the

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chores of the household). “The sacrifice and constancy of Angelica with her entrepreneurship soon had a reward.” She prepares organic compost, uses plastic tanks to collect rain water but most of all… “After knocking on several doors, Bancamía was the entity that helped me with the loan, and now my family is progressing.” Angelica is portrayed as the model Colombian rural woman: she is an entrepreneur because she has a loan from a private bank; she is environmentally friendly in her production techniques and transportation; and she is an example of sacrifice and constancy from a hard background of being a single mother and coming from a campesino family that is still in debt for having lost a tomato crop, nonetheless, they are “Harvesting Resilience” as the subtitle says. This mixture of moral temperance and endurance proper of a good neoliberal economic citizen; economic and technical participation and choices; and green subjectivity is the summary of the institutional narrative of how a rural woman should look like. No mention of the double or triple shifts she endures as labor burdens. Rather they can be presented as an individual attitude of temperance. Another neoliberal trait: the hardworking individual, “entrepreneurial self” (Schwiter 2013) who is responsible for her achievements and failures, absolving the state of any responsibility. I take this as an example aligned to the development of the Colombian policy legislation and how it seeks to shape rural women as neoliberal subjects.

In contrast to that example, an FCP perspective as presented by Luz and those I have previously presented of gender in agrarian studies, would first question if Angelica owns the land she labors in; how the daily chores are distributed in her household, both in production and in household maintenance and social reproduction; how much of what she produces is consumed by

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94 Bancamía literally translates as My Bank or Bank of Mine, presents in its webpage “We are a bank with social sense that seeks to promote the productive development of entrepreneurs at the base of the economic pyramid through its products and financial services tailored for their needs.” (my translation.)
https://www.bancamia.com.co/sobre-nosotros
herself and her family; how sustainable in time is this type of production on her body, for instance the cycling for distribution of the produce; managing the environmentally friendly techniques: who does the labor of the environmentally friendly techniques (water in plastic tanks, compost production, etc.) and how is this accounted for in the final price of the products and the payment and retribution to those doing the labor.

The Strategic Plan of the DMR (Ministry of Agriculture 2017) presents some of these problematics when it states rural women play a fundamental role in campesina/o economy, food and nutritional security, generating income, in the welfare of their homes, the management of their communities and in territorial development and how they are usually in charge of food security, the care of the young and the elder, and in this context, they depend on natural resources for their families and their own subsistence. It is interesting that this recent policy document intersects labor burdens with environmental vulnerabilities, as well as social opportunities and access to assets. I will resume these issues in the chapters about youth and environmental subjectivity. What is important to highlight of this chapter on gender subjectivity is how it is shaped and influenced by economic and political interests. Both in the neoliberal logic of the legislation and in the FCP conceptualization, this can be observed. They offer contrasting paths on how rural women can be offered better life opportunities and supported for this. Neoliberal subjectivities will continue to be a theme in the next chapter where I present policies and projects directed to rural youth in contrast to the formación or training offered by an LVC agroecology school. The question of this chapter about subjectivities created, molded, proposed from the state and from social movements, continues in the next chapter but examining the category of youth. This category is also intersected with gender, and the case studies provided with the interviews, show contrasting political and economic conceptual influences.
The appearance of environmental responsibilities and effects, as well as peace-building in the context of the peace agreements also emerge as important factors, both in this chapter and the next one, but will be more fully explored and developed in the subsequent chapter on *Environmental and peace-building subjectivities.*
Chapter six: Youth As Investment Sites.

Rural Youth, Economic and Political Subjectivities.

In Colombia, for six years already, the National Network of Rural Youth exists as a space that allows the empowerment of rural youth through capacity-building processes and accompaniment that allows youth to be the agents (gestores) of their own development and lead initiatives for the generation of income, and as a consequence, improve their life quality. These processes of formación and empowerment allow youth to know and demand the protection of their rights, and come into play in the formulation of the different public policies that affect them. Initiatives such as these, allow youth to be visible to the world. And it makes us understand the importance of their role in el campo, and that supporting them means contributing to the SDGs. We shall not forget that el campo is the present and future of sustainable development95.

This presentation of the National Network of Rural Youth (“RY Network” in this chapter) in their webpage neatly encapsulates the main themes of this chapter. With concepts such as “empowerment”, “capacity-building”, “formación”, Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and sustainable development, we are told how these concepts shape the rural youth subject, and affirming “their role in el campo” – the main broad question of this dissertation. A subject who is agent (gestor) “of their own development”, who leads initiatives for their generation of income to improve their life quality, having a visible role in el campo, and knowing and demanding their rights, with the capacity to impact the formulation of public policies that affect them, is the model subjectivity of this Network’s project. We have here the description of an economic, political, developed, sustainable subject. This chapter focuses on the dynamics meant to mold/formar the economic, political and development subject. It examines the discursive practices behind this subject formation as they are portrayed in national legislation (Statutory Law 1622 of 2013), institutional communications (text and images in webpages), the wider

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95 My translation of text found in: https://rednacional.kairos.team/un-2019-lleno-de-retos-para-la-ruralidad/
configurations of power (UNICEF, Gen-U), and the answers of those interviewed who participate in these development projects for youth. It explores how rural youth are subjected to configurations of power—such as state institutions and development NGOs—and their agency in negotiating and navigating these structures. In approaching these issues, the chapter addresses the following research questions stated in the theory chapter (three) of this part two:

- **Who brings new identities to el campo, and what do they mobilize?**
- **How are campesina/o identities negotiated in different spaces?**
- **How does a subject—struggling for democratic political form, emerge, capable of democratic evaluation and deliberation?** (from Maruyama’s case by Butler)

The focus is on “rural youth” and not campesina/os. Similar to “rural women”—seen in the previous chapter—it is meant to encompass campesina/os. Implicitly understood, although all campesina/os are rural in origin, not all rural inhabitants are campesina/os. As has been shown throughout this dissertation, the campesina/o identity carries many issues, from the relation to agrarian labor, knowledge of agrarian production, cultural traits, relations to nature and territory, among others, and amid deeper discussions of what each term (e.g. culture, nature, territory) means and to who. The way the interviewees portrayed here relate to their rural identity, sheds light on differences with campesina/o identities shown in previous chapters, as well as it shows how el campo is a gendered possibility. The cases of the RY Network interviewees and how I analyze them, contribute to this discussion.

While showing the aspects of this rural youth subject formation mentioned above, taking as a case study the RY Network, I argue that rural youth are seeking, navigating, and learning “survival tactics” (Scott 1976). These can also be understood as adaptation strategies to enter the adult “world of work” AKA the economic and political wider system, the labor market. These
adaptation strategies are also related to “identities-in-the-making” (Sundberg 2014, 43), fluid, changing, multi-dimensional, where youth perform specific identities in particular social spaces. This includes how the development narrative of the RY Network is appropriated and expressed by them. Recalling the theoretical thread in feminist geography (Nelson 1999, Sundberg 2004, Valentine 2007, Lau and Scales 2014) about situated identities and how identities occur in interactions, in relation to something, in this case, it is a rural youth identity formed by development institutions, where youth are finding the utility to adhere to its logic, appropriate its narrative –and for the meantime– replicate it. To approach how this happens, I explore formación as a general term for shaping subjectivities. Here, I will focus on a formación of the RY Network and address its links to the Development narrative, in line with critical development studies. Colombian scholar Arturo Escobar is one of its key initiating authors (1995) arguing how “development functions as a discourse that reproduces structural inequities and unjust representations of the Third World and its people” (Asher and Wainwright 2018, 26). This conceptual perspective is influenced by Foucauldian observations of “governmentality” examining the practices of governing, the regimes of practice and among them the conducts generated with its prescriptive effects of what is to be done, and what needs to be known (Foucault 1991, 75; Cruikshank 1999; Walker et al. 2007, 529). Contributing to a scholarship that examines governmentality and subject-making in rural scenarios, with youth and/or in environmental projects (Escobar 1995, Li 2005, Walker et al. 2007, Walker et al. 2008, White, 2012, Schwiter 2013, Zhang 2014, Korzenevica, 2016, McCune et al. 2017, Cassidy et al. 2019) this chapter examines the subject-making of young, rural, development subjects in order to address the questions of who or what brings new identities to el campo, what they mobilize, and how these new rural identities are negotiated by the subjects that perform them. In observing this
–and with the historical context of the peace agreements previously mentioned– it also contributes with Butler’s inspired question from the case of Maruyama in post-war Japan, of how (and if) subjects emerge who struggle for a democratic political form. Their capability of democratic valuation and deliberation is not deeply explored but superficially observed in the examination of the Colombian youth legislation and the answers provided by RY Network youth participants in the interviews done for this study. When asking, who or what brings new identities to el campo, what they mobilize, and how these new rural identities are negotiated by the subjects that perform them, I aim to contribute to a line of critiques on critical development studies signaled by Kiran Asher and Joel Wainwright (2018) that argue that it is not enough to propose a post-development, post-neoliberal alternative to development and neoliberalism but go deeper and “reframe the whole problematic of differences, capital, development and representation” (Asher and Wainwright 2018, 33), because for these authors, Escobar and other post-development scholars do not approach answers on why development, capitalism and state power are hegemonic. Inspired by Spivak, they propose that scholars’ ethical responsibility apropos development “involves the labour of careful critique and patient undoing of the problematic of development” (36). With this license of “learning to live with contradictory instructions” (Rosalind Morris in Asher and Wainwright 2018, 36), I use Foucauldian concepts in critical development studies while trying not to fall into problematic post-development assumptions, and remain attentive to the feminist methods of self-reflexivity about the researcher, “active thinking” (Spivak), whose voice one is representing and why, and the research subject: the “perpetual scrutiny of representation” (36).

I conclude that the subjectivity promoted by the RY Network is a neoliberal subjectivity. This echoes what has been shown in other studies with youth in the last two decades (Walker et
al. 2007a, Walker et al. 2007b, White 2012, Schwiter 2013) either in rural scenarios or not, where they are formed to become economic and political subjects that feel in charge of their own destiny, decisions, work, successes and failures, but with little reflection about the role of the state and the economy in their life choices, opportunities and constraints. An important reflection triggered by the answers in the interviews I show is “But what if poor people actually desire development” (Asher and Wainwright 2018, 35). This is to say that even if the researcher’s position seeks to critique neoliberalism, what happens when the research results find a comfortable neoliberal subject? The reflection about representation in research continues, with a contrasting formación with another kind of youth subjectivity explored in the next chapter, *Cultivating Youth’s Environmental Subjectivities*.

I begin by explaining the meaning of formación because it is a recurring concept both in this and next chapter in the forming of political subjects, as a form of governmentality to shape subjects in relating to the state apparatus. Then I present the current Colombian legislation on youth as context for the subsequent empirical sections. I proceed to present the youth subjectivities promoted by the National Network of Rural Youth (RY Network), unpacking its development practices and influences. This continues with the examination of the RY Network’s economic subjectivities of young plus rural, plus entrepreneur. I finalize with a discussion that relates the empirical material with the theories of subject-formation and critical development studies. This chapter is closely linked with the next one which continues exploring formación but with other political influences and for the environmental and peace-building subjectivities of Colombia in 2016-2018.

Finally –and going back to issues of positionality mentioned in the theory chapter of part two– writing this chapter has reminded me of my own youth experience as an Heredera del
Planeta (an Inheritor of the Earth) from ages 15-23 years, due to my affiliation to the National Network Association of Civil Society Nature Reserves (RESNATUR). We also had regional and local nodes, an organizational structure that imitated our parent organization’s structure (strategic planning, decisions committee, regional representatives, national meetings, governance structure) as will be seen for the networks for youth studied in this and the following chapter. It has made me reflect on my own training (formación) as a young environmental subject, and about my subjective views when approaching the interviewees of these other networks, and reading the documents and media products related to their work. This refers to Alcoff’s (1990, in chapter three) interrogative practices of our location as researchers. Issues of my positionality from my own environmental subject-formation experience emerge when I question the intentions in the answers of my interviewees, when I reflect on the intentionality of answering loyally to the narrative of the RY Network. Are their answers sincere or performative? From what ontologies do I analyze their answers?

**The importance of formación in ‘forming’ political subjects**

Initially, I want to introduce the concept of formación as an important word in understanding how rural, campesina/o and environmentalist youth identity is shaped by institutions they interact with. The word from Spanish can be translated as training or educating, but has implicit the intention of shaping, molding, giving form: political and economic form. Shaping or “forming” an economic and political subjectivity is what I propose in this chapter that formación is about. McCune et al (2017, 184) relate formación to “Che Guevara’s notion of molding the values of a new woman and a new man, egalitarian, cooperative social relations in the construction of a new society.” As a native speaker of Spanish, I do not relate the word nor its current meaning with Che Guevara. You can be “molded” as a Christian subject, a sportsman/woman, a member of the
military, or any other subjectivity having little to do with Che’s ideals, but with intentions of molding your character, identity, behaviors. Some can shape your political inclinations.

In La Via Campesina’s schools of formación, young people develop their skill set as movement people as they build their identity as a movement person and as they produce and reproduce the social movement. … Knowledgeable skill is encompassed in assuming an identity as an agroecological farmer, of becoming a full participant, a cadre. The development of an identity in practice is even more substantial in the young person’s life path than the specific knowledge and skills associated with that identity. (McCune et al. 2017, 190)

The claim of “the development of an identity in practice” is key to the intentions of formación.

The notion of formación, I also relate to Sundberg’s (2004) “identities-in-the-making” which she defines as

an approach that is attentive to how disciplining discourses and practices are invoked, enacted, (re)configured, subverted, and transformed by individuals who chose to be ‘for some worlds and not others’” (47, emphasis in original).

Formación is not quite as education, apprenticeship or training material skills such as SENA –the National Training Service– a public, national level state institution that provides technical training in a variety of skills (see part one). A varied array of institutions use the notion of formación for shaping, generating identities and ways of behaving and choosing; of defending postures (development ideals, political affiliations, social movements). From state institutions (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment); NGOs, supranational institutions and movements as well as international aid, or international platforms such as LVC or ProcaSur mentioned in this chapter; and also national and local institutions e.g. Instituto von Humboldt (IAvH), and campesino organizations, use this term as will be seen throughout this chapter and next. This notion of forming identities has a Foucauldian touch of governmentality and discipline where practices become regimes that seek to generate programs of conduct, with “prescriptive effects regarding what is to be done… and codifying effects regarding what is to be known”
When approaching the notion of participation of youth in public policy and in development projects, participation can be understood as a form of governmentality, a technology of government to access the state apparatus and generate for youth an idea of what the state is and how it works, creating codifying effects of what is to be known as “the State” for them. Issues of the subject and the citizen in relation with the state are thoroughly presented in the work of Barbara Cruikshank *The Will to Empower: Democratic Citizens and Other Subjects* (1999) where she discusses if and where there is a difference in being a subject or a citizen, and if power and agency are key factors in the difference. She observes how:

Poor people are governed at the level of the social through case management, empowerment programs, parenting classes and work training. Again, constituting the needs and interests of others to fulfill their human potential is a mode of governing people (1999, 40).

Governmentality aspects of development projects have also been noted by Walker et al. (2008, 529) when analyzing development NGO practices and the creation of “neoliberal subjects” (Schwiter 2013, Walker et al. 2007). I find similarities with the cases I present of rural youth linked to the RY Network and how they are portrayed in public policy to access the state, to understand it and relate to it, but primarily to become “successful” –or rather obedient– economic and political subjects. A point that stands out when observing the spaces where these rural youth subjects are formed is that training schools such as the agroecology ones of LVC, or networks such as the RY Network, tend to be NGO led, with private and/or international cooperation aid funding, technical assistance, and with some level of agreement with state institutions (e.g. SENA, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment in these cases).

Showing how the term formación is used, will help to understand how for instance the making part of the RY Network and its process marks their subjects identity, or how an agroecology
cadre is meant to become a political cadre. The following different narratives use and explain the importance of *formación* as key in subject-formation.

The agroecological historical subject is intimately connected not only to peasant realities, senses, and know-how but also to the ideological imprint of a generation coming of age among concomitant global crises, profound uncertainty, and a relative absence of optimistic, revolutionary political projects. The confluence of class, generational, and territorial identities in the agrarian social process plays out as a subjective factor in the absence or presence of young peasant farmers across a landscape, a factor linked to the dialectical challenge of young people to ‘become movement’ and the agrarian movement to ‘become young’. This suggests that efforts to scale out agroecology should take a closer look at the ‘generation question’ within peasant movements, both in terms of forming leadership and in territorial grassroots structures (McCune et al. 2017, 195).

We search to democratize democracy, make it real, open spaces from the State’s realm that allow the subject—in this case the young (*el joven*)—to take responsibility in exercising the constitutional right to participation. When we talk about the young (*el joven*), we imagine him (sic) in the breadth of the cultural and population diversity that this category implies. This participation should be inclusive, because it does not leave anyone behind; impactful because its effects on daily life should materialize in the national agenda; binding because it obliges the State to follow its guidelines; as well as decisive because the State’s powers have to assume it, without objections, as part of its directions of action. … Also, by emancipating, the subjects self-regulate since they know from within the importance of conserving the territory and the environment, guaranteeing also one’s and the other’s welfare. It is a characteristic action of political ecology; a frontal and loving struggle against the unsustainability of current social and economic practices. (Julio 2016, 33. My translation)

How our reflections about the models of capitalist and patriarchal systems, that not only subjugates us for being women, but it also includes our male *compañeros*. How we enter a process of sensitization with the compañeros specially when we were in these spaces of *formación* with the female *compañeras*, or in meetings, the compañeras would manifest it as a part of their needs. ‘We live situations of domestic violence but if we do not talk about them with the men, how are we going to approach it if it is not with them? They also have to be in these spaces of formación. This is why these spaces are open for women and are important for women but we do not deny that the compañeros can also be there. (Luz, July 2018)

I consider it worth mentioning the uses of formación by the LVC agroecological schools, the institutional project of Humboldt Institute and Ministry of Environment, and Luz’s feminist spaces. This shows how formación is not used exclusively by a development tendency or a state project. Cruikshank proposes to observe the forms of power
that promotes rather than repress subjectivity, power that produces and relies upon active subjects rather than absolute subjugation. Instead of excluding participation or repressing subjectivity, *bio-power operates to invest the citizen with a set of goals and self-understandings, and gives the citizen-subject an investment in participating voluntarily in programs, projects, and institutions set up to “help” them.* (1999, 40. Emphasis added)

This idea of self-understanding and voluntarily participating in programs, projects and institutions set up to “help”, is a key element in making youth – in this case – feel free to engage in these initiatives. How it meets their aspirations, or how their aspirations are shaped by these experiences are part of what this chapter helps to unpack through an examination on one of the possible paths, that of projects and programs tailored for rural youth under specific narratives.

This gaze of bio-power and self-understanding should also contribute to the discussion on why formación is used also in alternative spaces such as the LVC agroecology schools (alternative in relation to the neoliberal cases shown in this chapter). This will be more fully discussed in the next chapter observing other paths of youth subjectivity.

It is a common characteristic for youth participation structures to be defined as networks which have territorial nodes, ranging from municipal to regional. I found this in the RY Network and in the National Network of Environmental Youth. I can also relate to this structure in my own youth participation in the Inheritors of the Earth which was part of another national, environmental network and worked with regional and local nodes. I contend that this is also a neoliberal organizational structure, meant to create an idea of participation in a democratic structure. The following extract of the RY Network, explains how using this participative structure is key in generating disciplining practices of how participation is meant to be experienced, and how it forms political subjects-citizens.

Our Circle: The organizational structure of the Network of Rural Youth on the national level is based in sociocracy, a tool for self-management (*auto-gestión*) of social organizations that is based on decision-making by consent and operates in ‘circles’ with a specific area of interest inter-connected by double links using a system of election without previous
candidates. Each circle elects two persons to cover the roles of operative leader and circle representative, which compose the general circle.

Furthermore, the decentralized structure of the Network has established Local Nodes composed by groups of rural youth that exist in each municipality configured as a local node. Its purpose is to work with the aim to develop activities of self and community benefit, strengthening their capacities and managing their knowledge, helping in the realization of the life projects of the youth that form them. Empowering youth as social and political subjects so they can be true participants of the life of their communities.96

With my own experience, plus what I observed with the interviewees, the documents and the social media material accessible of these youth networks, although they claim to have thousands of members97, just a few are active and end up going to the meetings, making part of the social media material, and learning the narrative well to represent the network in institutional spaces. It seems more of a good subject performativity than a true access to benefits. The fact that youth are organized in networks and nodes for their participation, and not in unions, cooperatives, clubs, or any other organizational structure must have an explanation. I cannot go into detail about this issue but I suggest that it is a structure aiming to mimic some democratic structures but also propose a pyramidal structure that facilitates development projects to identify the most engaged, performative participants. As the quote above suggests, it is about “democratizing democracy” and opening spaces from the state’s realm that allow the young subject to take responsibility in exercising its constitutional right to participation. This way, multi-sector projects can filter and choose what subjects perform better and can be chosen to represent the project in other institutional and marketing spaces or perform the political subject that “understands” how to participate in state spaces, when they are finally created and available. This relates to the sub-section The Youth Subject from a Development Perspective. Local to

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96 Texts translated by me from webpage: https://rednacional.kairos.team/quienes-somos/
97 The National Network of Rural Youth (RNJR, or RY Network here) claims to have 1,400 active members in 50 nodes according to their webpage: https://rednacional.kairos.team
Global Links about the ways individual initiatives can link to global discourses of the world’s youth. The following sub-section shows how the national policy on youth, also formulates a participation structure based on a representative democracy model. Presenting this policy also serves as context for the subsequent sections.

**Political subjectivity. Legislation around youth, and rural youth in Colombia.**

Statutory Law 1622 of 2013, Youth Citizenship Status\(^98\) establishes the guarantee of youth rights in protection by the state, participation in decision-making scenarios, education and capacity building opportunities and guarantee of permanence, differential attention, among others. It presents among the aims of the law:

1. To guarantee the recognition of youth in society as subjects of rights and protagonists of the nation’s development from the exercise of difference and autonomy.
2. Define the political agenda, guidelines for public policy and social investment to guarantee the effective realization of the rights of youth in relation to society and the state… qualification and harmonization of the process of political and technical formación intended to youth, public servants and society in general.

The other aims include wording such as “guaranteeing participation”, “tending for the development of capacities and competences”, “promote equitable relations.” This statutory law is the wide framework from which general roles are mentioned for different state levels (national, departmental/regional and municipal government, specialized institutions) and should assign budgets for youth. It also mentions the creation of other participatory spaces for public policy design such as the National Council for the Public Policy of Youth where three representatives from the National Council of Youth\(^99\) shall be part of, together with delegates from state institutions (Presidency, National Planning Department -DNP-, Ministry of Interior, National

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\(^98\) Ley estatutaria 1622 de 2013, Estatuto de Ciudadanía Juvenil.

\(^99\) This other participatory space will be formed by one delegate of each: Departmental Youth Councils, City Youth Councils, campesino youth organizations, indigenous communities, Afro-colombian communities, Rom people, and Raizales (Afro-Anglo-Antillean Colombian communities of San Andres and Providencia Caribbean islands.)
Family Welfare Office –ICBF–, and SENA). Then there is a series of participatory spaces such as youth councils (national, regional, local), platforms, commissions and assemblies to be established and details of requisites, candidacy profiles, relation with organizational and political parties, and other functioning details. In relation to campesina/o and rural youth, the Law mentions that one representative of processes and organizational practices of young campesina/os will be part of the National Youth Council, and of the municipal youth councils when there are youth campesina/o organizations present. These councils are mechanisms of dialogue between state institutions and organized youth. They establish strategies and procedures to accomplish and develop policies, programs, projects related to youth.

I interpret this statutory law as a redundancy of participation spaces, reflecting a democratic state apparatus structure. The name of the policy “Youth Citizenship Status” reminds Cruikshank’s idea of how “Political power is exercised both upon and through the citizen-subject at the level of small things, in the material, learned, and habitual ways we embodying citizenship” (1999, 124). Even if all these spaces are available for a few youth (considering there are around 13-14 million individuals in this age range according to this Law) in this representative participation structure, the challenge lies in the incidence that these spaces –if they are effective in even meeting– can have in public funding and in tackling the necessities in an effective manner. From White’s (2012, 2019) reflections on how youth are portrayed in public policy, the statutory law seems to be a tool to define a population segment and their specific characteristics and possibilities of relation with the state apparatus as a subject, but, what kind of subject? The previous sub-section hints on how this political subject-citizen is meant to be formed by NGOs to access this state “participation” apparatus. This is how governmentality can
be portrayed in such a policy, feigning to make the state accessible to its youth population.

White’s (2019, 9) analysis provides an encompassing view of rural youth in policy:

There is a tendency for policy work, in the “human capital” and the “youth bulge/youth dividend frame, to treat young people as objects of policy and instruments of development, rather than as active subjects and as citizens with rights. An example is the “demographic dividend” approach to youth and development, where policy work with youth is seen not as an end in itself (or as a right of young people) but as an instrument of economic growth.

This makes sense with the following section which explores more in detail the “instruments of development” possibility where youth are meant to embody development in specific ways, and become economic instruments with what others have named “neoliberal subjectivities” (Schwiter 2013, Walker et al. 2008, Scharff 2016). It also contributes to Asher and Wainwright’s question of how is it that development, capitalism and state power are hegemonic, and reminding Spivak’s reflections on Marxism where we are to trace how we as researchers and our research subjects are positioned in an international division of labour of global capitalism (Asher and Wainwright 2018, 37). These disciplining, “participatory” practices, are parts of the ways that this hegemonic project operates. The next sub-section offers more material and connections to contribute to this discussion, also about who or what brings new identities to el campo.

The youth subject from a development perspective. Local to global links.

To show how youth is used to embody development and neoliberal narratives of the “empowered” subject, recall the opening quote of this chapter\textsuperscript{100}. It is a magnificent quote to

\textsuperscript{100} In Colombia, for six years already, the National Network of Rural Youth exists as a space that allows the empowerment of rural youth through capacity-building processes and accompaniment that allows youth to be the agents (gestores) of their own development and lead initiatives for the generation of income, and as a consequence, improve their life quality. These processes of formación and empowerment allow youth to know and demand the protection of their rights, and come into play in the formulation of the different public policies that affect them. Initiatives such as these, allow youth to be visible to the world. And it makes us understand the importance of their role in el campo, and that supporting them means contributing to the SDGs. We shall not forget that el campo is the present and future of sustainable development. My translation of text found in: https://rednacional.kairos.team/un-2019-lleño-de-retos-para-la-ruralidad/
summarize and exemplify the neoliberal narrative of the successful subject. In this capsule of text, it contains many –if not all– the magical words and catchphrases of the neoliberal development logic: empowerment, capacity-building, agent (be your own agent of development), generation of income, improve life quality, contribute to SDGs; and last but not least, sustainable development. Plus, it has the concepts that have been treated throughout this dissertation and chapter: el campo, and formación. El campo as a conception of rural space with the connotations in Colombia and Latin America that do not translate in its whole meaning as “countryside”; and the concept formación introduced in this chapter that encompasses notions of education, training, and subject-formation, commonly used in NGO and multi-sector programs and projects. The webpage where this text is found includes the question “How to help youth construct a better future?” and it links to a TED Talk by Henrietta Fore, the American government official giving a talk in her role as Executive Director of UNICEF. Her talk is about the 1.8 billion global youth population (24% of the world’s population), their common difficulties –including lack of access to education, risks such as forced marriages and teenage pregnancies, lack of opportunities in the labor market– and the grand solutions that a program launched by UNICEF, “Generation Unlimited” or Gen-U can offer with its multi-sector partnerships, investment and innovation for youth. Two magical words we were lacking in the neoliberal narrative puzzle: investment, on people, more precisely people as investment sites; and innovation. If youth can access innovation (aka technology use and dependence), then they can access the global labor market. The talk ends with the message that youth are the future. This reminds us White’s (2012, 2019) work on how youth are portrayed as human capital in public policy, or what I call youth as investment sites for these global, hegemonic narratives. Gen-U’s main webpage begins:
We are a global partnership working to prepare young people to become productive and engaged citizens. We connect secondary-age education and training to employment and entrepreneurship, empowering every young person to thrive in the world of work.\textsuperscript{101}

The text provides more colors to the neoliberal paradigm of subject formation: preparing young people to become productive and engaged citizens. From education to entrepreneurship, from being prepared to thriving. Engaged with what? “the world of work”, implicit way of saying, the global economic system: capitalism. Prepared for what? To become good economic subjects, more precisely, entrepreneurs. How do “productive and engaged citizens” behave? They perform the empowerment they have been prepared for and thrive. What does empowerment and thriving look like? How is it personified and performed? That part has plenty of imagery to show us how it is performed and I argue that the interviews in the next sub-section are also exemplary of this.

It would lead to another angle of critical development studies to continue the description of Gen-U. However a brief description of some of its aspects serve to portray how development is encountered (reminding us of Escobar 1994) and how this serves as a profile of the global, mainstream (e.g. led by United Nations agencies, World Bank) tendency to portray Global South youth and solutions for their dreadful, global, common situations but avoiding to relate it directly to a dreadful capitalist system. Again, how does empowerment and thriving look like? The webpage is full of images of young bodies of color –particularly young women and teenagers in traditional clothing– smiling, joyful as they are in scenarios such as schools, workshops (e.g. in front of a sewing machine, by a motor vehicle, using computers), broadcasting in radio station studios, laboratories, performing learning, or perhaps performing being prepared (formados) to thrive “in the world of work”. Other images include Gen-U’s director (Roberto Benes, a European white man who is not young), UNICEF’s director and some global board members,

\textsuperscript{101} \url{https://www.generationunlimited.org}
leaders and partners in meetings, dressed in suits, predominantly white bodies in center stage of the images, also, none are young even if you expand youth to 40 years. Of course in the photos there are some bodies of color in suits too, and even a person with a severe disability explicitly visible. The images suggest diversity and inclusivity as tokenism; a graphic reminder of how development is also constructed through imagery and a composition of bodies and attitudes meant to represent development embodied, performed. The list of leaders, board members, and a category named “Champions”, include roles such as Secretary General of UN and other high-profile UN agencies’ roles, presidents of developing countries, trust funds presidents, private companies representatives (e.g. Mastercard, ING, IKEA, Unilever, Avianca), and international aid NGOs. The Champions include representatives of state agencies, UN agencies, development banks, philanthropies and Special Olympics. This composition portrays the multi-sector partnership which is another component of the current global development idea, and relates to Walker et al. (2008) observation of the commodity chain of technical assistance. This description of the GEN-U, UNICEF sites, is useful to remind us what the RY Network is after and seeks to thrive as, or what is behind it, answering what is bringing new identities to el campo. In the RY Network webpage, the link that leads to Gen-U is a reference of “How to help youth construct a better future.” I did not find explicit references of how Gen-U supports this network. Perhaps, as presented by Walker et al. (2008) this is because there is a sub-contracting model very common in the development world, that seems like a commodity chain. Therefore the chain from donors, passing by intermediary NGOs to beneficiaries is long. As Walker et al. (2008, 531) explain, donors prefer intermediary NGOs because they are highly formalized, “set up along corporate lines”, highly attuned with “managerial watchwords of development assistance” and their structure and functioning are well positioned “to enact the kind of multi-sector partnerships
between business, the state, and civil society that many neoliberal development projects have as touchstones.” In this long chain structure of commodity-development programs, there are a lot of “experts” involved. A relevant research project would be the percentage of funds that is spent in their salaries and travel expenses. Finally, what do the beneficiaries get? Formación in the shape of workshops with these experts; traveling to meetings with other beneficiaries where photos will be taken to feed the development results narrative, its personification with these participating youth and images for social media, all aiming to shown as a result of a project, a program, or a policy. In these spaces they will learn to replicate the structure of strategic planning and decision-making, for when they are empowered enough to be able to access the funds, for their productive citizenship innovative, entrepreneurships. However, does all this development apparatus approach the International Labour Organization’s Global Employment Trends for Youth (in White 2019, 5) that alert on 10-15% youth unemployment rates (three times higher than the adult rate), the high levels of informal employment, the precarity of working conditions, and how more education is not solving the unemployment problem for youth? I cannot fully approach this question with the design of this research, however in the next section I will show a glimpse of how this looks like with the youth participants of the RY Network that offered me interviews and the public policy framework in which all this development perspective is meant to fit and unfold.

**Economic subjectivity: Young + Rural + Entrepreneur**

I have previously exposed uses of identity such as political recognition and participation with the case of the tutela about campesino population in the national census; I have also argued how it can be used for political and economic recognition and participation by rural women exposing the historic inequities, violences, and discriminations in the previous chapter. In this section, I argue that identity—in the cases explored here of rural youth—can also be used to negotiate in
economic and political spaces and is a tool to navigate society, seeking to establish social assets in the hope that they can help generate or secure a job, a working niche or a livelihood opportunity in a current world where this is increasingly difficult for youth (White 2019). This does not mean to exclude other psychological uses of identity, or other social ones but it contributes to the vision of White (2019) that

Young people are increasingly faced with the reality that while you cannot get a skilled or semi-skilled job without the relevant diploma, in overcrowded labour markets having the relevant diploma does not get you the job unless you have other means to open doors, such as personal or familial networks and contacts, and relevant work experience, which poor and rural youth are less likely to have. For this generation, then “human capital’s underlying premise—that education increased employability— is not based on credible evidence.” (Bessant et al., 2017, Ch. 5) (White 2019, 6)

In this chapter—and particularly in this section—I explore and propose what I encountered in youths’ economic subjectivities and subject formation through their involvement with the RY Network (formerly Network of Young Entrepreneurs). First, the frame presented in their webpage is a useful referent and example of the concepts already revised and discussed of formación and participation in their utility as subject-formation tools:

The National Network of Rural Youth [RY Network] is a juvenile movement that seeks the empowerment of rural youth through capacity building processes, impact and generating productive initiatives that allow youth to stay in el campo. The network in our country works differently in the territories, the context of each local node is different, the nodes work accordingly to the interests and priorities of the youth, and in this sense, the support given by the network does not want to be assistant-based (asistencialista), we seek to generate processes. The network facilitates access to opportunities for youth, but its harnessing depends on them and the dynamics in their territories.

I accessed the young members of the Network of Young Entrepreneurs after a national meeting of representatives they were having in Bogotá on a day where the Soccer World Cup (2018) had an important game. It was difficult to catch their attention before the game. Three of them with representative and leadership roles were willing to give me interviews but two were particularly
interested in finishing before the game began. As I will show with their testimonies, I noticed in
them a particular attention to their representative roles, in their explanations of the Network’s
structure and how they got their representative roles. Their agrarian production initiatives
seemed secondary in their narrative. This will be further discussed.

I am purely rural, very proud of being very rural. I arrived to the Network about four years
ago seeking opportunities for the youth of the region. And not only opportunities in the areas
of incidence and participation, in education, in strengthening el campo. I come from a purely
agrarian rural zone. Where 10 tons of maize can be harvested. We produced maize, yuca, squashes and also cattle… Currently, in these four years of being in the Network I also
founded a women’s association… This association transforms, produces and commercializes
dairy products like yoghurt, ‘bolicrema’, caramel (arequipe) and cheese… The initiative was
mine and that is why I applied for the Mujer Cafam prize, and to apply you need to have
your own initiative…126 women were nominated at country level. Twenty-five of us were
finalists on a national level and I ended up representing my department from 5 candidates.
With 30 youth of my municipality we created a local node, lines of action like we have here
in the national Network, we have lines of action in the methodology that are composed of
political incidence, cultural ideas, environment, entrepreneurship and holistic training
(formación)…But in in our node we have adapted to the needs of our territory so we currently
have four: political incidence, entrepreneurship, communication and management (gestión).
We have an action plan we assess annually, seeking representation. Today in our node we
have a president of the youth platform that is part of Colombia Joven; we have a
representative of the Network in the local node; we have a representative of the Victims
Table of the department…

[Me: How did you get to know this network?] Through SENA. In an integration activity
we did in 2013 through the Ministry of Agriculture and SENA, two youth were chosen from
each regional department of the 32 departments of the country. There is where my process
with the network began.

[And what did you study in SENA?] A complementary training in dairy production. That is
when we began to process, to know how to make yoghurt and all that.

[What part of the productive chain do you do?] We buy milk and we have our own store.
Currently we have machinery: sealing, dosing, filling machines.

[Where do you commercialize what you produce?] In the centers. We have barcode, health
registration. We have our products in chain stores and we contract with ICBF. With stores
and the final consumer. (Jenny, young woman from RY Network, July 2018)

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102 Does not specify area of this production in the interview.
103 National Service of Traineeship is a state agency which offers a variety of traineeship courses. It is a technical
degree option for many who cannot access university education.
104 ICBF is the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare.
Although this interview contained a lot of useful information and I wanted Jenny to tell me more, or to explain better what she was telling me, the soccer match was soon to begin and she was looking forward to its beginning and organizing where they would see it, and she was also shy in the interview except in the part about being a candidate for Mujer Cafam\textsuperscript{105}. Nonetheless, these sections I extract of the interview portray at least two useful aspects. One, is the importance she gives to replicating the structure of the network (strategic lines of action, action plans, assessing the plans, node representation). I recognize here a subject formation of the development subject in neoliberal subjectivity, who is welcomed in an organizational structure and is trained to reproduce it. She seems comfortable in the format offered through this NGO structure and –at least in the interview– seems uncritical to the structure and happy to replicate it in their regions and reproduce the organizational pattern. This might have to do with how she reads me as an interviewer and perhaps as someone assessing her as a beneficiary of this network and its projects. Also, this productive initiative is perhaps her entrance to the adult world of working, of worldly structures, it provides an ontological element of “how things work.” In this sense, she seems to fit the cadre provided also by the global platform of Gen-U understood as a global, hegemonic narrative of youth as development subjects. Her answers also remind Asher and Wainwright’s question to the scholar of critical development studies: “But what if poor people actually desire development” (2018, 35).

The other aspect, is the description of her small enterprise and in this sense I can relate her testimony to the public policies discussed in the previous chapter where the entrepreneurial rural woman gives good use of technology (e.g. the machines she lists) and of the access to the

\textsuperscript{105} It is a private initiative award provided annually to a woman who demonstrates leadership in grassroot processes and in service for vulnerable communities. https://premiomujer.cafam.com.co/el-premio/
market, portraying the image of what innovation is about. In this way, she performs or portrays the neoliberal subject of the rural plus, young, plus woman subject who successfully understands and narrates what individual entrepreneurship, empowerment and thriving are meant to look like. It would be a great follow-up to this research to observe how her testimony evolves in five, ten, and twenty years. What is the sustainability of this economic narrative and subject-formation during youth (as temporal condition, from White 2012)? The scope of this research cannot suggest such answers due to its time frame and methodology, but for the sake of this research, it provides an understanding of how an identity shaped/formed by the RY Network logic looks like, how it is performed and narrated to an external observer. It would have been even better to do the interview in her dairy production factory, where the action takes place, and where the relation with the other members of the association could have provided more context about this economic project and its favorability –or not– for young rural women.

I turn now to another interview from the same youth group. John was more enthusiastic in providing an interview, gave more details of his entrepreneurship and of his origins. He also seemed much more confident of himself, of the importance of his representative role in the RY Network. To Colombian racial standards he was whiter and he was a male, which from a feminist perspective can suggest he has a different relational privilege to portray the neoliberal subject. White males already traditionally symbolize and embody more successful economic subjects than females or people of color in a patriarchal and Western colonial society. He came from an oil production municipality and described how despite the levels of corruption that were evident, there was also noticeably more public investment in things like internet connection quality which he said was much better than in many cities; or road quality, public sanitation
infrastructure, or electricity coverage. He also recognized this last factor as an advantage for him and a privilege that many rural municipalities do not have.

I am currently the national representative of all the youth platforms to the Ministry of Interior in the National Council of Citizen Participation, summarized as CNPC. I am the National Councilor of Youth which is easier to say. I never imagined I would be National Councilor of Youth. And my family, what can I say, currently I am 28 years old so I am leaving the age of youth in Colombia.

I live in the vereda Río Chiquito and I am producer of eggs, enriched with organic nutrients for the hens. I am a chicken egg producer for a specialized market. I generally sell to people in strata 3 and 4 in Colombia because the egg I sell, I sell it costly because it is organic.106

[How did you get to know the Rural Youth Network?]
The situation was: I was a producer—in my department—of hen’s eggs and there was an excellent idea that we still manage, where we produce an egg that—as I already told you—is for a specialized market. SENA on the national level organizes agrarian fairs and is interested in interesting products, and our product was very interesting and we always helped SENA. We worked closely with SENA, all trained by SENA in short courses. The first was on food manipulation, minor species with emphasis in poultry farming, production of nutritional diets, marketing and commerce, themes like that. And adding all those short courses we had the idea of producing a specialized egg. Being trained in protein banks, marketing, we could access the market, and a specific population segment. So working with SENA, they invited us to their fairs at national level. In these fairs, SENA was one of the public actors that helped with the creation of the National Network of Rural Youth. I arrived to the Network in 2013 during a big fair for rural youth organized by SENA where they were launching AgroSENA. I arrived to talk with the Network and I had the profile they were looking for in my department… SENa invested a great quantity of funds selecting youth that had productive units, or maybe were rural agrarian producers, be it plantain, pigs, etc. They were chosen just because they had an entrepreneurship, but many of these youth did not give any results. They kept the knowledge but did not replicate it, share it. That is what happened in my department, and only I continue in my department. I began working with youth in my department, I was promoted to department secretary, then to department chair for youth, so now I manage all the youth themes in my department and in the Network.

[Why entrepreneurships and not for instance, productive cooperatives? Where is the origin that it needs to be entrepreneurships?]
It could be something different but the inconvenience is that youth do not associate. And because associations often exist only to receive funds. Many associations are founded only because they need to be visible. What SENA works with is individual productive units, but they end up being family productive units. So maybe that is the reason, because Colombian youth live in their family nuclei, not all, but the majority. Those of us who have productive

106 In Colombia, public services are stratified from 1 to 6 according to an urban neighborhood planning. Strata 1-3 are meant to be subsidized and 4-6 to subsidize. It has also become a popular way of classifying the population, or describing through these strata their socio-economic class. Strata 3 and 4 as mentioned by this interviewee are middle class.
units, it is family productive units, so you can’t really have associates. There is only space to link your family. (John, young man from National Network of Rural Youth, July 2018)

The interview begun with a notion of his entrepreneurship and his profile for the youth network, but it turned into a family production unit as he described how it worked. When I asked how tasks are distributed in the family productive unit, John described the daily activities of turning on lights at 4 a.m., giving the hens fresh water, then opening the nests, preparing their food, serving it, gathering the eggs, bringing them home. According to him, this is not a continuous labor, but a three hour total daily labor depending on the number of hens. Usually distributed between two people: himself and his sister (21 years old) or himself and his mother, or the mother and the sister. They also contract a worker for the maize crop (food for the hens) or buy the maize in the region. The description was very mechanical, and included the parts when he could go back to sleeping, or for other activities such as using the internet, going to town, or to the city meetings of the Network. This daily mobility, access to different resources (internet, the Network, going to town) and relation with agrarian labor, sets a difference from the testimonies of those who describe themselves as campesina/os in previous chapters. His livelihood seems solved or arranged in ways that are not accessible to campesina/os. Issues such of daily mobility, access to internet at home, his training with SENA and relation with that institution, as well as the participatory and representative spaces he is part of, are differential aspects in relation to the testimonies of the siblings Miguel, Santiago and Juan shown in previous chapters. His roles in the political spaces of the RY Network, SENA and being a youth representative are also differential from the previously shown campesino testimonies. John’s relation with agrarian labor is different to, and how he portrays himself as an entrepreneur and “his” production unit as an “interesting product.” Another issue worth exploring is the gendered differences in mobility. Porter et al. (2011) evidence how the potential to build livelihoods in rural Ghana is limited and
highly gendered, due to constrained mobility, work demands and limited education. The
gendered angle of his testimony, and of how this can set a differential opportunity is discussed
below.

There is another salient issue in his testimony: “youth do not associate… associations
often exist only to receive funds. Many associations are founded only because they need to be
visible.” This resonates as a neoliberal tendency towards individualism as good social culture,
and contrasts with Law 731 for rural women (seen in the previous chapter) asking for
associativity in order to access funds as “rural women.” For John, associations (I asked for
cooperatives) are cheaters. They only exist to receive funds, but they are not really working in an
associative manner, suggesting they are loafers too. I argue that with his line of thought,
neoliberal moral values emerge here in contrast. If associations are cheaters and loafers,
moochers, then individual entrepreneurs are the opposite: hard-working, and worth investing in.
This is evidenced when he says “I arrived to talk with the Network and I had the profile they
were looking for… SENA invested a great quantity of funds selecting youth that had productive
units.” My analysis is that he implies he is a posterchild for SENA and Youth Networks because
he is “a good investment site” to put it in a dry neoliberal term. He gives results with his
entrepreneurship, he successfully replicates knowledges, terms, narratives when he “manages all
the youth themes in my department and in the network.” What I interpret of his formación as a
development subject, is that he represents a neoliberal rural youth subject. I understand then as
neoliberal subjectivity (Schwiter 2013, Walker et al. 2008) the entrepreneurial training
accompaniment, the exaltation of the individual for her/his economic achievements, the moral
attributes of leadership, self-made success, empowerment, a subject worth investing in, because
he portrays himself as someone worth investing in. This all reminds of Cruikshank’s The Will to
Empower (1999, 124) on the technologies of citizenship, on how “citizens embody power relations...[and] political power is exercised both upon and through citizen-subject at the level of small things, in the material, learned, and habitual ways we embody citizenship.” I argue this young man portrays youth as investment sites for neoliberalism, and this is exemplary of how development, capitalism and the state apparatus operate to be hegemonic. They function at the level of individual behavior and moral codes of what is a good economic subject-citizen.

During the interview, the details about the production and the enterprise do not seem to be as relevant in his testimony as his participation and roles in the RY Network and his descriptions about the oil producing municipality where he comes from and his explanations about how things work there politically. His performativity as I perceive it is more of a young leader-in-the-making, than of a rural worker. The enterprise seems to be the reason, the entry point to be rural youth leader. But once he is a leader, where does the link, the identity with agrarian production lie? Not to mention the actual time he dedicates to the enterprise labor. In this identity-in-the-making, the productive initiative might prove to be a good starting point as a young entrepreneur when accessing SENA and the development projects, but now that he is ending his phase as youth (up to twenty-eight years in these policies), then he is profiling himself as a participant in politics. This is an example of how identity-in-the-making is navigated. He might be profiling his identity towards a political role for his adulthood, now that he will no longer be identified externally as a “rural youth” nor can access the same youth spaces with the same roles.

He certainly never suggested that his family production unit could work as a production society, an association. Rather, roles are interchangeable, as interchangeable seems in his narrative passing from entrepreneurship to family production unit. Curiously, the interchangeable
subjects were both women, his mother and his sister. John presents the roles of his sister and mother as secondary, “it is interchangeable, if my sister cannot, if I cannot, –because she is in college, because I travel all the way here to Bogotá– then perfectly my mother can replace me, or in this moment –we have only had him for a month– a worker in the farm can do it” (emphasis added). Again, since the interview was not in the production site it was impossible to observe the production labor dynamics, the roles of the sister and mother, their attitudes towards this “interesting” production unit. It would have provided an important perspective to interview his sister. What does she think of her roles in it? What does she say about the ownership of the production unit? What types of daily mobilities does she have? How are her youth aspirations similar or different to his? Has she been shaped by SENA and the RY Network in similar ways? How are her possibilities of a rural livelihood gendered?

I notice that for women, both in the policies presented in the previous chapter and in the testimony of the young woman with the dairy production, there is a sense of associativity. This provides a glimpse of how livelihoods in el campo are gendered, as are its possibilities due to different mobilities (daily, socially, economically, politically.) Arguably that women tend more to generate these agrarian businesses in associative manner, while for men –and as is suggested by the young man with the hen’s egg production– he says that “rural youth do not associate”, that associations are only created to receive funds. He begins his testimony suggesting he is the producer, and only later does he suggest with the description of the routine activities that it is a family production. This also suggests different roles in the division of labor, even in these “innovative”, “entrepreneurial” initiatives.
Conclusion

To the disappointment of a possible, preconceived, critical view of development that hoped to find post-development subjects, critical of a neoliberal narrative, the interviews in this chapter show that development is alive and well, being performed and embodied by (some chosen) rural youth. The intentions with which these two interviewees comfortably portrayed and performed this development subjectivity is a matter of discussion. I argue that it is a survival tactic to navigate “the world of work” in a world that offers few stable opportunities for rural youth (Leavy and Hossain 2014, White 2019). It is also a reflection of identities-in-the-making, assuming a fluidity where this is not the only identity they embrace, nor does it have to be the only they embrace in life, even during their youth. It escapes the possibilities of this research to observe what is left of the rural young entrepreneur in five years, or what these opportunities lead to in their “fully adult” life, but there are glimpses of local political leaders in-the-making. I also propose a margin of doubt about the role of the researcher in representing her subjects of research with my own subjective experiences in youth subject-formation.

In a country with the quantity of internally displaced population, initiatives such as RY Network are more than welcome by rural and other vulnerable communities. They offer spaces of recreation, identity-formation, training about the state structure, legal assistance, accessing the state in the shape of formación en incidencia política (training in political impact), and eventually a few temporary job posts in the regions. They contribute in the emergence of new subjects “from the ravages of war” and in this sense their presence is better than their absence in Colombian rural territories with tragic histories of armed conflict violence. However, this is not to say it is an ideal institutional intervention, if our ideal is a state apparatus that generates a sustained state attention and investment of its rural and agrarian population, offering economic,
educational and other stable livelihood opportunities. State institutions and policies (Statutory Law 1622 of 2013) are meant to form citizens. These citizens must participate in certain ways (councils, assemblies, applying to scholarships, expressing their voices in institutionally created spaces). The access to educational opportunities, protection, capacity building as narrated through these policies, projects and legislations seem to be more easily available if you belong to an organization, a political party, an educational institution, or a network as the cases portrayed here show. This partially answers who or what brings new identities to el campo. The question remains about how do you access these possibilities for youth when you are not part of any of these structures or if what you are seeking is not reflected in these policies?

In a reduced state, proper of a neoliberal influence present now for more than three decades, these configurations of power (organizations, development aid, networks) are currently what is available (even if controlled and overlooked by the Presidential Agency of International Cooperation). In order to “achieve” or show project or program results on “political impact” RY Network works in an alliance of public and private institutions which includes the Ministry of Agriculture, Nestle, and national and regional NGOs (ProcaSur, AsoJe). The training and formación they offer is then tainted by these donors interests in the long commodity chain of technical assistance observed by Walker et al. (2018) in the forming of entrepreneurial subjects in rural Latin America. Taking this into consideration, I argue that what RY Network and other youth focused NGOs are doing is ontologically shaping the youth’s ideas of politics, economics and institutional structures. Basically, training them on how to relate with power –or as was mentioned before– as a form of governmentality to shape, discipline subjects in how to relate to and understand the state apparatus. This is how the conduct of conduct works, by prescribing actions led by NGOs and a few state institutions (e.g. the influence of the AgroSENA fairs in
recruiting rural youth), and generating codifying effects regarding what is to be known: strategic planning, ways of producing and marketing, participating in public-private alliance activities, among others. Taking this into consideration, these youth networks, created by development projects, are particular forms of knowledge and political surfaces produced under the hegemony of development and recreate a worldliness, and a subjectivity for these youth subjects. This contributes to answer the research question, what do these structures mobilize in el campo?

What these development projects foment is a subjectivity that believes in the power of individual action, as personal and not reflective of political, cultural –and specially– economic dynamics. Even though SENA and Ministry of Agriculture as state institutions might provide a part in the shaping of this subjectivity, it is the development aid and private funding that ends up shaping/formando these youth’s subjectivities. This is where neoliberal subjectivity is evident, just as with the case portrayed in the discussion of the previous chapter with the “successful” rural woman who has to wake up at 4 a.m. and go to bed at 11 p.m. but is the posterchild of the “sustainable woman entrepreneur” where the burdens of productive, family and “green” labor are shown as personal attributes of perseverance and faith.

Alternatively, are there other formación possibilities that these youth could access which do not pass by their training as neoliberal, development subjects (projects, interinstitutional public-private alliances, strategic plans, marketing their interesting product)? Where do these alternatives lead to? What are their narratives? From what ontologies are they built? Wainwright (2008, 14) suggests that “postcolonial theory offers no particular development theory or strategy.” “[F]ew things are as productive of political spaces and subjects as capitalist development. The question, then, is not, whether development stifles politics, but rather how and why certain political surfaces are produced and contested under the hegemony of development.”
(Wainwright 2008, 32). A recent reflection on critical development studies on how to continue signaling the recurring failures of capitalist (neoliberal) development models, while not falling on a post-development narrative where it is problematically assumed that “the grounded knowledge of subaltern social groups is the source of alternatives…that ‘natives will save us’”

Asher and Wainwright (2018, 27) propose paying attention to Gayatri Spivak’s strategies of critiquing capital, development, difference and representation. This proposition of taking Spivak’s questioning of representation, takes me to the research question of how are campesina/o identities negotiated in different spaces? I did not perceive or witness with my interviews shown in this chapter that these young subjects contested what they were engaged in. For instance when I received Jenny’s interview answer beginning with “I am purely rural, very proud of being very rural. I arrived to the Network about four years ago seeking opportunities for the youth of the region.” Initially, I take it as a methodological fault that a deeper ethnographic approach and time together might have seen differently. However, I also consider that these young subjects are still too new to these narratives, to these worlds of development to have anything else to contrast their experience with. Taking it from my own personal experience, if the adults you know and trust are leading you towards these initiatives and are happy that you are there, “participating”, being formed, then you take it as an asset that will get you places or give you new mobilities, both social (e.g. scholarships, jobs, social connections, friendships, recognitions, awards, status) and spatial (e.g. traveling to meetings in town, to meetings in the capital city and maybe eventually to international events). Going back to what was presented in part one, these are all inputs for livelihood assets, and it is better to have them than not to have them. They provide diversity of options, and this again, is a survival tactic.
Finally, if it is ontologically not available in your social and communicational circle, then how can you imagine other sorts of economic and political subjectivities? The case of the LVC agroecological school in the following chapter will give another view of youth subject formation. These two chapters can be read as a thematic continuity in the themes of formación. However, here the focus was on economic and political participation subjectivity, and the next chapter focuses on environmental and peace-building subjectivities which can also be argued to be political subjectivities.
Chapter seven: Environmental and Peace-building Subjectivities.

Cultivating youth’s environmental subjectivities\textsuperscript{107}.

Thanks to the Network I don’t feel hatred anymore, I transformed it into willingness to have a better environment. I am not a victim because I work with willingness and I ask forgiveness for having felt hatred of the river. Now I thank the river because it took my grandfather to heaven and the same river brought me here… I want to ask you a favor, hopefully, when you gather all those handfuls of soil from all the country and plant that tree that you said you will plant in Bogotá, think of my grandfather so he too can rest.
(Janet’s testimony. In: Julio, 2016, 159. My translation)

This chapter explores multiple governmentalities (Fletcher 2017) and specifically uses environmentality (Luke 1999, Ulloa 2004, Agrawal 2005) as an analytical optic to approach how rural youth, and within them young campesina/os become environmental subjects, and use and negotiate environmental subjectivities\textsuperscript{108}. To observe these environmentalities, I largely base this chapter on the recent work of political ecologists who approach relations between subjectivities, notions of nature and the environment, with the state and other actors (Agrawal 2005, Camargo and Ojeda 2017, Fletcher 2017, Harris 2017, Nightingale 2018, Perreault 2015, Stinson 2017, Sultana 2015, Ulloa 2004). Within this literature I am particularly attentive to feminist political ecology that intersects these themes with gender and intersectionality (Fischer and Chhatre 2013, Harris 2017, Nightingale 2018, Sultana 2015) and with political ecology and other contemporary social sciences literatures about the Colombian state, environment and subject relations (Bocarejo and Ojeda 2016, Camargo and Ojeda 2017, Courteyn 2018, Del Cairo and

\textsuperscript{107}See Fletcher 2017 : 314 “forms of subjectivity intended to be cultivated” (Miller and Rose 2008)

\textsuperscript{108}The term environmentality has different meanings. I initially trace it in Luke (1999 in Danier, E. [ed.] 1999) but it is also used by Ulloa (2004) in the book I reference in Spanish as ecogubernamentalidad which is closer to the Foucauldian origin also coined by Agrawal (2005). My use of the concept derives more from the work of Ulloa and Agrawal as will be explained throughout the chapter. Luke’s political science view of environmentality suggests “most environmentalist movements now operate as a basic governmentality.” (1999 :123). His analysis has more of a global geopolitics scale starting from the USA’s government tendencies of the 1990s. However it lacks case studies such as Agrawal’s and Ulloa’s that are closer to my research.

I begin with the conceptual structuring offered by Agrawal (2005) who situated the utility of commons scholarship, political ecology and feminist environmentalism for analyzing contemporary environmental politics. He noted that political ecology lacked the focus of subject-formation when focusing too much on how institutions and political-economy affects environmental politics. He also noted how feminist environmentalism approached subjectivity and environmental politics but by narrowing the approach only through the lens of gender and more specifically, women’s relations with environmental matters and politics dismissing other important angles of subjectivity and environmental politics. Common property literature in Agrawal’s perspective has assumed fair distribution under communal government and with this assumption has failed to approach distributive politics and identity politics within social systems.

In a nutshell, what he proposes as an environmentality lens is about how

Processes around the environment always involve power/knowledges and subjectivities and are always mediated by institutions. Instead of a selective conceptual focus on ‘politics’, ‘institutions’, or ‘subjectivities’, as the foundation on which to build an analysis of changing environmental relations, it can be more fruitful to examine how these concepts shape each other and are themselves constituted (Agrawal 2005, 203).

This dissertation and this chapter in particular answer Agrawal’s call to expand scholarship on how institutions and subject-related formations “relate to and produce each other” (204) and expand the lenses of subject-formation not only through gender but also through age/generation as an analytical category, plus the subjectivity of campesina/o which I have already explored from socio-economic class and political actor perspectives. I also consider Ulloa’s definition of ecogovernmentality as all

the politics, discourses, knowledges, representations and environmental practices (local, national, transnational) that interact with the purpose of directing social actors (green bodies)
to think and behave in particular ways for specific environmental ends (sustainable
development, environmental security, biodiversity conservation, access to genetic resources,

Ulloa also refers to the diverse agents (institutions, scientists, organizations, indigenous people,
etc.) in the “process of regulating and directing social actions according to logics and discourses
that contribute to the development of an emerging conception of global environmental
governability” (my translation, ibid). In this chapter I focus both on the practices (rituality,
participation in meetings, conservation project activities), as well as the subjects that relate with
these diverse environmentality-creating instances, but also in the conflicts that appear in the
agency of people as they question, navigate, absorb and reproduce these discourses and practices.
I argue there is fluidity, agency and ongoing processes of negotiation in the identities-in-the-
making of environmental subjects. Their subjectivity is in constant change and performativity
depending who they relate with (the state, NGOs, community members).

To begin exploring how youth are molded into environmental subjects using an
environmentality lens, my first field observation will focus on the use of rituality in diverse
spaces of formación of youth\textsuperscript{109}. I argue that rituality is a disciplining tool used with youth, meant
to trigger, ‘form’, mold thinking, generate discipline and behaviors towards what is to be
understood as environment, and what working for -and protecting- ‘the environment’ looks like.
Basically, rituality works as a tool for environmental subjectivity. Rituality – through the use of
native cultures symbols and rituals- and its effects on emotions is instrumental to generate a
sense of commitment to ‘the environment' and therefore generate an intangible, perhaps spiritual
sense of identification and environmental moral values around protection of nature. Also, it can

\textsuperscript{109} Recall from the previous chapter that although the word from Spanish can be translated as training or educating,
the meaning in Spanish has implicit the intention of shaping, of molding, giving form: political and economic form.
Shaping or ‘forming’ economic and political subjectivity is why I use the term in Spanish formación.
be understood as a transactional move on how the environmental state uses native rituality as a way to appear as “environmental” instead of dealing with deeper economic and political claims of the indigenous populations. Adopting the performativity of rituality is an easier way of ‘appearing environmental’ than actually committing to actions that can considered as approaching environmental problematics.

Then I explore another scenario between youth and environmental institutions where other governmentalities are manifested in environmental subject formation. Analyzing the meeting that generated the National Declaration for Environment and Peace, in the National Meeting of Youth, Environment, Territory and Peace in 2016, I use the notion of “performing participation” (Perreault 2015) to propose how making use of certain discourses (e.g. SDG language, development scheme language), using certain words (e.g. sustainable development, governance, empowerment), catchphrases in an appropriate manner, a few selected youth participate in the making of a discourse with specific protagonists (e.g. the Minister of Environment, the nation’s president). With this case I argue that a sense of importance, authority and environmental action is generated through this performative action of generating the Declaration. Unfortunately, this research does not include any material from international settings, nor does it include what has happened after 2018, to observe what sorts of impacts youth climate activism, Greta Thunberg, the school climate strikes or Extinction Rebellion are having in Colombian rural youth in relation to environmentalisms and its expressions. However, the fact that they have become mainstream, at least in social media, plus the magnitude of the marches demonstrate how youth environmental subjectivities are ongoing and operate in multiple scales.
Rituality for environmentality. Rituality in youth movements, gatherings and formación.

I initially noticed aspects of rituality in the publication *Somos Paz y Ambiente* (Julio 2016) which is a report of the institutional project *Strengthening youth participation in environmental management and use of natural resources in the national level*. This was a project of the Ministry of Environment, developed by the Research Institute for Biological Resources Alexander von Humboldt (IAvH), during the peace process between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla. This glossy and colorful publication includes many photos of the Youth and Environment Network in regional and national meetings during the phases of the project named ‘Sowing’, ‘Germination’ and ‘Harvest’. The photos show the young participants gathering in circle, joining hands, putting offerings in the middle of the circle, dressing ‘native’ with ritual-style body paint, kneeling and holding a handful of soil in their hands. Although some of the participants might identify with an indigenous group, others might not.

With this initial observation in mind, I also began identifying elements of rituality in other youth events and meetings promoted by institutions and NGOs in activities related to environmental issues. In contrast, the activities of the National Network of Rural Youth – mentioned in the previous chapter – did not display elements of rituality in its activities with youth, but of group games and elements of uniformity with caps and t-shirts with logos. I noticed elements of rituality in the LVC affiliated agroecology school when I went to do the interviews.

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110 Translated as *We Are Environment and Peace*, I will use the publication’s name in Spanish throughout the chapter. This publication shows the results of the Ministry of Environment project, managed by Humboldt Institute (IAvH) and subcontracted to the anthropologist M.A. Julio who worked on the project and wrote the publication’s document.

111 The peace process developed its public process between 2012-2016. The mentioned project is mentioned in the publication only for 2016 right before the Peace Process plebiscite (October 2016).

112 For the regional gathering in Guainía, a department with a predominantly indigenous population.
to the *educanda/os* and they chanted “Children of the Pachamama we will always be… with agroecology liberate your consciousness!”

Rituality is also mentioned by McCune et al. (2017) in their observations of the *formación* in the La Via Campesina (LVC) school of Central America they researched on. They describe how “sharing *mística*” is one of the pedagogical principles defined as “Recognizing the unity and diversity in the ‘sacred’, the ‘now’, the ‘here’, and the ‘we’.” (2017, 189). They explain the importance of rituality or ‘sharing mística’ with

The creation of permanent small groups with a name, a chant, and tasks at the school is part of helping students develop meaningful relationships with one another and take responsibility for the functioning of the school. *Mística* ceremonies produce meaningful moments to begin and end encounters between and among *educandos* and educators. (McCune et al 2017, 189)

The question that emerges for me about these common observations on rituality in youth spaces related with environmental issues is about its relation with symbolism and signification. The LVC agroecology schools are explicitly Marxist, socialist in their theoretical *formación* but the regional and national meetings promoted by the Ministry of Environment through the IAvH in the frame of the *Somos Ambiente y Paz* (“We Are Environment and Peace”, Julio 2016) do not have this explicit theoretical leaning. However, what does the explicit recognition of native and ancestral elements in agroecology (LVC, campesina/o organization owning the agroecology school) and in institutional environmentalism (IAvH) tell us about the tendency to use native ritualist performativity and symbols for environmental and agroecological meetings and *formación*? There are more questions than obvious answers to this tendency. For instance, the fact that the LVC political training is Marxist, and also seeks with agroecology an identity proposal of “the native”, “the roots”, “the ethnic”, the Amerindian, can be hinting a claim of authenticity and differentiation as an identity marker, a differential marker to other possibilities

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113 My translation of: “Hijos de la Pachamama siempre serás, … con agroecologia libera la consciencia.”
of environmental subjectivities. Why would there be a need to mark a difference in the manner of doing or performing environmentalism? More questions arise, such as where does this idea come from? Is this some sort of cultural appropriation or is it rather a recovery of cultural elements? And, does the performance and intensity of the rituals, leave emotional marks in the individual’s memory? Does it generate a lasting mark that shapes identity? What does it seek to generate in youth identity? What identity markers does this rituality construct or mold in the person and develop in short and long terms? These are some of the questions that this chapter explores and discusses as elements to understand environmental subject-formation in Colombian youth.

Initially, I consider that the use of Amerindian elements of rituality in an institutional project (IAvH) is accepted in terms of representing the official discourse of the pluricultural, multiethnic Colombian identity from the National Constitution of 1991. It looks appropriate to include native rituality giving a message of cultural diversity and recognition in its discursive relation with Colombia as a biodiverse country. Ulloa (2004, 315) in her analysis of the idea of the Colombian indigenous people as a “closer to nature” subject that she defines as the “ecological native”, argues that the presence of this “other” to Western modern, industrial, capitalist and white standards, in certain spaces (institutional, organizational, mediatic spaces related to environmentalism) legitimizes some sort of ancestral knowledge of nature-saving and the human representation of biodiversity. When the ecological native can be physically present there is usually a performative ritual: a chant, the giving of protective fetishes, a speech about Mother Nature and how we are her offspring and must take care of her, which somehow provides a tone and legitimacy that the specific space, event and its actions are ecological or environmental. As will be seen in at least one example, ecological natives are taken to the events to “sanctify” the
event as ecological with the authority of their “closer-to-nature native-ness”. In the lack of a native representative as token, other events include anyway the rituality performance that aims to simulate the native rituality which provides the ecological tone. In this way spirituality and environment are coupled seeking effects on the subject’s psyche. Also, an environmental subjectivity is constructed using elements of an ideal of the ecological native. Environmental practices for youth that simulate ecological native rituals somehow construct an idea that performing, wearing, imitating this ideal, provides an assimilation that completes the environmental subject. This representation of the other as the one with ecological knowledge and even the embodiment of closeness to nature is a romantic vision and colonial imaginary of indigeneity. Taking this into consideration, it is as complicit, unjust, and imprecise as previous development schemes. It reinforces a ritualistic subject without further political, economic needs and positions within the state. As if their invitation to sanctify the event cancels out their political claims. If these state institutions claim to be seeking a new environmental, “sustainable” development by accessing native ontologies that have survived or adapted to centuries of colonialism, capitalism and patriarchy, I argue that ritual performativity in institutional events is an erroneous way of positioning alternative views and actions of nature-society relations. It is a guise of reinforcing otherness and in the name of being an alternative rather falls in the problematics recently discussed by Asher and Wainwright (2018, 28)

Post-development and its new avatars, we contend, are implicitly driven by a weak form of identity politics and the recovery of subaltern (non-Western) subjectivity. Consequently, the proposition that the grounded knowledge of subaltern social groups is the sources of alternatives contributes to the problematic notion that ‘natives will save us’.
We are reminded again about issues of representation. Although the spaces are not academic but institutional, and from a scientific research institute (IAvH), they are exemplary of the problematic ways in which indigeneity is still addressed.

As I read *Somos Ambiente y Paz*, looking for the voices of young campesina/os, my skepticism grew about the project’s clarity and impact. I found the text either too poetic, ambiguous, full of the researcher/project manager’s voice, profession (anthropologist), his personal political opinions and little did I find of the voices of the young people mainly of indigenous, Afro-Colombian and campesino origin the project claimed to have worked with. However, I gave it a chance, reading carefully the whole text, also seeking how it presented the combination of environment, peace, rurality and economy for youth subjectivities in the context of post peace agreement Colombia. In the last pages I finally found what really touched me and made sense of the rituality in this institutional project with all of those photos of young people, around a small pile of soil, some seeds, leaves and other symbolic elements holding hands or in an offering pose around a small fire. The last pages transcribe Janet’s testimony after introducing how she had participated in one of the project’s meetings, silently observing, her look distrustful, perhaps bored, or uneasy. Readers cannot get an idea of her age but she must be somewhere between 14-28 years of age since this is the age range of youth, that the project gathered as subjects. She finally speaks at the end of a meeting, after the “earth’s consecration” (2016, 157) and describes how she used to live in the Orinoco region (*Llanos orientales*) with her mother on a ranch where she had access to fish, plantain, yuca but how after the assassination of her grandfather by *los muchachos* (the boys) they had to leave the ranch one day, fleeing the guerrilla and leaving everything behind, traveling fifteen hours by river to the closest city. There

114 See opening quote in this chapter.
115 Popular way to refer to the guerrilla members.
she discovered she was now labeled as displaced (desplazada), a victim, looked at with pity. They had no money, they were hungry, they had nothing with them. After two years she met the National Network of Environmental Youth and began getting involved with their activities. This involvement in the network helped her move from her grief and constant sorrow. Recalling what she said, mentioned in the opening quote of this chapter, rituality has the intention and effect of helping generate a mood, a sense of belonging, an identity. Rituality has the power to transform feelings as signaled by Janet in her testimony, and when feelings are transformed they can also be focused towards new actions, and in these cases collective actions and sense of belonging. A sense of purpose is triggered by rituality. Emotions are the motor that can be triggered using rituality. Once emotions are mobilized perhaps transformation is feasible.

The testimony of a Colombian young woman who has been affected by armed and political conflict of the country reminds me of the work of Diana Gómez and her dissertation in Anthropology which is also a personal emotional path to process her father’s assassination. Of Love, Blood and the Belly: Politization of Intimate Ties of Caring and Belonging in Colombia (2015) is centered in the power and importance of emotions to understand social issues. Drawing from anthropology literature since the 1990s (Ahmed 2004, Beatty 2014, Gould 2009, Oatley 2004), Gómez mentions how emotions are now recognized as being a central part of social life and social movements and how recognizing and approaching the role of emotions brings a new ontology and conception of social reality. “Emotions are a crucial means by which human beings come to know and understand themselves, their contexts, their interests and commitments, their needs and options in securing those needs.” Emotions play a role in the “initial politization of social actors and in the maintenance of social movements… [they] are conceptualized as a force” (Gomez 2015, 48-49).
The importance of emotions is being recognized in the social sciences through fields such as emotional geography. Sultana (2015, 633) proposes emotional political ecology “that elucidates how emotions matter in nature-society relations” where “complex emotions and meanings attached to resource access, use and conflict [can be observed] in order to better understand the emotionality thereby engaged in everyday struggles.” The cases I am looking at in this chapter focus on how rituality in the agroecology schools and the institutional project Somos Ambiente y Paz, is used to trigger emotions that generate commitment towards meaning and conceptualization of what the environmental is and what it is not. This can include natural resource use, biodiversity conservation and research, water protection programs, among others. I argue that the rituality in these spaces (school, project events) where rural youth are the main protagonists under subject formation, are meant to generate and trigger commitment in environmental work, generating an environmental subjectivity that identifies with elements of nature and/or environment such as water, soil, biodiversity (e.g. seeds, feathers). These materials are then given or acknowledged agency as living, as ancestors (such as the idea of Mother Earth, Pachamama). This agency generates a notion of wisdom, guidance, protection, that is capable of triggering a sense of loyalty, belonging, kinship, which aims to generate a sense of commitment for protection, specifically for environmental protection. The exact ways and actions that this will entail are not necessarily developed in these spaces, they are more meant to be spaces of generating community and common identity through these improvised rites of passage. If youth are transition ages in a lifetime, passing from adolescence to adulthood, from dependency to

\[116\] Recall from previous chapters how youth is delimited differently in legislation. For example Colombian Statutory Law 1622 of 2013 for Juvenile Citizenship defines youth in the age range of 14-28 years of age while Colombian Law 1780 of 2016 to promote youth entrepreneurship, aims to boost the generation of employment for youth between 18-28 years, but also the enterprises of those 35 years and younger. See also White (2012) for more conceptualizations of youth and age ranges.
independency, from receiving to giving, then it can also be argued that they are passing from acknowledging what water, soil, seeds, have given them to how they need to protect them and become their guardians. Protection is the commitment that this environmental subjectivity seeks to generate as a sort of vow, of pledge. In this sense, we are approaching how natural resources are imagined (as beings, as agents), in order to then be accessed, used and controlled which is at the core of what emotional geography, and emotional political ecology proposes (Sultana 2015). I add that above all, this use of natural elements representation (fire, seeds, feathers, handfuls of soil) are meant to create a notion of respect towards living agents, something that is better understood from the Amerindian ontologies. This notion can have a difficulty in cultural translation, understood as described by De Lima Costa (2016, 49) where “any process of description, interpretation and dissemination of ideas and worldviews is always already caught up in relations of power and asymmetries between languages, regions and peoples.” In the case of Janet presented above, her suffering with the assassination of her grandfather, is transformed through her involvement with environmental rituality. Through these rituals she is able to change her conceptualization of what the river is in her life. It passes from being a source of food resources and recreation, to a channel that takes her grandfather’s body, to a being that takes her out of the ranch -the site of death- and takes her to this new space (the town) which initially was a space associated to being considered a victim (a desplazada), but where she also found a creative space, a collective space, a space where she can re-create herself and find new meanings to her life. For instance, this can be conceptualized then as an emotional geography of water because it provides an insight of how the river, this geographical fluid space, is always present in Janet’s life but its meaning, material and symbolic importance changes throughout Janet’s short life as a current youth. The emotions she relates with the river change throughout
her personal history. The moment I am focusing on -this participation in the project *Somos Ambiente y Paz* - help her reflect on the meanings of the river in her life. As such, this act is part of a construction of her environmental subjectivity. The rituals are a form of *environmentality* because of what they generate. If youth in these social-environmental spaces (networks, schools) are constantly exposed to certain rituals when being trained in a particular environmental themes: agroecology, water protection, then they begin identifying those rituals with the manifestation of that subjectivity, with enacting or performing that environmental subjectivity as part of their identity: being an agroecologist, being an environmentalist, being a water guardian. There is also an enunciative performativity (see Butler in chapter one) in rituality with its processes of reiteration, re-establishment and sedimentation which are key in the autonomization effect and the establishment of social categories and identities (see chapter one).

Given that this environmental youth is also meant to be a peace-constructing youth, this reminds us of Butler’s question based on Maruyama (see chapter one), “*How does a new subject emerge ... from the ravages of war?*”. What Janet’s testimony can also suggest is precisely a new subject emerging from the ravages of war. The institutional offering of participating in an environmental-peace focused project, generated in her a transformation in how she understands what she has been through due to war. From the horror of hers and her family’s experience, to the experience of being labeled as a victim, a displaced person, to this new possibility of visualizing herself as having a role in environmental protection, different subjectivities are emerging. This is not to say that this last environmental subjectivity is the one that will last, or that will definitely take her out of a precarious and vulnerable socio-economic situation. As is seen by her brief testimony, these subjectivities change due to external situations, and since identity is relational, these diverse identity positions intersect and inform one another. Some
aspects become salient, dominant or relevant in certain circumstances and this is why I have referred to identities-in-the-making (Sundberg 2014) or fluid subjectivities (Lau and Scales 2016) throughout this dissertation to explain how they are navigated and used by youth.

Situations will keep changing for Janet and everyone else. However this observation and argument about “new subjects emerging from the ravages of war” offer valuable material for research and continuation both academic and institutional. What could now be connected with other parts of this dissertation is how environmental and peace-building subjectivity is connected with how “Are campesina/os proposing a new economic path based on/through their (new) political subjectivity?” (see part two, theory chapter). Perhaps this new political subjectivity – which also aims for an economic path and recognition– passes by engaging with environmental and peace subjectivities to generate a status, a position, a relevance within the Colombian society and politics.

**Gendered aspects of participation in environmental issues**

Ingrid –whom I mentioned in chapter one– was one my initial contacts for this research. Through my presence in the Sumapaz region I learned that she worked in a project led by the Autonomous Regional Corporation of Cundinamarca (CAR) for the protection of the Andean bear (Tremarctos ornatus)\(^{117}\). Although I went to her house three times, I was not able to record an interview with her about her experience in the project. The first time we just met, I told her about my research, she briefly told me about her role in the project. The second time, she was not

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\(^{117}\) CAR is the regional environmental authority. In Colombia the environmental Law 99 of 1993 (Article 23), established these public entities with ecosystemic, basin or regional administrative delimitation, to administer in their area the environment, natural resources and tend for sustainable development. They have administrative and financial autonomy and usually have a generous budget from royalties of industries that use natural resources. About this specific project see: [https://www.car.gov.co/uploads/files/5c4649693d7f8.pdf](https://www.car.gov.co/uploads/files/5c4649693d7f8.pdf) ; [https://doctrina.vlex.com.co/vid/papel-mujer-conservacion-oso-684135797](https://doctrina.vlex.com.co/vid/papel-mujer-conservacion-oso-684135797)
feeling well but she was willing to show me the computer files of the camera trap images not only of the bear but also of other mammals of the Andean cloud forest; documents related to the project and images she was trying to put together about the cultural and natural attributes of Cabrera, a Sumapaz municipality. The third time it was her daughter’s birthday, she was offering with her husband a family party and invited me for *sancocho* but it was not a good time to deepen the interview. From what I gathered of our second conversation in my field notes, she had been contacted to have an administrative role since she has a technical degree in accounting administration. I am not sure if she was paid for this work. She had also been the secretary of the vereda committee JAC. She was in charge of the distribution of barbed wire to each farm of the vereda so the creeks could be protected from the cattle entering, and so there could be local corridors for the Andean forest fauna, including the Andean bear. She was the contact person in the locality for the camera-traps installment with other people from the vereda and was in charge of their management, care; and was the connecting point with the information gathering personnel of the regional environmental authority CAR. A text by Güiza et al (2016) *The role of women in the conservation of the Andean bear: case study in Cabrera, Cundinamarca* gives another perspective about the same project. The text is written by three people who are in academia and also linked to CAR. They explain that the case study was suggested by CAR due to complaints about illegal hunting of the bear done by the same local community. The Andean bear has a status as a protected species due to the decline of its population and reduction of habitat which has it assessed as a Vulnerable species (VU) by the IUCN Red List of Species. In the paper, Güiza et al (2016) identify illegal sports hunting by the members of the community as one of the environmental problems in the Sumapaz region. Only 20% of their survey answers

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[118] https://www.iucnredlist.org/species/22066/123792952
consider the bear to be a threat to their property (cattle) or their own personal safety. These forest and tropical peatland (páramo) ecosystems are habitat to emblematic mammals such as the Andean bear, the mountain tapir (Tapirus pinchaque, Endangered species-EN), puma (Puma concolor, Least Concern of threat -LC), dwarf red brocket deer (Mazama rufina, VU), common wooly monkey (Lagothrix lagothricha cf., VU) plus small mammals, and a wide diversity of birds, of which all these mammals and the guans –similar to wild turkeys– (Cracidae bird family) are all locally hunted.

The methodology proposed by the authors to find the ‘environmental leaders’ who could be able to tackle this conflict, included a gender inclusive approach for ‘active participation’. There is no mention of the individuals that were identified as environmental leaders, no age, nor background characteristics (if they were representatives of JAC, or what other community roles they have, or experience with wildlife management?). The authors mention their research as the first phase of the project in which Ingrid would eventually participate.

During this first phase it was identified that women in the community have a high environmental leadership, constantly strengthening their communication channels and generating proposals for the conservation of natural resources in the municipality. This constitutes a favorable panorama for the consolidation of a participatory, inclusive, environmental management model where the rural population can be participant of the environmental conservation of their territory. (Güiza et al. 2016, 124. My translation)

Güiza et al (2016) notice an active participation of women in actions for the conservation, defense and protection of the Andean bear because in the meetings organized by their research project, 75% of the participants were women and 25% men. It is not clear in their paper what they understand as “gender equity” which they praise as one of the guidelines of the project.

They also did surveys with local inhabitants where 55% manifested knowing about Andean bear hunting and 90% of hunting of other wildlife; 37% proposed actions leading towards generating consciousness to abandon hunting habits; 30% agreed with imposing string sanctions; 21% with
setting warning signs prohibiting hunting; and 12% on educational campaigns. The research project also identified through these meetings a high level of distrust towards environmental authorities and state institutions in general. They are perceived as repressive entities, and no communication channels were identified between the parts. Few if any of the participants and community members recalled any direct communication with representatives of the environmental authority. The project agreed to three lines of action but I will only focus on the one related with what I discussed with Ingrid, which is the protection of habitat.

The community has manifested the need to develop activities of reforestation and isolation of the protective forest with barbed wire and live fences, with the objective of protecting the zones of special ecological importance that form part of the habitat and biological corridor of the Andean bear. This seeks to strengthen and protect the ecological structure of the municipality to establish a limit to the agrarian border area so that the habitat of animals such as the Andean bear is not reduced further for activities such as cattle-farming and agriculture. (Güiza et al, 2016: 136, my translation)

The research and conflict resolution proposal of the hunting of bears and other wildlife is based on the proposal of governance and particularly of environmental governance as a way to solve these conflicts arguing:

[Section title: From Paternalism to Governance.]

The traditional model of governing, where society is driven by an authority that exercises government in a one-way mode, is today -and approximately since the 1990s- generating the rise of concepts such as ‘governance’ that is focused in giving a new role to social protagonists, so they can interact with state institutions and be participants of a participatory and inclusive government model (Aguilar 2010). In terms of environmental management, governance is part of a postulate from which there are duties and responsibilities in conservation of natural resources, which are both headed by the state as well as its associates. This implies the implementation of transparent, participative and inclusive mechanisms of environmental planning, monitoring, and controlling which allow coordinated and complementary actions between state entities and social protagonists (Güiza et al, 2016, 127. My translation)

The paper proposes that instead of “government” which is portrayed as outdated and paternalistic, “governance” is what is trendy now since it is government with participation, where both the state and the community decide, set agreements and both parts comply. A shared
government is governance, and the article does accept that its functioning requires the state institutions to build the legitimacy and trust that it has not constructed previously with the people.

The concept of governance includes the formulation and joint implementation of decisions that have been informed, debated and accepted in a generalized manner by the actors involved (Brenner & de la Vega 2014), for which it is also required that the institutional actors generate a generalized perception of legitimacy and acceptance (Pare & Fuentes, 2007). Therefore, the effective participation of social actors require that there is a previous process of strengthening and organization of the communities, as well as the opening of spaces of dialogue, discussion and generation of agreements and compromises between the different actors, in a way that accepted norms are fixed in a joint manner and trust and acceptance of the institutional actors is incremented (Pare & Fuentes, 2007) (Güiza et al, 2016: 127, my translation)

Besides governance, there is another concept in the Güiza et al (2016) paper that merits attention.

The concept of the Social Entrepreneurship for Environmental Conservation (ESCA)119:

To date, through the project Social Entrepreneurship for Environmental Conservation - ESCA- between CAR and the JAC of the vereda Quebrada Negra, thanks to the active participation and gender equity of the ZRC community, 2000 m of live fences have been established for the delimitation and contention of the agrarian border; 2500 m of isolation of water protection zones and the planting of 400 fruit trees in agro-forestry parcels120. Likewise, a series of compromises and initial community requests were achieved, where members of the community who participated in the diagnosis and community strengthening process, agree not to hunt, generate and promulgate environmental consciousness, no logging or affecting native vegetation and develop observations, annotations and monitoring wildlife sightings, their behaviors, their routes, and habits. All with the objective of improving the knowledge about this and other species in the zone, and establish preventive strategies to achieve a sustainable coexistence with human populations. (Güiza et al, 2016: 136, my translation)121

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119 In CAR’s webpage, ESCAs are described as: Innovative and differentiated process where CAR promotes through local action committees (JAC) and rural and urban aqueducts, voluntary actions that are translated in exercises of environmental protection, community appropriation of the micro-basin, and strengthening of social networks for environmental management.

120 ZRC refers to Campesino Reserve Zone, a land planning denomination in Colombia meant for the protection of campesino economy according to the agrarian law of 1994. Cabrera was designated ZRC in 2001.

121 The authors do not offer their definition of Social Entrepreneurship (SE) in their paper. Seeking elsewhere, SE is a field growing over the past 15 years (Bozhikin et al. 2019). “One of its definitions can be referred to skills that leverage resources to address social problems… SE aims to solve local environmental and social problems such as access to water… SE is identified as a vital mechanism to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in reaching environmental and social goals...[SE] are embedded in civil society through the development of voluntary collective action around common goals characterized by a public benefit dimension.” (Bozhikin et al. 2019: 731)
One aspect that is not clear to me is the entrepreneurial part of the social entrepreneurial ESCA proposal of Güiza et al (2016). CAR was advised by Rosario University’s Human Rights research group from which two are coauthors in Güiza et al. (2016). However, it is not clear who suggested the format of SE for these CAR initiatives. Arguably, their preference of environmental governance over “paternalistic” government carries the values they place on inclusive and participative governance over authoritative and unidirectional government; shared duties and responsibilities on conservation that can lead to spaces of information, discussion, negotiation, that allows coordinated and complementary actions between state entities and social actors (Güiza et al 2016, 127). ESCA’s nor Social Entrepreneurship (SE) had not been mentioned by Ingrid when we talked. She referred to the project with CAR, the materials, the concrete actions she had tried to coordinate and the hassle of negotiating with the older campesino men to use the barbed wire for the project activities and protect the water points. Nor was it explicit in her testimony that there were “a series of compromises and community requests that had been successfully achieved. It would also be sarcastic to say from her testimony that her experience with the project had strengthened social networks for environmental management. Neither was she vocal about an oversight and tracking committee such as the one in the successful narrative of Güiza et al described as:

With the objective of verifying and guaranteeing the compliance of the acquired commitments, an oversight and tracking committee was created, led by women of the ZRC, because it is necessary to count on the coordinated support of the community that inhabits the influence area, so they can keep constant watch of the activities that impact natural resources and keep constant communication with authorities and institutional actors (Güiza et al, 2016, 136. My translation).

The perspective brought by Ingrid on how all this unfolded in the territory is quite different. Ingrid’s husband is a tree-tomato producer which is the main agrarian product of the vereda
where they live. From what she told me, the elderly men of the vereda—mainly tree-tomato producers and small cattle-ranchers—opposed the presence of CAR in the vereda. They signaled her as being the one bringing that state agency and “selling” the vereda for the hydroelectric dam that was projected (in 2017). The elderly men had been loggers in the 1970s and 80s and had known CAR only as a policing institution. They can only relate to CAR as prohibiting them to use any tree for production and construction matters and fining them or confiscating their chainsaws. That was their only experience of relation with that public environmental institution or with any public environmental institution for that matter. Although the Sumapaz National Park is geographically close, in this vereda they have never related with the National Parks office. During the JAC local committee meetings they specifically signaled Ingrid as naively exposing the community. I read this as the masculine, older, campesino vision due to experience of the loggers, of relating with the State (CAR), and this vision of distrust of the state trying to impose itself (e.g. in JAC meetings) over her younger experience of relation with the state. Plus the fact that being a woman relating with a state institution as a representative of the community generated another layer of rejection. It is possible to glimpse here a gendered and generationally different relation with the state and its environmental proposals and what it internally implies in a campesino community. According to what she told me, they called on her naïveté in relating with the state, and sabotaged her work with CAR by not using the trees to be planted, the barbed wire and other materials provided by the institution or using them for other purposes, not the project activities. Or they would agree with the project when she talked with them separately and then in the JAC meetings they would disagree. There is also a public shaming of relating with the state labeled as a gendered naïveté from the males’ narrative and an openly defiant attitude of neither relating with the environmental state nor through Ingrid as the middle-person, refusing to
acknowledge her role within the community. Although it can also be read as a defense of the territory in the context of the threat of the hydroelectric energy project in the region, there is also a gendered angle that needs to be highlighted about how the relation with the state seems to have been traditionally controlled by the men, and especially by those who are now elderly men. An assumption can be that the younger men, loyal to the traditional male view of distrust of the state, stay out of relating with it whenever possible. However, when a woman, and specifically a young woman, not only has a relation with a state institution but also a working relation with it, there is an additional layer of shaming. Not only is she bringing the environmental state to the territory—which is already viewed as a policing state– she also might have a contractual, economic relation with it. Ingrid is aware of the damage that CAR has done by policing the use of trees, putting fines and confiscating chainsaws. She says “CAR makes itself hated because of the prohibition of any logging…. They come and harm the campesino with these actions, they run-over the campesino with this.” She was also aware that the staff and offices that came with these wildlife projects, are not the same offices that enforce the logging prohibition, nor the ones that can be related to the institution’s position about the hydroelectric energy projects, and she recognizes that the people are not aware of these differentiations and layers of the state institution’s functioning. For her, not only the state, but this specific state agency cannot be seen as a monolithic unity. She also knows which veredas CAR is present in with different facets as environmental authority (e.g. conservation projects, logging bans). Nonetheless, she considered the information they had gathered through the project about the wildlife in the region to be very interesting and useful for the community, arguing how the vereda primary school can make use of this information, of the images captured by the camera-traps to learn about their local wildlife. They had captured images of Andean bears, pumas, dwarf red brocket, guans, and small
mammals. She had all the project documents well organized and showed me the photos of the few trees that had managed to be planted, the barbed wire that had been installed to protect the creeks from the crossing of cattle and generated the corridors meant for the wildlife to not pass to the agrarian production zones, the few parts and farms were people had not opposed but rather collaborated with the project. She also showed me a home video she was putting together with images captured of the animals with the camera traps, and iconic images of Cabrera. Ingrid told me that women prefer to work by themselves and some are participating in the SENA capacity-building short courses on entrepreneurship through the bean production association, AsoFrijol. She mentioned that women—especially older women—often have a cow, or a few cattle, and manage the milk production to make their own cheese. She was not particularly explicit about the “environmental leadership” nor of it being led by women. She rather expressed isolation and lack of support in trying to develop the CAR’s project activities. The men have their economic dominion on the tree-tomato crops where women are only invited to ‘help’ in harvest time and to wash the tree-tomatoes of the layers of agrochemicals used in their production. I can say from my field observations that the tree-tomato fields stink of ammonium and strong agro-industrial chemical products. The containers and plastics are often found on the ground by the crops and on road sides. There does not seem to be a conscious work on how these industrial products pollute the waters that all drain to the Sumapaz river. There is a clearly gendered environmental impact on how this production process is managed. However it exceeds the focus of this chapter to explore that other angle of gender and environment interactions and (lack of) responses.

The difference between how Ingrid describes her involvement with the Andean bear project and the narrative suggested both by CAR and by Güiza et al (2016) about the project as an ESCA, reminds me of my own Master’s thesis research in Cabrera, the same ZRC, when I
interviewed people about their relation with the ZRC (Ruiz Reyes 2015). In the veredas where I developed both research projects (MA and PhD), the inhabitants do not seem actively involved with NGOs, campesino, environmental or gender focused organizations. Therefore when a state “project” arrives to the vereda, be it a land planning designation or a social entrepreneurship for conservation, they are portrayed as development projects that bring materials (barbed wire, chickens, pigs, books, seedlings, etc.), gather people in workshops and generate local problems among vereda inhabitants around how access to the project is generated, what sorts of relations are needed to access its actions, and who gets to access it with how many (chickens), how much (barbed wire). The testimonies of how the state is encountered contrasted with the state narratives of what the ‘project’ is, differ greatly. This coincides with Camargo and Ojeda’s view of how Colombian “[p]easants’ lived experiences of the state hint to the constant and disputed processes of state formation.” And how when globally informed interventions (in this case of biodiversity conservation) meet specific local configurations of society, space and environment, they produce contradictory outcomes (2017: 64).

Another analysis of how a Colombian campesino community views the state has been done by Yie Garzon (2015) in her work about campesino agency in the narratives about agrarian reform in the Colombian department of Nariño. Yie reflects on how the construction of the state should be studied as an idea and to unveil the forms of domination established by it. Also, how narratives about the state not only conceal realities of how subjects interact with its diverse facets, but also produce ideas of what the state should be understood as. Therefore special attention is needed on the material, discursive, historical and everyday practices through which the state is formed and given meaning. This also implies paying attention to our own discourses of the state in the reproduction, contestation of relations of exploitation, subordination and sub-
alternization. For Yie, an implication of this focus is the ample dispute of the border between civil society and the state (Yie Garzón 2015, 99). Nightingale uses these state boundary making processes (state-society, society-nature, citizenship-belonging) as an analytical starting points to address questions about the socioenvironmental state such as: “who is authorized to govern [environmental] change, who is required to make changes on the ground, and [particularly relevant for this chapter] what subjectivities and pathways emerge?” (2018, 689).

With this in mind, going back to both accounts of the Andean bear project (Ingrid’s and CAR/Güiza et al, 2016), I suggest how the “voluntary collective action” meant to be led by Ingrid as an “environmental leader”, put a burden on her in representing the state (CAR) with her community, since now “the community” had committed to the no-hunting and protective actions that the project suggested. In this “entrepreneurial” arrangement for conservation between the state and the civil society, Ingrid’s labor in making the project’s actions work can fit into the narrative of community solving of local environmental problems. In the meantime she is shamed by the older males of the community for bringing the policing state since they relate CAR with hunting and logging fines. Here there is generational and gendered difference of relation with the state that needs to be examined. The older generations –let us say 45 years and older– remember the few encounters with the state as repressive, either in the form of military forces or policing environmental authorities. It was mainly the males that related with this state and its representatives and have created their own idea of what the state is and why it must be distrusted. It is likely that the hunting is also done by men, since it is a traditionally gendered (masculine) activity. However, this is only an assumption in this research since I do not have data to support this statement, only general observations in the field.
This case regarding the Andean bear can also be analyzed through an emotional political ecology lens of the struggles in natural resource management involving power relations and how management “can be conceived as an emotional process defining everyday life” (Sultana 2015, 633). In these power struggles over natural resource management, gender is performed and negotiated and intersects with other subject positions (age in this case) where there are also manipulations, actions, rejections and negotiations triggered by emotions. There is for instance the shaming of Ingrid in JAC meetings by older men, who might act angered by her “naiveté.” This performance of public anger and shaming can be meant to produce embarrassment and guilt and enforce a notion of who has the community power to regulate natural resource use (wildlife) which in this case suggests a gendered and aged imposition of older men with the power to decide what gets regulated and what does not, specially about a masculine associated activity of resource use such as hunting. Ingrid might have been discursively empowered by the state and academia to be an ‘environmental leader’ (CAR and Güiza et al 2016) but the older males want to show who has the real power on the ground by not complying with the environmental project, and least to the “leadership” of a young woman. Agency is performed through emotions and can have material effects on natural resource management. In this sense it would have been insightful to know if those who complied and followed the project have emotional ties with Ingrid. Were they family, friends, or those who have other emotional bonding with what a bear and other creatures mean in their lives in the vereda?

Ingrid’s generation –less than 40 years old– has encountered the neoliberal state. It is a state that when visible, arrives with narratives that include words such as “entrepreneurship”, “innovation”, “gender equity”, “strategic planning”, and brings technologies such as camera-traps, GPS, and PCs to develop its actions in relation to the environment. Women are actively
counted in this state’s activities since the number of female participants in meetings can tick the checkbox of gender equity in state planning and monitoring tables. Perhaps the actions they suggested were even taken into account in planning documents, which can tick the checkbox of participation. Therefore, the generational and gendered perspectives of what the state is, and what the environmental state looks like, are of great contrast. One is about policing men’s interactions with their natural environment (hunting of wildlife, logging of native hardwoods), the other about using technologies (camera-traps, GPS) to identify, locate and monitor wildlife and endangered species, and call for “participation.” One brings fines, the other promotes workshops, participatory tracking routes, and brings materials claiming these show a joint decision-making process where civil society is in the same level as the state, strengthening and empowering the role of the individuals, where there is no longer a paternalist government but a participatory governance. This generational difference on how the state is understood and approached does not seem to be generating a solution to the socio-environmental situation of the illegal hunting, but rather producing a new gendered-socio-environmental conflict within the community about who has the power over the resource of wildlife and by what means. My research data are insufficient to contrast how young men are relating with CAR, or how they relate with the wildlife hunting situation, or with other state institutions (except the army which was already discussed in part one). Nor can I show how older women are relating with CAR or relate with the wildlife hunting situation. However, more than looking for a matrix of relations such as: “gender + generation + relation with hunting + relation with the state”, the feminist lenses that I am using to consider environmental matters suggests that emotions and the intersectionality of identity categories are at play in the relations and understandings of the state
and in the meanings and uses given to “nature”, “environment” or its conceptual similar and material representations (wildlife).

Another Colombian case of environmental subjectivity serves to illustrate yet another angle of this change in relating with and understanding the state through environmental matters. Del Cairo and Montenegro-Perini (2015, 50) explore a case of campesino subjectivity in the Amazonian department of Guaviare. They argue that the strategies of producing spaces, populations and subjectivities generate socio-environmental conflicts that take different forms and in some cases “silent” forms. They present a case of environmental campesino subjectivities in “contingent and unfinished modeling.” Also inspired by the work of Agrawal on Environmentality they observe the State project of generating green subjects, campesino environmental subjects that will comply with state environmental ideals based on western conservation imaginaries. These authors conclude that the imposition of “conservation” to the campesinos of Guaviare who have been portrayed by the state as illegal colonizers of frontier zones and protected areas, of destroyers of the environment, is now used by them in creative and hopeful ways to show themselves now as environmental subjects to be legitimized by the institutions and therefore be able to protect their territories and manage the risks of the material and symbolic relations with the forests. In the case of Guaviare studied by these authors, it is the same people that have been labelled as destroyers of the environment who are now using environmental subjectivities to produce a new narrative where they are protectors of the territory and therefore of the environment. This relates to how Ulloa explains how the global environmental discourse is beginning to include other actors such as campesinos when they position themselves in the ecological native discourse (2004, 314). However, with the case in Cabrera and the Andean bear, there are the ‘predators of the environment’, denounced by the
same community, and the defenders of the environment, portrayed by Güiza et al (2016) as environmental leaders. Implicitly, it can also be generating a view that the men are the destroyers and the women are the defenders. Such a divisive view is problematic and might be deepening the conflict about wildlife hunting and its management rather than solving it. The CAR project seems to confront them (destroyers vs. defenders, men vs. women?) but now there is no need of CAR to do the policing since it has delegated the policing and the sanctions on the environmental leaders through the idea of environmental governance. However, if the women are portrayed as the defenders –AKA environmental leaders– and the men as the environmental destroyers, there is a complicated notion that the women are the snitches or informants of the “traditional” hunting activity of the men. Therefore various subjectivities are at play here, and those delegated to the environmental subjectivity of the “environmental leader” are not necessarily enjoying its negotiation with their own community such as Ingrid’s case. Ingrid’s situation reminds us of Agrawal’s (2005, 213) perspective on how a feminist environmentalist perspective 1) acknowledges that “the extent to which women will act to conserve depends crucially on how conservation is related to their historically constituted material interests and the practices of which they are part”; 2) how policy designs –and in this case institutional projects– reserve for women “additional tasks to protect trees and vegetation without commensurate attempts to change the political relations that marginalize them” (Razavi 2009, see part one of this dissertation) ; and 3) “conservation often relegate women to marginal positions of power and simultaneously increase their labor requirements.” The first postulate will be used for the next case of campesina, environmental subjectivity. The second postulate is exemplified by Ingrid’s role as environmental leader, assigned by the project, and for the sake of “voluntary collective action around common goals characterized by a public benefit dimension” (see Bozhkin et al.
2019 and chapter one) where with the label of voluntary for common goals, these extra labors of administering the materials and the diverse emotions around the project are carried on Ingrid’s shoulders. This environmental stewardship assigned to women in this case, which can be institutionally argued as a policy design to augment women’s participation in rural and environmental management is actually leaving them more vulnerable and signaled by other members of the community. This situation connects too with what I exposed in chapter one of Razavi’s (2009) observations of gendered agrarian dynamics in rural development initiatives where women and other particular categories of people who are deemed more suitable stewards of the environment, are not sharing in benefits when participation becomes an additional unpaid burden. The power of persuasion and of action in the community and of the actual environmental management of each of these ‘parts’ is yet to be observed in a longer term, however for now it might be triggering a new social conflict with the axis of gender and generation in play. The third postulate also serves for Ingrid’s case, since her role of secretary of the JAC, easily led to assigning her more administrative roles, now with the CAR’s ESCA’s project.

Arguably, Ingrid is an environmental subject, but can we say that the older male of the community who confront her—and who might be the hunters—are also environmental subjects or are they not? Güiza et al (2016), argue that their research project arrived to Cabrera because “the community” had denounced hunting by “the community.” Therefore, it was not that their project formed Ingrid’s environmental subjectivity, but perhaps that it enforced hers and other project participants’ views of how environmental protection should be enforced. However, this is a

122 See Part I, Chapter 1, page 25
narrow view. According to Stinson (2017) in his research about the politics of conservation in Belize, this sort of view about environmental subjectivity suffers of a problematic dichotomy.

In the case of environmentality, a dichotomy is established between those who become environmental subjects and those who do not. The problem with this framing is that it treats ‘environmental subjectivity’ as a linear spectrum that reflects one’s ‘degree of environmentalism. (Stinson 2017, 186)

However, the same “anti-environmentalist” Andean bear hunters, are also the fervent environmentalists when it comes to defend their Sumapaz territory against the development projects of hydroelectric projects and oil exploitation. It is the possible anti-environmentalist hunters that accuse Ingrid of selling their territory for the development projects by bringing CAR to the vereda. This suggests that the problem is not about degrees of environmentalism. An alternative approach can be a matter of scales (bear = small, river=big) where different values and scales of relation are given to what environment is and how every subject relates to it or its constituents. So how should the environmental subjectivity be described in those that are defiantly “anti-environmentalist” towards the hunting regulation, even when the policing is done by the same community, but are environmental subjects when opposing projects that modify the river, the land, and its access and control by the community? What sort of power and practice enforced in the past molded a care for one aspect and not for another? Is the river protected because it is “territory” but not the bear because it is “threat”, or “sport”? Is hunting the bear an enunciation of using one’s territory and having autonomy over it? Is it a defiant act to confront the environmental authority? This brings us back to navigating and negotiating the fluid subjectivities mentioned in the theory chapter of this part to understand how multiple aspects shape resource use and identification with what environmental can mean. If subjectivities are situated then they are not only situated by locality (e.g. vereda) but also generationally situated.

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123 See theory chapter, part 2, pg.29
and negotiated differently in different spaces/relations. There is a personal and historic background that influences one’s actions and responses. There is agency in how one behaves as an environmental subject. In this sense, the notion of what a bear means, is valued for, is different generationally due to what they have been exposed to and from what sources (e.g. television, school, oral histories, etc.). Ingrid’s situation of expressing isolation, rejection and questioning from the community’s older males, about her involvement in an institutional environmental project can also be explored in terms of the intersectionality of gender and age and the position of vulnerability (Iniesta-Arandia et al 2016, S386) this manifests in her positioning within the community, how her voice is disallowed by the elder males, her actions and her criteria are too.

This case of the Andean bear project could also be seen through the lens of commons literature. I will not expand this possibility since it is not the focus of this research, but if wildlife are considered to be commons (resources?), and a part of the community, is “exploiting” this commons resource for sport or due to eventual threat, while another part of the community is denouncing its exploitation to the state’s regional environmental authority, this makes an interesting case to study the management of this commons’ situation and the actors involved in its regulation. The problematizing of the internal divisions in a “community” in relation to environmental issues and bringing to the table the possibilities that it has for gendered and generational angles, resonates with Elmhirst’s (2015, 519) claim that Feminist Political Ecology “complicates arenas of assumed common interests, such as ‘community’ and ‘household’.” As was enunciated above, there is the possibility that the focus of the CAR and Güiza et al support with a gender equity and participatory governance approach has not been able to tackle deeper,
complicated angles of the gendered and aged subjectivities and power relations within this campesina/o community.

Finally, I want to relate Ingrid’s case, with a different generational and gendered perception of campesina identity, found in the following statement, recorded in a public event against the hydroelectric project. It shows how an older women portrays campesina/o environmental identity of those from the Sumapaz region, and the Cabrera municipality:

... [B]ecause here [in Sumapaz], many agrarian struggles were bred, led and held. So, if we have struggled for our land, today we are struggling for our water, which does not have any political color. We all need water to take our thirst, whatever the political color is. So -as my predecessors have expressed-... we are in the defense of our Sumapaz páramo. We do not want our Sumapaz river to be violated, because this is the purest river there is in Colombia. Because all the other rivers are already polluted because of the same issue of energy or other matters. So we do not want -ever- for anyone to come and violate our river, and least, that they come to impose on us some cultures, because we, as Sumapaceños and Cabreronos, we have our own culture which is cattle-farming agriculturists (agricultores ganaderos). This is what we are, the men, women, boys and girls. Thank you very much. (Woman speaking in event against the hydroelectric dam in Sumapaz. Pandi, February 2017. My translation124)

In this statement there are several identity markers. There is the recognition of the campesinado of Sumapaz as a political, historical actor who has experience in organizing land struggles, territorial defense struggles. There is also an identity with the paramo, a tropical high mountain peatland ecosystem that produces the water which is used by cities and agrarian systems down the cordilleras. The Sumapaz river is an axis of the territory which is demarcated by its water basin and in 2017 was in dispute for hydroelectric projects that proposed to construct a complex of eight micro power houses along the Sumapaz river. The project was proposed by the Italian-Spanish transnational company ENEL-EMGESA (Frutigao and Tierra Libre, no date). The word violating is the same in Spanish for raping, so there is an implicit relation of the transgression of

this body –of water– which is also described as the only pure, unpolluted river left in Colombia. Finally, there is the explicit cultural identity as cattle-farming agriculturalists and the explicit inclusion of this identity intergenerationally and for both genders. This statement can be more related to the elder men’s position about territorial defense and against CAR’s ‘intrusion’ in local natural resource management. However, it does not compete or deny with Ingrid’s position since it also talks about protecting the páramo. In both cases, the women do not see a conflict between conservation (of the páramo, of the river, of the wildlife) and their agrarian production. What gets complicated is how this conservation or protection is achieved and who has the power to exercise control and management over these environment elements. The next cases which relate with other facets of the environmental state, propose further discussions of how subjectivities, politics and institutions shape each other and are themselves constituted.

**Participation, peace and environmentality**

In the framework of the project *Somos Ambiente y Paz*, a National Meeting of Youth for Environment, Territory and Peace was held in June 2016. Its key discussion points were peace, post-conflict and biodiversity. Meeting during three days, the participation of 3,500 youth would be the base for constructing a document –the National Declaration– that would connect the initiatives of youth participation in national environmental management and agency, seeking to promote territorial proposals for peace, biodiversity and climate change. The event began with the blessings of the Muisca\(^\text{125}\) grandparents, the wise women (*sabedoras*) of the Amazon, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta shamans (*mamos*), with the presence of the national president Juan

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\(^\text{125}\) Muiscas were the people of the territory where Bogotá now is in pre-Hispanic times. There are Muisca recognized communities in and near Bogotá with a population of approximately 15,000 individuals self-recognizing as Muisca in 2005 according to the Ministry of Culture. [https://www.mincultura.gov.co/prensa/noticias/Documents/Poblaciones/PUEBLO%20MUISCA.pdf](https://www.mincultura.gov.co/prensa/noticias/Documents/Poblaciones/PUEBLO%20MUISCA.pdf)
Manuel Santos, the minister of environment, IAvH director and other institutional representatives including the National Network of Youth for the Environment. Recall here Ulloa’s observation of how the presence of “ecological natives” in Colombian institutional spaces “legitimates the ancestry and biodiversity” (2004, 315) of the event. The academic panels were about territorial management (ordenamiento territorial) and post-conflict, water governance and climate change, participation, biodiversity and environmental justice. These would serve as tools to generate the result which would be “Environmental Agreements for the Future” and conclusions for the “environmental routes” which would be signed at the end of the meeting.

A National Declaration for the Environment and Peace was crafted and uploaded to webpages as a result of this meeting. It begins stating it was in the occasion of the 7th National meeting of Youth for the Environment, that youth proposals around environment, territory and peace are outlined as “For us, Peace is not reduced to the end of armed conflict, we want peace with environment, with the territory and the communities, recognizing the present territorialities in the different regions of the country.” It highlights the importance of participatory processes that have impact, are binding and decisive, marked by autonomy, proactive, critical and independent of political party affiliations.

As youth, we add and commit to the construction of a better country, recognizing and compensating the victims of armed conflict, who are not limited only to human beings. In this way we recognize that the environment and diverse species have also been victimized and therefore we commit to repair them and tend to guaranteeing the rights of nature.

126 Original phrase: “Para nosotros la Paz no se reduce al fin del conflicto armado; queremos la paz con el ambiente, con el territorio y con las comunidades, reconociendo las territorialidades presentes en las diferentes regiones del país.” Source: http://www.minambiente.gov.co/index.php/component/content/article/2316-plantilla-ordenamiento-ambiental-territorial-y-coordinacion-del-sina-con-galeria-19#1-1-documentos-de-interes

127 My translation of document downloaded from this page: http://www.minambiente.gov.co/index.php/component/content/article/2316-plantilla-ordenamiento-ambiental-territorial-y-coordinacion-del-sina-con-galeria-19#1-1-documentos-de-interes
To conclude, we demand a Commitment from the national government to foster an impactful participation from youth in the process of decision-making recognizing the territorial autonomy. We propose peace with the territory, the environment and the communities developing strategies that promote sustainability of the territory. And we commit to appropriate our territory and to participate in decision-making, being overseers and generating actions that recognize ethnic, cultural and environmental diversity\textsuperscript{128}.

The list of demands, proposals and commitments is thematically similar to that in the Somos Ambiente y Paz publication which is another product of the same project. I recognize the Declaration proposes a holistic approach where environment and peace are to be seen as a single thing but for the purposes of this academic exercise it is imperative that I dissect and separate ‘the environmental’ to see what it is made of, which I will offer in the discussion below. One of the observations is the mentioning of non-human agents, the “environment and diverse species” as victims, and the “rights of nature” as something that can be guaranteed. I will not deepen the discussion of the more-than-human elements of this narrative because it exceeds the focus of this research. However, I recognize it is an important element to analyze about the socioenvironmental state.

Neither the publication nor the statement derived from the national meeting have clear images of what they are understanding as environment and effective participation beyond this event. With this lack of clarity of what the state (Ministry of Environment) is understanding by “environment” in more material terms of what biodiversity, natural resources and climate change are made of, it is useful to bring one of Harris’ (2017) and Nightingale’s (2018) question about the socioenvironmental state: “how are resources, objects, and related infrastructures central to refashioning state-society relations, or the crucial boundary work required to delineate what we refer to as the ‘state’ and its evolving capacities?” (2018, 689). The notion of the “environment making state” (Parenti 2015, Camargo and Ojeda 2017) is also a useful resource to understand.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid. Italics in original text.
how this state led event produces notions of what territory, biodiversity, climate change, and water understood as “environment” are. As Camargo and Ojeda show in their case about the Colombian state in climate change adaptation and mitigation projects in the Colombian Caribbean, the state is ambivalent and there is an ambivalent relation with the state. The Colombian state is prone to propose “fictitious scenarios of prosperity and welfare that link both the local and the global in very problematic and unrealistic ways.” (2017, 59) and it is useful to examine the “emotive repertoires that mediate local populations’ understandings and experiences of the state and the political.” (Camargo and Ojeda 2017, 59; Bocarejo 2016, Bolivar 2005, 2006). For the case of this environmental declaration by youth promoted by the state, youth are participating in a construction of state imaginaries, where they are active actors and their claims in this declaration are powerful and will be heard. It is a sort of performing participation (Perreault 2015) strategy where these institutionally promoted environmental performances for youth,

circumscribe the opportunities for action and discursive fields available [for youth, and become] a technology of government meant to promote participation of a sort, through a narrowly defined set of rules and practices, in order to produce a ‘convenient’ alignment of people and things (Perreault 2015, 447).

In other words, it generates convenient environmental subjects, for a discourse of what environment is, looks like, and how to work for it, feeling like being part of a solution, feeling empowered. More than the what the environment is, these activities serve to show how the environmental should be approached with the state through a fictitious scenario where youth use a commanding tone in the Declaration, ordering the state to commit to peace and environment. This can be read as part of the emotive repertoires that generates an idea of the state, more precisely here of an “environment making state” or a “socioenvironmental state”; a notion of how to discursively relate with it; and the construction of environment and peace-building young
subjects who respond in this convenient alignment of people and things. Similar to what happens
with the use of rituality, the performative act of the Declaration has a meaning in how the
socioenvironmental state is understood by those who participate in these actions. These actions
generate emotions and emotions can then be attached and related to what one feels about the
state (e.g. patriotism, nationalism), and about what ‘the environmental’ triggers in one’s psyche.
In this way, rituality is also about state-making, and state-making implies forming subjects, in
this case, inclusive of forming environmental subjects through particular technologies of
government such as performing the urgent need of a Declaration to address environmental issues.

**Environmental institutional perspectives of relating with campesina/o subjects**

I was able to do a great interview with a National Park director whom I knew since my college
days when as an ecology student we would do botany fieldwork in the National Park he directed,
and also of the days when I worked with the National Parks central office in my first job. The
interview did not have the distance of a state agent being interviewed by a researcher. It had the
tone of a conversation among colleagues who share insights about a state agency and a territory.
Therefore my own subjectivity and situated knowledge is evident as I choose the extracts of the
interview and as I write the section. Although he put me in contact with the young professionals
from the territory who were working with the Park, I was not able to interview them. This means
I only have the institutional perspective of the relationship and I cannot compare, contrast or put
in conversation with the campesina view of the relation. However, having the institutional
perspective offers the opportunity to exercise a feminist political ecology view offered by
Nightingale’s *The socioenvironmental state: Political authority, subjects and transformative
socionatural change in an uncertain world* (2018) which examines the boundaries between the
state and society and questions how to make sense of the struggles of power in the production of the socioenvironmental state. Her lens offers the recognition that

State-society boundary-making emerges within the reconfigurations of ecological and political relations of territory, land, natural resources used for everyday livelihoods, and opportunities for long-term material accumulation… The state appears as public authority at least in part because it governs (but cannot control) the unpredictable material foundations of livelihoods and political economies. At the same time, these effects are also embedded within cultural imaginaries, knowledges, sense of belonging, subjectivities, and social relations, which help share what ‘resources’ are, which authorities are recognized, and who is included, making disentangling the social-political from the natural impossible. (2018, 694, italics in original text)

I present below the main extracts of the interview with a National Park authority (Sept. 2017) and propose a discussion of the issues of the socioenvironmental state that I identify from this interview.

What I have detected in the campesino movement of Sumapaz is a social movement. Not an adult movement of adult men, No. It is not an association of producers where you have the man meeting there with his association. Instead, the campesino movements of Sumapaz are social movements. This means you have the representation of women, of youth; you have social systems of education, outreach, of reading, for families. You have an amazing richness of formación.

[Is the political formación evident?] Yes. Deep in the veredas I observed and there was this girl of 12, 13 years of age, with her beret, listening attentively to what the institution [National Parks] said. Worried, she would tell the president of the Agrarian Union -who is supposed to represent everything- ‘be careful with what you sign, be very careful.’ She was very attentive and this is how you see a very active political participation. I like this. There is like a very high academic-political level that is very good. It confronts not the National Park, nor the environmental system but rather the social context that youth face, in social media, in the possibilities available.

How to act, how to exercise being the environmental authority in contexts of use-occupation-and-tenure, are immense challenges. So one learns that it goes beyond the limits of the Park’s area. That the themes of legality of the Park, authority has a higher richness than police action. So do systems of self-regulation. When one gets to know the campesino systems of self-regulation and when I give them for example some information about forest fires, they have said ‘yes, this year we can control that there are no forest fires’ and they have mechanisms to control this better than anyone else. At least better than us trying to handle forest fires everywhere. Systems of self-regulation and some information. Information had been distanced from Sumapaz. Which means that fear not only drew people away but also information. What was left in Sumapaz? When you begin
georeferencing you see that the most recent information was from the 80s. When van der Hammen did studies there. Then there is like a temporal black hole of information. So we are resuming research, about climate change, with the Botanical Garden we want to do the flora list of the district.

We are organizing an *EcoParche* in the Jaime Garzón school\(^{129}\)… This base work of community communication is being coordinated by a sociologist. This is an element of society construction of what society wants to express. We give technological tools, for video, radio, drawing to express. Then you see the kids once trained, asking for instance ‘why is the Union environmental?’ and his dad –the Agrarian Union president– answering ‘we have environmental policies to take care of the paramo.’ I saw it in [the municipality X], a great potential with the tools to make the videos for You Tube. You give the kids access to modernity while they are immersed in their territory and learning the elements of communication.

We have three young women from the territory [of Sumapaz] working with the Park. They are all studying law in Bogotá. In the context of use-occupation-and-tenure they are the local experts. They are working through the project financed by European Union. What I see is that these young women are like fractals of the territory with what they show in the discussions. For instance in the meetings of [the organization]. National Parks is not invited but they are because they are part of the association. One is the vice chair of an Agrarian Union. They have the territory in their hearts. And when we need logistics support for the meetings, to know how much it costs, to bring people from different parts of the region, they figure it out. ‘That man can help us with the transportation’. They are working very well with us. What I have done is showing them that conservation is no easy task. That we have our own internal doubts. That it is not that we are the bad guys, and that we are going to screw up the peasants, but rather where there are institutional reflections: what is community ecotourism; what are payments for ecosystem services and where have they worked? We have done field trips. Trips to Iguaque, Chingaza where they observed the new project of the Bogota aqueduct, how the pipes work, those pipes that have social benefits and economic implications.

One of the aspects that can be observed from this institutional perspective is an acknowledgement of the local strength of campesino mobilization and its history of land struggles. This insight and recognition coming from an individual that represents the state in the negotiation spaces he mentions can be analyzed through Nightingale’s (2018) suggestion of how

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\(^{129}\) *Eco Parche* refers to an environmental communications group initiative for schools led by the National Parks Office. Some of its videos: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opcWCz8wziA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=opcWCz8wziA); [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iivPQ2nGGI0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iivPQ2nGGI0)

Jaime Garzon was a very popular political humorist in Colombia who was killed the 13 of August of 1999 by paramilitary forces. He had been local mayor for the Sumapaz locality of Bogota, the only entirely rural locality.
to make sense of the struggles of power in the production of the socioenvironmental state. If we admit that the exercise of power involves processes of power to act, refuse, step out of hegemonic relations, and all other reactions possible among agents (in this case campesino organizations, campesina/os and the agents that represent the state as National Parks), we can be attentive to the revelations of how change occurs. Changes in the reconfigurations of rule could be occurring in the form of this assertion from a public authority that recognizes the historical-territorial authority and control and the strength of political formación of the people of Sumapaz. There are important considerations to be made here of the state-society-citizen boundaries—as Nightingale calls them. What happens in this case with the power of the state when the public authority (National Parks) admits there are legitimate historical organizational structures that have a better knowledge of the territory and organizational structure to manage environmental issues such as forest/páramo fires? If as critics of the state we wanted to prove the state is an evil coercive and authoritarian state and the state comes personified by someone who recognizes and legitimates local social authority, this “contradiction” offers interesting reflections. What happens when the same state role (National Park director) is replaced with another subject, even if with the same state role, but with a narrow mind of what this social organizational structure represents and the territorial power it has? This reminds us that the state is also made up of political subjects where each individual brings their own subjectivity. In this case they bring their own political-environmental subjectivity and perform it and exercise it in their role of representation of state power. Contractions and expansions, as well as inclusions and exclusions in the relation between the state and the society are a constant when the subjects representing the state are changed in their personification, and their knowledge, negotiating abilities and agency as individuals generate different outcomes. This is an example of the constant (re)negotiations of
the state-society-citizen boundaries (Nightingale 2018). This constant negotiation is also present when members of this organized community are invited to work with the state—in this case with the National Park—to facilitate the state’s presence in the territory. There is a process of “authority-recognition” and “authority-subjectification” pictured here and is also always in constant change. This is why we can only have temporary and circumstantial pictures of outcomes of these relations and its “boundaries”, not a “god trick” (Haraway 1998, 589), nor an objective single truth of what the state-society relation is and where the boundary is found. “It is these processes through which re-imagination of public authority can occur” (Nightingale 2018, 693).

The lack of information “from the other side” –the subject’s side– reduces the discussion possibilities. However, it is possible to question if these same women who worked for the National Park logistics as community members can also oppose the Park in other spaces. Is it a question of scale and historical times? Or is it also determined by the agency of the individual who appears as a representative of the state and their negotiating capacities? In her fluid regard of subjectivities, Nightingale suggests

[A] performative framing of political subjectivity allows for subjectivities to be dynamic and multiple, changing as power and belonging are exercised (Ahlborg 2017) and as people move through the political-socinatural contexts of everyday life (Ahlborg and Nightingale 2018, Nightingale 2013). In this formulation, it is possible for people to simultaneously accept and refuse the knowledges, discourses, relations, and practices that attempt to create particular state-subject boundaries. (2018, 696)

This reminds me of Ingrid’s ability to recognize that CAR was wrong in policing the use of trees by the community and accept that this had led to its rejection, while at the same time, accepting to work with CAR in the Andean bear project, recognizing that the results of the project could be beneficial for the community. She is able to have a simultaneous critical and dynamic relation with the environmental state. The same can be true of the young women who work with the
National Park and are also part of the community organization AsoJuntas where the Park is not invited. In contrast the older men of Cabrera accuse Ingrid of not being able to have a single, unitary view of absolute rejection of the state. If in both cases it is about perspectives over power and authority over natural resources, these women are able to negotiate this power by being involved with it, gaining insight of how the state functions, without losing their critical perspective to what it has done to the community too and what the state (as CAR and National Parks) also represents to the community. This an expression of their agency in their relation with the environmental state. If working with the environmental state offers livelihood solutions for solving everyday problems (e.g. feeding a family, having cash for transportation, for public services, for communications, for helping family members buying medicines) how is it not an option? If it allows a person to get to know the languages of the state, to have insiders’ information, to learn how to use tools, to further educational possibilities, how is it not an option for young women of campesina origin? As Nightingale puts it:

[B]elonging is a dynamic boundary-making process, one that is inseparable from the exercise of power and the socionatural relations through which subjectivities emerge. For political ecologies of the state, these insights mean that the micro-politics of the everyday cannot be separated from the larger level assertions of sovereignty and public authority and the circulation of capital. Gender, race, caste and other intersectional subjectivities are not only crucial in terms of shaping access to, control over, and distribution of resources (Rochealeau et al. 1996), but they are also re-inscribed by struggles over authority, recognition, citizenship, and belonging (Elmhirst 2011, Harris 2009, Nightingale 2017) (Nightingale 2018, 696)

I interpret the working relations of these young women (Ingrid, the ones working with National Parks) as decisions immersed in solving the everyday, asserting personal sovereignty (instead of the problematic ‘empowerment’ term) and struggling for recognition in micro-politics dynamics. According to what I develop in chapter one, it is cultivating a social asset. Additionally, it is evident that all this is permeated by intersectional subjectivities and their performances. The fact
that Ingrid has to face the disapproval and public questioning of the older men of the community is an example of a struggle over authority where each “part” enacts power in a different way: hunting or denouncing hunting; using hunting tools or using monitoring tools; bringing and supporting the project activities or sabotaging the project activities. Belonging is also at trial. Does the one who hunts and makes this use of “natural resources” belong more, than the one who condemns hunting and seeks another use of this natural resource?

Inclusions and exclusions in governance and everyday resource use are not only justice questions, they also point to the basis of authority making. Struggles over recognition link scales of governing and in doing so, reframe the basis of claims to authority and belonging. It is through these boundary-making practices that the possibilities for social change lie as people adhere to or violate resource governance rules, recognise or refuse authority, make claims to rights and belonging, and struggles over political subjectivities and authority are inscribed within the landscape (Nightingale 2018, 696).

This also agrees with Camargo and Ojeda’s (2017) observation of ambivalent desires for the state from the Colombian peasantry. They call for the “differentiated state experiences and state desires that need to be analyzed, not as an abstract call for the state, but in their concrete manifestations” (2017, 63). The cases portrayed here of Sumapaz answer this call for political ecologies of the state. My perspective agrees also with Nightingale’s that through these nature-society-state relations “the state emerges conceptually and empirically as an ongoing contested domain, one that is not only governing, but is also constitutive of the kinds of political and environmental challenges” (2018, 696). In the end, it is not about the state but about how through the environmental situations, the relations with the state, are part of the issue of how to exercise authority and recognition in a community. This is traversed by the intersectional subjectivities of those who relate with or against the state as an idea of power.
Conclusion

In this chapter I take feminist political ecology, emotional political ecology and feminist environmentalist lenses to discuss how young environmental subjects are produced/generated/forming. Using Agrawal’s and Ulloa’s environmentality approaches I begin by identifying and analyzing the use of rituality in environmental related spaces for youth, from state institutions and from agroecological schools. I argue that the use of elements of the ecological native together with other tools such as chants, the use of water, soil, fire, feathers, seeds, its presence in events, its repetition, and reiteration are able to trigger emotions in youth towards what the environment is and promote a sense of belonging and commitment to protection. In this sense, rituality becomes a disciplining tool in spaces of formación for environmental subjectivity. This shows one of the ways in which subjectivities, politics and institutions come to interact, answering Agrawal’s call for environmentalities that relate these issues. I suggest this also answers to an analysis of emotional political ecology where natural resources are given new meanings, provided agency, and other uses to trigger emotional repertoires for environmental subjectivity construction. I also expose another way of triggering emotions and sense of empowerment in youth in environmental-institutional spaces such as the National Meeting of Youth for Environment, Territory and Peace where a National Declaration for the Environment and Peace is said to be composed by young environmentalists. This enunciative act (Declaration) carries with it a performative participation promoted and generated by the environmental state (the Ministry of Environment and the IAvH) which generates a sense of power in this environmental youth. This, I argue is another way how environmental subjectivity in youth is constructed. I use Camargo and Ojeda’s term of the “fictitious scenarios” used by the Colombian state to generate a sense of prosperity and welfare, particularly in the
historic moment of the peace process when this Declaration was produced. It shows not only the environmental but also the peace subjectivity in-the-making in this historic moment for Colombia’s contemporary history: the year 2016. The act of the meeting and its declaration product are also examined as part of the “emotive repertoires that mediate local populations’ understandings and experiences of the state and the political” (Camargo and Ojeda 2017, 59). This feeds both a discussion of the state from a political ecology point of view and also answers calls of emotional political ecology (Sultana 2015, 633) “that elucidates how emotions matter in nature-society relations”.

The last two cases show more gendered perspectives of environmental subjectivity and relations with the socioenvironmental state. Answering the call of political ecologies of the state by Camargo and Ojeda and Nightingale, I observe how the state manifests itself through a biodiversity conservation project (Andean bear CAR project) and a National Park and its relation with campesina/o youth. With these examples I suggest that the core of the situation is not about the state but about how through environmental situations, the relations with the state become issues of authority and recognition in a community, about who exercises authority, along with the intersectional subjectivities of those who relate with or against the state. This is shown with the examples of Ingrid who works for the Andean bear project and the difficulties she faces with the elderly men of the community to implement the project’s activity. There are administrative and emotional labor burdens that Ingrid faces. However, I see this situation as a power struggle within the community with the axis of ‘natural resource use’ (aka hunting) but that has immersed intersectional subjectivities such as gender and age. In the case of how a National Park staff describes the relation with the community and young women community members, I suggest that the socioenvironmental state is permeable when the women can both be part of and opposed to
the Park, and how this is an example of the constant (re)negotiations of the state-society-citizen boundaries, and how it is possible for people to simultaneously accept and refuse the knowledges, discourses, relations, and practices that attempt to create particular state-subject boundaries (Nightingale 2018). In both cases, these women are able to negotiate state power by being involved with it, gaining insight into how the state functions, without losing their critical perspective about what it has done to the community too and what the state (as CAR and NP) also represents to the community. This also shows how belonging is a dynamic boundary-making process. Linking this with what I exposed in part one, these women are also using this socioenvironmental state to solve their everyday needs and expand their livelihood strategies. Concluding, I do have a concern about how the ritualistic and the participatory environmental spaces promoted by the state can also trigger emotions of frustration and deception in the campesina/o youth, but I also see possibilities of temporarily solving livelihood situations and of giving more agency and tools (e.g. information, insider’s view of how the state bureaucracy works) to navigate the state and the micro-politics of community power and intersectional interactions.
Conclusion

I set out with the question of youth in agrarian and environmental issues after my MA research in geography about environmental land use planning in Campesina/o Reserve Zones (ZRC) in Colombia, when I observed during fieldwork that youth involved in that theme were scarce to find. That led to my broad PhD interest on where campesina/o youth situate themselves in contemporary agrarian and environmental issues, particularly in Andean Colombia. I was also interested in exploring my own positionality and reflect on my roles and relations with the Sumapaz region from my emotional closeness to this place due to personal histories. As with all research trajectories, the unfolding of events created new paths, challenges and opportunities.

My research project began with the enthusiasm and hope around the peace agreements between the Colombian government (2014-2018) and the FARC guerrilla. Looking back, the design of the research carried the historic expectations around the peace agreements as a hope for change from the tragic history of armed conflict and violence to a new era of peace in rural Colombia in the shape of new policies, fewer dangers (e.g. no landmines, no sexual abuse from armed forces, no recruitment of minors for irregular armed forces, no persecution of social leaders). The unfolding of events generated a retraction from that momentary hope. My fieldwork was done after the vote against the peace agreements won the plebiscite (November 2016), and the writing of this dissertation when a new government that opposed the peace-agreements came to power.

When I began my fieldwork, both my personal situation and the political situation proved challenging and changed the course of what was originally designed and planned for this research.

Among the variety of problems faced by humanity today are the massive changes of land use that threaten the production and access to food, the livelihoods of rural people and the
degradation of environmental conditions contributing to negative climate change, loss of situated knowledges of how to live in a place with its natural conditions, and general loss of life on Earth. This also generates a constant displacement of rural populations, their marginalization and stigmatizing as unproductive masses and a disappearance of rural livelihoods with their situated knowledges associated with cultural practices of environmental management, food production, and well-being conditions. The broad lens through which I look at the causes behind these aggregated catastrophes is the expansion of capitalism as the hegemonic economic project which influences politics and mindsets generating new subjectivities and identities that code behaviors and conducts so capitalism becomes a truth and continues its expansion and destructive modes. This colossal problem has infinite ways to be tackled and unpacked, and plenty of smaller problematics to be approached. The theoretical route I chose with this dissertation began with agrarian studies by approaching how the continuous expansion of capitalist economic relations in agrarian and rural settings has long threatened the fate of the peasantry in what has been studied as the agrarian question. I introduce the discussions and observation brought by agrarian, economic, development and feminist scholars on how gender is present in agrarian scenarios and what this implies in analyzing agrarian settings and situations. In correspondence with some agrarian scholars, the “gendered agrarian question” is one of the missing links in contemporary agrarian debates and this dissertation contributes to this scholarship.

Another of the aspects that has recently received more attention in relation to the agrarian question, is how rural youth are affected by capitalist relations in el campo (understood as a cultural and agrarian productive setting) and how, if they are supposed to be the next generation of agrarian producers, these relations affect their livelihood opportunities and challenges. Introducing the lens of youth studies (White 2012, 2019, Leavy and Hossain 2014, Cassidy et al.
I use ethnographic methods to focus on youth as subjects with agency on their decisions and actions, but also as gendered subjects, bringing some individual testimonies to understand livelihood expectations, challenges and opportunities, being attentive on how these possibilities are also gendered. This leads me to conclude that if capitalism depends on economic class relationships, the first level of classed relations is found within the household when children, youth and women do agrarian, domestic, care and other types of labor – e.g. related with natural resource management – that are either not paid, are undervalued, or exploited, and this leads to a first disadvantage and discrimination in how agrarian livelihoods are accessed and constructed.

What I suggest is that el campo is a gendered and generational possibility, in terms of agrarian livelihood options.

Another observation that comes out of the testimonies, is that out-migration does not have to be definite and urban. Migration can be seen as mobility and in this sense, as a livelihood asset. Spatial mobility which can imply for example moving to different climates within a region to labor seasonally, and/or social mobility which includes accessing other social circles (e.g. religious, productive, political, educational). I argue that narrowing the range of labor and migrating decisions as economic decisions is discriminatory as it suggests that all peasants are economically poor and therefore intellectually poor in their life interests. Rural youth value elements of life in the countryside that the city cannot offer. Migrating to the city or to do unskilled labor in other rural settings can be seen by them as a temporary situation, not meant with the intention of out-migrating definitely but of seeking to build new assets that can strengthen their possibilities of life in el campo. I highlight how for urban youth, mobility is usually portrayed as a positive action in life, while for rural youth in agrarian studies it tends to be seen as a negative action, always leading to definite out-migration. What needs to be observed
are other external aspects such as access to education, adequate public policies, or issues such as the one that I mention where compulsory military service for campesino young men is a constraint in their life, an intersectional discrimination where they end up being a source of cheap labor for the state’s war apparatus and where they are formed to reinforce violent masculinities, furthering an already violent, toxic, abusive and discriminatory territory for campesinas, rural women and other feminized bodies in el campo.

In part two I examine other angles to understand the current situations of campesina/o youth. I explore what brings new identities to el campo and in what ways campesina/o identity and subject formation is mobilized by young campesina/os in search of viable agrarian livelihood options. As was seen in the chapter four Tutela, with the political claim of being acknowledged as a specific population by the Colombian state, the peasantry or campesinado is a current active social and political actor—at least in Colombia. I observe that the use of this legal instrument (acción de tutela) calling the state to count the campesinos, is a form of agency for the negotiation of positioning a political, collective identity. It might imply using strategic essentialism and this is because identity is always in relation to something. In this case, this relationship is with the state apparatus and it is about seeking to position a political and economic space, a space of protection—instead of persecution—a public legitimacy from the state and society more broadly. Therefore it is full of intentionality and—using Butler’s term—is a form of performative agency. This is an answer to the hegemonic invisibility and stigmatization of this population in a particular place and given the context of the peace agreements it is also strategic in its historical timing since it proposes a new democratic subject emerging from the ravages of war, taking Butler’s reflection of the performative agency. The other cases or examples shown, also exemplify the negotiation of identities and subjectivities. For instance, the
positioning of rural women in public polices and in state institutions has also required the use of essentialism as a strategic political tool. It serves a purpose for specific negotiations with state institutions and its legal language or with development agencies and their project logic. However, this also implies negotiations within the organizations, and among the women who are part of them. Not all have the same interests, agendas and conceptualizations as explained by Sañudo (2015) since I was not able to access direct testimonies on this perspective. In campesino organizations, campesinas have passed from an initial demand for parity in organizational spaces, to deeper, more structural claims for the campesina/o movement in general. However, it is important to observe the changing subjectivities of rural and campesina women and how they are also mobilized by the state through the different economic and development schemes that influence state policies, programs and projects. The achievements in public policy for rural women and campesinas are disputable. Nonetheless, there are advances in relation to how it was some decades ago in relation to land rights. Even within the campesino organizations it has been challenging for campesinas to position their political space and agenda. In a case portrayed in the chapter five Claiming Political Space as Women, with the conceptual framework of Campesina and Popular Feminism, campesinas are claiming and placing in their organizations the private as political, the everyday chores as political, and their situated knowledge as political, territorial and economic knowledge. In this way, I argue that a situated feminism such as FCP can be approached as a territorial feminism. This leads to linking with FPE arguments. The campesina knowledge of nature which can be turned into a subjectivity of a scientific knowledge claim or can be a construction of an essentialist subject, a women-close-to-nature subjectivity can be used for political agendas and this deserves further research. The option of what subjectivity to claim can depend on context of negotiation which is also a practical view of how to construct, use, and
perform subjectivities. What is important to highlight of this chapter on gender subjectivity is how it is shaped and influenced by economic and political interests. When analyzing the narratives in public policy for rural women such as Law 731, I find the narrative of the entrepreneurial subject, which proposes a rural women subjectivity where they will be competitive actors in direct relation with “the markets.” This is a narrative that is also examined for rural youth in the subsequent chapter. What I argue is that this is more a creation of a gendered economic subjectivity meant to align to current national macro-economic dynamics, rather than a policy that responds to the claims of the women it is meant to support.

When observing the narratives of young entrepreneur (RY Network) or agroecology cadre (LVC agroecology schools) – among others – in subject formation, what I found is: that they are adopted by rural and campesina/o youth as survival tactics, as identities-in-the-making, or adaptation strategies for the entrance to adult economic and political systems. The performing of these identities might prove useful in the “world of work” or, more precisely, to navigate the capitalist economic system to organize their livelihood options. The cases seen show how this implies thinking about and planning for issues such as: generating income; social pressures around family, knowledge, alliance, patronage or networking; leadership ideals; entrepreneurial schemes; or political arenas beginning by a local scale. An interesting difference observed – that merits further research – is if there is a gendered difference in the type of agrarian business proposed, developed and maintained for rural youth and, what are its reasons and implications.

In the cases shown in chapter four Youth, of the two youth involved in the rural youth entrepreneurial network, the young man referred to his individual enterprise while the young woman to “founding a women’s association.” With the young man, there was a notion of undervaluing the “interchangeable” labor done by his mother and his sister in “his” enterprise.
With the young woman, there was a sense of working in a node, and she always talked in plural about the agrarian business: “when we began to process … We have our products in chain stores and we contract with ICBF.” While the man referred to the business in singular: “I am producer of eggs… because the egg I sell, I sell it expensive.” Additionally, he suggests that associations are cheaters and loafers, moochers. In this logic, then the story goes that individual entrepreneurs are the opposite: hard-working, and worth investing in. This can also have implications of how genders are portrayed, if associations are assumed as a feminine organizational and economic structure, while individual enterprises are masculine affairs. Further attention and research needs to be placed on what is ontologically shaping the youth’s ideas of politics, economics and power/institutional structures.

The associativity requirements for women to access rural funds is explicit in Law 731 (Art. 10) for rural women (see chapter five Claiming Political Space as Women) with the FOMMUR fund which seeks to strengthen associative forms and the granting of credits to women’s associations. However there is no explicit mention of individual access for women to this fund. This differentiation of associativity for women and individual enterprises for men, can be hinting another angle of the argument of el campo as a gendered experience and opportunity. However, further research needs to show if this aspect portrayed in this dissertation is a recurring tendency and what this entails for short, medium and long-term possibilities of agrarian and rural livelihoods. Also, how this generates a different, gendered subjectivity of what being a campesino and a campesina is, and how it is negotiated differentially in different political and economic scenarios. In the meantime I observe that rural youth can comply with institutional projects (e.g. Rural Youth Network, environment and peace network) in order to be rendered legitimate and recognized by institutions that can offer opportunities, and –I argue– furthermore
this is a way to seek assets (education, travel, social networking, job opportunities, political participation, mobilities) that can become livelihood opportunities.

I find it problematic that multi-sector projects can filter and choose what subjects perform better and can be chosen to represent a development project in other institutional and marketing spaces or perform the political subject that “understands” how to participate in state spaces, somehow embodying the development subject, or more precisely the “empowered subject.” It is problematic because these youth networks, created by development projects, are particular forms of knowledge, ontologies and political surfaces produced under the hegemony of “development” as an unquestionable truth. They recreate a worldliness—a sense of importance and knowledge of worldly affairs—and a subjectivity for these youth, full of expectations of “empowerment” and “success” that renders invisible the structural inequities of the wider economic system that explain why most rural youth cannot access more secure and stable livelihood options such as educational options, stable jobs or even daily accessible mobility options to reach their educational sites. It would be important to monitor the unfoldings of these expectations in the lives of these youth involved in these projects.

Moving on to the Environment chapter, I continue exploring how institutional environmental programs reinforce certain ontologies of what the state is and how to access it. In that chapter, more than offering a definition of what the environment is, the cases shown serve to explain how the environment/al is to be approached with the state. For instance through a fictitious scenario where youth use a commanding tone in the National Declaration for Environment and Peace, ordering the state to commit to peace and environment. This can be read as part of the emotive repertoires that generate experiences of the state. With a political ecology approach, the cases shown help to understand what needs governing (from Nightingale
2018), about different issues that emerge as “environmental” and how rural youth relate both to the state and to the environmental –broadly understood and then defined through the cases. For this, the recently developed concept of the socioenvironmental state proves useful.

One of the key contributions of this dissertation is the analysis of the use of rituality as an environmentality tool. I argue that rituality is a disciplining tool used with youth, meant to trigger, form, mold thinking, generate discipline and behaviors towards what is to be understood as environment, and what working for –and protecting– the environment looks like. Basically, rituality works as a tool to shape environmental subjectivity. However, I also argue that rituality has the power to transform feelings as signaled by Janet in her testimony. When feelings are transformed they can also be focused towards new actions. In the case of Janet, it suggests that rituality has triggered a sense of belonging, has eased her sadness, and created an interest for collective actions towards environmental protection. A sense of purpose is triggered by rituality. Emotions are the motor that can be triggered using rituality. Once emotions are mobilized perhaps transformation is feasible. If youth in these socio-environmental spaces (networks, schools) are constantly exposed to certain rituals when being trained in particular environmental themes, then they can begin identifying those rituals with the manifestation of that subjectivity, with enacting or performing that environmental subjectivity as part of their identity. Rituality can have an automaton effect by being reiterated, re-established and therefore sedimented in youth’s psyche and have a role in their formación. For instance, protection is the commitment that one of the environmental subjectivities observed seeks to generate as a sort of vow, of pledge. The use of objects that represent nature (seeds, soil, feathers, stones) are used as fetishes, in an anthropological sense, to represent natural resources as beings, as agents imagined to need protection by youth. The emotions triggered by rituality for environmental protection offer a
meaning of how nature can be imagined, accessed, used, controlled and protected. I argue that this is at the core of what emotional geography and emotional political ecology proposes and should be further researched. However, I do not go deeper to explore the impact of rituality further with other youth who do not have such traumatizing experiences as Janet. Questions remain on whether the use of rituality has negative impacts on other personal experiences on how the environment/al is approached by youth from other contexts.

The other cases in that chapter also offer reflections about the boundaries of the socioenvironmental state, where people can both work for an institution and be opposed to it (in the case of National Parks); or can reject the policing actions of the regional environmental authority but also call for its authority for other environmental issues (in the case of the Andean bear project); or can be anti-environmentalists as bear hunters and environmentalists as territorial defenders against infrastructure projects. These cases show young campesina/os fluid subjectivities in relation with the socioenvironmental state, and contribute to emerging scholarship on political ecologies of the state (Iniesta-Arandia et al. 2016, Camargo and Ojeda 2017, Nightingale 2018).

**Further research and policy recommendations**

In line with what is proposed by Asher and Wainwright (2018), thinking of alternatives to the current flaws of development –rural development in this case– should not have to imply a post-development reasoning that uncritically assumes “that the grounded knowledge of subaltern social groups is the [only] source of alternatives… [but rather] attend carefully to the problematics of capital, development, difference and representation” (27). State institutions, development agencies and NGOs will most likely continue –at least in the short term– having roles in policy, programs projects and influences on some rural youth. In the short term, when we
still have not overthrown capitalism due to its destructive dynamics –both environmentally and for human wellbeing– we should at least propose how the money involved can be used more wisely, according to the needs of campesina/os and for issues that support and strengthen campesina/o livelihoods that provide wellbeing for all. Policies that are more attentive in intersecting socio-economic challenges (class), gendered differences and generational situations should be designed and implemented to approach several social problematicats at the same time. If these policies can also advance on tackling food sovereignty issues while generating sound environmental protection and recovery, much better. The socioenvironmental state approach could prove being a useful lens and in the words of Nightingale “re-imagine public authority and socionatures, and possibilities for revitalized responses to environmental challenges.” (2018, 705).

A key issue to consider about campesina/o youth, is that leaving el campo does not have to mean leaving all el campo. Youth can migrate to another campo, to other rural spaces. This means, it can be healthy to leave the family’s territory (farm, vereda, town) as part of a lifecycle choice of expanding life horizons, seeking/building/creating/thinking aspirations, but this should not necessarily mean out-migrating to the city or out-migrating definitely. Rural development policies and programs, as well as policies for youth and rural women should offer academic and technical education in a diversity of rural settings and ecosystemic conditions. Agroecology schools are a great beginning, and there are other formats that were not explored here such as agrarian high-schools (bachillerato agropecuario). A relevant formación in my opinion involves sound education about the history of the Colombian campesinado which involves a political and economic analysis of their situations in different historical moments, but it also involves a comprehensive technical and scientific education that includes situated knowledges of soil,
water, and ecosystems management and conservation (which includes passive and active restoration strategies), and their intrinsic relationships for an agrarian production that be built with independence from the agro-industrial influences, and that proposes a local, regional and national food sovereignty as a political project. This needs to be intrinsically structured with a local land management that promotes the health and wellbeing of people and their environments as a whole. It is an embedding project and one that deconstructs the alienation that capitalism has imposed. After possibilities of accessing a high quality academic and technical education relevant to Colombian agrarian history, soils, ecosystems, and production possibilities, this formación should also lead to accessing productive land and a guarantee of land rights that is attentive to gendered, racial, regional and other historical discriminations. In terms of policy, this should be linked with what is proposed in the RRI, DMR, and Juvenile Statute.

A state that is concerned about the population that will produce the food, inhabit el campo and take care of the environment cannot contradictorily extract that same population to the ravages of war. The targeting of the male-able-bodied, economically vulnerable, as bodies that labor war in the name of state presence and security-making must be dismantled. An initial step towards peace in el campo is to abolish compulsory military service for the rural male youth (and urban too) and generate spaces for new subjectivities and formaciones such as agro-ecological subjects. Policies that show how the military structures have ravaged the campesina/o culture and rather propose a voluntary socioenvironmental public service where youth can learn about urgent issues such as public health, disaster prevention and attention, environmental restoration and protection, while being supported by the state with a decent salary and social protection, could be a starting point.
What questions and issues remain unresolved?

Reflecting on livelihoods, personal and others
As I wrote this dissertation, I also had my own gendered roles to assume. Child care as a single mother with the times and responsibilities it implies daily. The diversification of livelihood to make ends meet. Service contracts that would allow me to “manage my own time” for dissertation writing but having contractual products to respond to and a precarious labor condition, paying my own private health insurance, retirement pensions and something compulsory in Colombia called labor risk insurance, and contract insurance. Juggling these three main responsibilities: primary child care, waged labor and dissertation writing proved challenging. This is not counting all the other intangible and unmentioned aspects of a life, such as political participation, family care and attention, personal relationships, health issues, recreation, taxes, paperwork, etc. As I read and wrote about livelihoods, it often seemed as if it is something research subjects, economically vulnerable, campesina/os have and can be studied but thinking of my own livelihood, its diversification, its assets, and how all these play out in what this dissertation became, should be somehow acknowledged. Seeking to keep all these things going proved challenging for doing the fieldwork I had originally planned. Lack of time in the field left many unresolved issues and open questions. I identify that more interviews, particularly to campesinas could have offered richer discussions. However, the fact that they were so scarce and difficult to interview can be a mirror of my own gendered situation of multiple chores in daily life. This is obviously a topic of gender that merits further discussion, research and acknowledging from academia.

Among the issues that I saw in the field and that I did not explore in this dissertation, is the gendered angle of tree-tomato production as a masculine dominated production and its
disputes for space with other uses such as women’s cattle, or environmental protection of water courses. I perceived a gendered attitude towards the intensive use of agro-chemicals as a masculine trait of strength and high productivity. I wanted to explore how this becomes—or not—an environmental dispute. This could have given more perspectives of gendered uses of space and production in el campo and its relations with ontologies and perspectives about what the environmental is and what types of importance it has.

**Positionality and Politics**

Is collaboration privilege? As I tried to focus on writing the dissertation while balancing other life needs like (single) parenting and solving my everyday economy, I had to take the decisive path of drifting away from the relations with organizations and people I met during research. I simply did not have the time and funding to visit them and commit to support them in ways that can be called collaboration. I felt guilty, sad, and bad in those big ideals of political support and fraternity for common causes. But it also made me reflect on who gets to collaborate in ways that can later be published or recognized otherwise as collaborative. The privileges of time and funding, are two assets that I did not have enough of. Also I found barriers within organizations where the bases supported my research and invited me to support in specific ways (e.g. giving ecology classes in the agroecological institute) but that formal support had to be preceded by the filter of acceptance of their directives, and reaching these directives was elusive and bureaucratic.

If a question is if I managed to mobilize, advance, get closer to, do resistance and revolution for the anti-capitalist causes of the campesinado, the answer is No. It puts a lot of pressure and it comes from a savior mentality and morality to think that I can help, that I am useful, that my research is useful for a socio-political-ecological cause. My own livelihood situations—which I have described enough in the introduction and along the document—imply
prioritizing “what battles I choose”, the first one being the safeguard of my family –also through my own safeguard. The second one, focusing on graduating, which implies selecting how to use your time “wisely”. I either went to another event which might still be useful as fieldwork input or I wrote; I either wrote or I worked in what paid my bills; I either wrote, worked or spent quality time with my daughter for our own mental and physical health (this includes doing groceries, cooking, having a conversation while eating, and washing the dishes… manually), and manual labor takes time.

What then was this dissertation path useful for? As an academic exercise it was useful to learn how to put theory and practice together, how to theorize while practicing, and how to organize my thoughts in an academic language and structure. As a social exercise, I identified that while doing interviews I could also get my ideas across. For instance while doing an institutional interview, the interviewee mentioned at the end that my questions about campesino youth gave him important insights on why to include this vector of analysis in an upcoming technical document they were elaborating. Through two other interviews, I was able to get in contact the two interviewees for the creation of a study group. An article that I wrote about my MA was cited in a technical document about the ZRC which leads to hoping that if you offer and mention your writing to those attentive enough, your work might even prove useful to advance an academic or a technical conversation. About the change impacts this can have, it all makes part of a hopeful wishing realm that we might not be able to measure in our own lifetime, or even measure in any terms. Yet hope is what we better organize, as I write these words in the new uncertainties the COVID-19 pandemic brings.
Appendix 1.

Glossary

**Acción de tutela:** “Acción de Tutela” is a legal mechanism described in Article 86 of the Colombian Constitution that aims to protect fundamental constitutional rights, even those not affirmed in the National Constitution, when they are infringed or threatened by the action or omission of any public authority. The court’s ruling from this action is of immediate compliance. Translation of definition found in: [http://www.reddhfic.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=144](http://www.reddhfic.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=144)

**Agropecuario:** agrarian, consisting of both agriculture and livestock management.

**Asistencialista:** adjective derived from the term *asistencialismo*, it refers to a welfare dynamic from the state or private organizations that generate an assistance-based model criticized for its generation of dependency and charity as its way of working.

**Bachillerato:** considered middle education in Colombia, it comprises an equivalent of school grades 6th - 12th in the United States educational structure, or middle and high school.

**Balú:** also called *chachafruto*, an edible seed of the bean family, which grows as a tree: *Erythrina edulis* species.


**Baños:** literally ‘baths.’ In this context of agriculture it refers to the coating with agrochemicals (fertilizers, anti-fungi).

**Bolicrema:** a refreshment product made with dairy cream and different flavors, similar to a homemade ice-cream.

**(Banco) Caja Agraria:** Agrarian Bank. State bank for agrarian investment.

**Caja de compensación familiar:** Family welfare and compensation fund corporations. Private entities with social security roles and public interest obligations and regulations. Among their services is recreation, offering sport facilities, leisure possibilities (e.g. short courses), and vacation resorts.

**Campo:** countryside, but also a sense of space (a field, ground, outback) which gives to it also an abstract notion of realm. In this sense, it can also mean an abstract thematic realm. When saying ‘el campo’ there is a sense of place of all pertaining to the countryside, culturally and in landscape terms.
Campesina: (noun, feminine) a female peasant, farmer or agrarian laborer. I bring emphasis to the gendered noun in Spanish to give visibility to the gendered realities of being a peasant.

Campesino: (noun, masculine) a male peasant, farmer, or agrarian laborer. Commonly used in Spanish for any peasant, female or male, although the gendered noun only refers to male individuals.

Campesina/o: option I prefer to use in this dissertation to refer to peasants/farmers/agrarian laborers independent of their gender.

Campesinado: (noun) peasantry.

Colono: landless peasants colonizing land usually in the agricultural frontiers.

Compañeras: broad term which can refer to female companion, partner, colleague, friend, or comrade. In the case used in this dissertation it refers more to fellow campesinas or organizational colleagues and friends.

Conducta: literally ‘conduct’, but in this context, laissez passer or safeguard document stating a behavior certificate as part of the military status of the individual (see libreta militar).

Descampesinización: de-peasantization. Refers in Colombia to the devaluation of the campesinado/peasantry’s or its lack of social, cultural and economic recognition leading to an uprooting intensified by the effect of armed conflict on their livelihoods and personal and communal safety which has led to a situation where 9 out of 10 displaced Colombians come from el campo. (see Uprimny 2017, Fajardo and Salgado 2017).

Desplazada: displaced, in feminine noun version. In the Colombian context it refers to forced displacement. There are estimates of over 7,7 million internally displaced persons in Colombia (2018).

Educando(a): learner. Not a currently common term in educational spaces. Here it refers to the term used in agroecology schools of informal education.

Emprendedor/a: entrepreneur.

Facilidades: in this context, more than facilities, it refers to advantages or possibilities to access services and rights such as education, health, transportation.

Formación: literally ‘formation.’ In Colombia and elsewhere in Latin America, this term is used for education and training, but also with a sense of shaping.

Gallinaza: chicken manure used for fertilizing soil.

Gestión: noun, commonly translated as management, originates from Latin gestió and means action and effect of administration. Gestionar (to manage) is to proceed diligently towards the

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130 https://www.acnur.org/Noticias/noticia/2018/12/5c243ef94/hay-mas-victimas-de-desplazamiento-forzado-en-colombia-que-numero-de-habitantes.html
achievement of something. In Colombia is commonly refers to the process of achieving impact for policies, projects, or diverse proceedings.

**Gestores:** agents, operators or administrators, they can be project managers or have organizational or administrative roles in communities.

**Granjas integrales:** integrated farms. They usually integrate small-scales productions of crop, livestock and aquaculture, with a comprehensive approach for the treatment and management of water, soil, residues, energy sources, among others.

**Guanábana:** Soursop fruit (*Annona muricata*). Grows in the tropics approximately from 0 to 1,200 m (3,900 ft) in humid, hot and warm climates (not below 6 degrees Celsius).

**ICFES/**“**ifes**”: popular name of the state qualifying exam for approving completion of high school studies. This corresponds to the acronym of the Colombian Institution for the Assessment of Education, which regulates this exam. The name of the exam, or the fact that it refers to an institution is not necessarily known by everyone, so the name of the exam often receives variations in popular jargon.

**Jornal(es)/jornealero/a:** day wage or unit of day work/to work with this daily labor agreement/day laborer.

**Junta de Acción Comunal:** Board of Community Action. Grassroots organizational structure in Colombia, divided by neighborhoods, urban or rural (*veredas*), relating directly with municipal administrations. They have various representational purposes (for local public funds, participatory schemes, cultural activities, local decisions in issues such as roads and common use spaces and resources, primary school). Although of institutional origin, they are common and stable organizational structures in both rural and urban scenarios. Londoño (1997) analyzes their double character, both communitarian and institutional associative which has facilitated a direct relation between the specific demands of rural inhabitants, and the resources and programs from the state.

**Labor:** meaning not only labor as a verb but labor as a noun. In the term “*la labor del campo*” it refers to laboring in the countryside, or literally, the labor of the countryside.

**Libreta militar:** passbook, or laissez-passer document which establishes the military situation of its carrier in terms of the obligation of service to the Colombian military forces. Often asked for in Colombia in military and police checkpoints to determine if the carrier should be a conscript. This passbook is also necessary for Colombian men to register for professional or administrative career studies, obtain their professional titles and practice their profession, or to be contracted by public offices.

**Llanos orientales:** literally ‘eastern plains’, refers to the geographical landscape of the savannas of the Orinoco river basin in eastern Colombia.

**Los muchachos:** ‘the boys’ common term used to refer to the guerrilla members.
Madrugar: To get up before sunrise. In the tropics it is usually at 4-5 a.m.
Mamo(s): Common term used to refer to the Kogui and Arhuaco shamans of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

Mano Vuelta or Vuelta de mano: literally “turned hand”, it refers to an informal economy labor exchange, where you return a favor of laboring in someone else’s parcel or house project, when they have contributed labor to your parcel or house project.

Matamalesear: A product turned verb, it refers to applying ‘mata-maleza’ (weed-killer) which usually refers to Round-Up (Monsanto company glyphosate weed-killer product).

Me fui de paseo: “I went for a hike/trip”, the temporal implications are very loose.

Mi mujer: literally “my woman” is a common way to refer to a female partner or wife, with the cultural and patriarchal connotations it implies.

Microcuenca: small-scale basin or watershed. In stream order metrics, that of the headwater sources that feed larger river bodies.

Microempresa de gallinas: business of laying hens.

Minga: indigenous and campesino form of communal work where everyone works towards a goal set collectively or asked particularly by an individual, family or community that all who wish to support offer their labor. Everyone offers their labor in exchange to food and beverage for this common goal.

Mingueros: those working collectively in the minga.

Mística: mystique, here referring to the production of a meaningful moment meant to give a "raison d'être", a spiritual sense.

Mujer Cafam: Cafam Woman. Refers to a prize offered by the Colombian family welfare and compensation fund corporation CAFAM in recognition of women whose work benefits communities in conditions of vulnerability. https://premiomujer.cafam.com.co

Ordenamiento territorial: Land planning, usually in regional or municipal scales of governance.

Páramo: a high mountain tropical ecosystem like a tropical high-altitude peatlands found above local treeline. Found in Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador and Perú. In Colombia, approximately between 2,800-4,000 meters above sea level.

Patria: nation or literally fatherland, patriotism as its main expression of belonging to a nation-homeland.
Patrón: boss, but from its origin in Latin *patronus* also has connotations of protector, owner, from its Latin etymology of *pater*, meaning father.

Plantée/plantear/les: in this context it means someone that will put the seed funds to begin planting.

Préstamos: loans, often informal ones between individuals.

Posesión (es): lands colonized, transformed for agrarian production and resource extraction (wood) but not fully legally recognized as private property but as unlawful possessions.

**Prestar el servicio military**: Refers to compulsory military service for young males but with a terminology that renders the compulsory part, as “prestar” which means lending, or offering. Therefore the meaning of the term implies a signification of “offering military service” as a patriotic labor, with the very problematic implications this has, socially and politically.

Problemita: a small problem, which in this context can mean an unwanted pregnancy, a problem with the law, or any issue that is minimized with this expression.

Remiso: remiss, in this context, he who has not served the army and regulated his military situation.

Resguardo: collectively titled indigenous lands.

Sabedoras: term to refer to wise women, often of indigenous origin.

Sacar adelante: a Colombian expression meaning to ‘bring forward,’ to take out of poverty.

Sancocho (de gallina criolla): Hen soup with different types of carbohydrates: potatoes, plantain, yuca (manioc or cassava) and cilantro.

**Sumercé**: is a common and popular expression used in central Andean Colombia to address someone with respect. It derives from the term *A Su Merced*, a colonial Spanish term meaning *At Your Mercy*. It is currently used to address parents, other elders or to other people to address respect (aged and/or classed, commonly).

Tejo: or Turmequé is a popular game in the Colombian Andes among men and usually is accompanied by beer drinking, due to it being a sport sponsored by national beer companies. It is presumably a pre-Hispanic sport in origin.

Toma: siege. Here it refers to the siege of the FARC guerrilla.

Tutela (see acción de tutela).

Vereda: a sort of rural neighborhood. It can be delimited by a small stream or river basin (*microcuenca*), a common access road or other physical landscape characteristics. It can be
composed of private properties but also of other land tenure situations. It usually has a small elementary school and a basic neighborhood organizational structure (see *Junta de Acción Comunal*).

**Violencia (La):** Historical era in Colombian history characterized by the political and armed confrontation between the Liberal and Conservative parties and their followers.

**Violentada(s):** violated, or subjected to violence.
Appendix 2.

Acronyms

AIS: **Agro-Ingreso Seguro** *(Secured Agricultural Income)*; launched by the Ministry of Agriculture as a credit line, meant to provide loans with low interest rates, it ended up benefiting the landlords and agro-industrials that financed Alvaro Uribe’s 2002 campaign for presidency.

ANMUCIC: **Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas e Indígenas de Colombia** *(National Association of Campesinas and Indigenous Women of Colombia)*; One of the leading organizations that has promoted and worked on policies for rural women.

ANZORC: **Asociación Nacional de Zonas de Reserva Campesina** *(National Association of Peasant Reserve Zones)*; One of the most important and politically involved campesino/peasant associations, it unites the Peasant Reserve Zones (see ZRC) organizational structures that were created following the agrarian reform law 160 of 1994.

AsoJe: **Asociación de Jóvenes Emprendedores** *(Young Entrepreneurs Association)*; One of the national associations that works with the Rural Youth Network.

CAR: **Corporación Autónoma Regional** *(Autonomous Regional Corporation of Cundinamarca)*; Regional environmental authority for the department of Cundinamarca. Created in 1993, these public entities are in charge of administrating the natural resources in their jurisdiction with a sustainable development perspective and land planning. They also own and administrate regional protected areas.

CCC: **Corte Constitucional Colombiana** *(Colombian Constitutional Court)*

CEDAW: **Convenio de la Eliminación de Todas las Formas de Discriminación contra la Mujer** *(Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women)*

CLOC: **Coordinadora Latinoamericana de organizaciones del campo** *(Latin-American Coordination of Organizations of el campo)*, part of La Via Campesina.

CONPES: **Consejo Nacional de Política Económica y Social** *(National Council of Economic and Social Policy)*; When an issue merits attention in the state budget, a CONPES document is established and included for it in the state’s use of its budget.

DANE: **Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística** *(National Administrative Department of Statistics)*; state agency in charge of national statistics. In this case, referring mainly to their role in designing and developing the national population censuses.

DMR: **Dirección de Mujer Rural** *(Direction of Rural Women)*; entity within the Ministry of Agriculture, created in 2015 with the Decree 2369 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. Its role are mainly generating, providing and analyzing information; coordinating with legal offices and institutions; designing policies, plans and projects for rural women.
ENEL-EMGESAA: ENEL is a multinational electric energy company—or group as stated in their webpage—initially from Italy but currently in 32 countries. EMGESAA is its commercial partner in Colombia. They were planning to construct a complex of eight micro power houses along the Sumapaz river.

ESCA: Social Entrepreneurship for Environmental Conservation. Described in CAR’s page as: innovative and differentiated processes promoted by CAR through local action committees (JAC) and rural and urban aqueducts, voluntary actions that are translated in exercises of environmental protection, community appropriation of the micro-basin, and strengthening of social networks for environmental management.

FARC: Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), former guerrilla which after signing the Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace with the Colombian state is now the political party Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (Common Alternative Revolutionary Force).

FCP: Feminismo Campesino y Popular (Campesina and Popular Feminism); Term used by an interviewee in this research, coined by La Vía Campesina (LVC).

FPE: Feminist Political Ecology

FOMMUR: Fondo de fomento para las mujeres rurales (Fund for the Support of Rural Women); fund created in Law 731 of 2002 meant to “incentivize the creation, promotion and strengthening of associative forms, the granting of associative credits with the purpose of achieving an organized and direct connection of rural women to the markets.” (Chapter 2, Law 731 of 2002).

GAD: Gender-and-Development

IUCN: International Union for Conservation of Nature

IAvH: Instituto de Investigación de Recursos Biológicos Alexander von Humboldt (Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute); Colombian research institute in charge of research on biodiversity. Attached to the Ministry of Environment, it is a mixed entity of science and technology, ruled by private law and administrative autonomy. It provides guidance on the management of biodiversity and natural resources.

ICANH: Instituto Colombiano de Antropología e Historia (Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History); administrative unit of the Ministry of Culture, this public entity is in charge of establishing scientific and technical criteria in issues about anthropology and history including archeology and linguistics, as well as guiding, assessing and issuing concept notes for the state about these themes.

ICBF: Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (Colombian Institute for Family Welfare); state agency in charge of welfare attention, specially to vulnerable populations of children, teenagers and families under diverse situations of vulnerability.
ICFES: Instituto Colombiano de Fomento a la Educación Superior (*Colombian Institution for the Assessment of Education*); This agency generates and manages the state’s qualifying exam for approving completion of high school studies. The exam is commonly referred with the same name as the institution.

JAC: Junta de Acción Comunal (*Board of Community Action*); grassroots organizational structure in Colombia, divided by neighborhoods, urban or rural (*veredas*), relating directly with municipal administrations. They have various representational purposes (for local public funds, participatory schemes, cultural activities, local decisions in issues such as roads and common use spaces and resources, primary school).

LVC: La Vía Campesina

MMC: Movimento de Mulheres Camponesas (*Brazilian Movement of Peasant Women*).

ProcaSur: International NGO which works with cooperation agencies in themes such as rural youth inclusion, entrepreneurship and sustainable development. One of the NGOs that works with the National Network of Rural Youth (RY Network).


RESNATUR: Asociación Red Colombiana de Reservas Naturales de la Sociedad Civil (*National Network Association of Civil Society Nature Reserves*); associates private and communal initiatives of ecosystem protection in farms and other private and communal land ownerships. Proposed the private protected area designation *Civil Society Nature Reserves* established in the 1993 environmental law.

RRI: Reforma Rural Integral (*Comprehensive Rural Reform*); first item of the Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace between the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla signed in 2016.

SENA: Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje (*National Educational Service*); A national agency that provides training and technical diplomas in a diversity of trades and crafts. It is often the only educational possibility for many urban and rural populations after they finish high school.

STP: Sentencia-acción de tutela-Sala de Casación Penal (*Sentence-legal protection-Court of Cassation*) A juridical categorization of the Supreme Court of Justice of Colombia of ordinance types, plus constitutional actions, plus court of cassation that emits the decision. The resulting letters explain the juridical path followed by a consecutive number and year it was emitted. For more information see: [https://cortesuprema.gov.co/corte/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Comunicado04-14numeracion.pdf](https://cortesuprema.gov.co/corte/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Comunicado04-14numeracion.pdf)
UMATA: Unidades Municipales de Asistencia Técnica Agropecuaria (Municipal Units for Agrarian Technical Support); managed and sponsored by municipal administrations, regulated by the Ministry of Agriculture through departmental (regional) authorities.

WAD: Women-and-Development

WID: Women in Development

ZRC: Zona de Reserva Campesina (Campesino Reserve Zone); a land planning denomination in Colombia meant for the protection of campesino economy according to the agrarian law of 1994.
Appendix 3.

Context of age and rurality in contemporary Colombia based on the Agrarian Census 2014.

According to the Agrarian Census of 2014, 94% of the Colombian territory (111.5 million hectares) is rural (non-urban) yet only 32% of its population lives in non-urban areas. Most inhabitants of the non-urban areas are older than 39 years. This Census counted 2,700,000 “agrarian producers” of which only 26.8% (725 thousand people) are permanent residents of their plots or Agrarian Productive Units (UPA) while approximately two thirds of the inhabitants work permanently in the UPA and are members of the producer’s home, while the rest sell their workforce in other plots to acquire additional income. The permanent residents sub-group is composed of 63% (461,244) men, and 36% (263,981) women (2016: 510). Although there is not a clear definition in the results document of the agrarian census (DANE 2016) “resident producer” loosely translates to: individuals, legal entities or a mix of both that assume the responsibility of decisions related with crops, raising animals, agrarian practices, the use of means of production, and the destiny of the production from the productive unit (DANE 2016: 502). Therefore, this census does not necessarily tell us about a fluctuant population range who does not necessarily live in productive units but who are socially originated from a small-scale agrarian dependent population.

The results of the Agrarian Census suggest that the population object of this study ranging from 18-35 years of age is of about 55,274 women and 86,878 men (142,152 total),

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131 “productores que bien pueden ser personas naturales, jurídicas, o una mezcla de ambas, que asumen la responsabilidad de las decisiones relacionadas con el cultivo, la cría de animales, las prácticas agropecuarias, el uso de los medios de producción y el destino de la producción de la UPA.” (DANE 2016: 502).

“Productor persona natural: Persona o grupo de personas físicas que toman decisiones sobre las actividades que se realizan en la Unidad de Producción Agropecuaria (UPA), ellos enfrentan los riesgos, toman créditos, reciben ganancias o asumen las pérdidas económicas con su patrimonio.” (DANE 2016: 498)
representing 0.29% of the Colombian population who are considered “resident producers”, a denomination that seems to suit state reading and naming of its subjects, but that does not appear in any other literature or narratives led by peasant communities or organizations, suggesting a scrutiny of subjectivity issues of who gets to get counted and for what purposes.

The demographic information of the Agrarian Census results (DANE 2016: 512) gives us hints about what might be occurring with rural-agrarian populations. On one side it shows how female population even from childhood are considerably less than male populations of “resident producers” on a ratio almost 4:1 boys to girls in the age range 10-14. This continues on a 2:1 boys to girls ratio as they enter legal adulthood at 18. There is a gap which is hard to interpret when we do not know how other rural populations not considered “residents producers” are counted. This opens questions on why the ratio is so wide, and why it changes so much along age ranges. I might have left much unanswered on this front. However, what is notorious in “Characteristics of resident producers according to age” (512) is how it is a gendered biased population suggesting that male producers predominantly compose the “resident producers” in any age range. Having in its highest peak, men of ages 50-54. This relates to what I mentioned on gerontocracy.

From an educational aspect, only 8% of resident producer men and 8.9% of women have completed high school level. Only 1.5% men, and 2% women have reached a following level of technical or technological education. Within this population there is a significant illiteracy rate (11.5% above 16 years), where 20% of children and youth between 5-16 years were not enrolled in any education institution. Compared to the whole Colombian illiteracy rate132, the difference is significant. Again, these data do not include all other who might consider themselves

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132 According to UNESCO data published by the World Bank Group, the literacy rate in Colombia for 2015 was 94%. Source: [https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicador/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=CO](https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicador/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?locations=CO)
campesina/os or who originating from small-scale agrarian dependent societies and rural backgrounds were not counted because they do not fit the “resident producer” State logic. The tutela chapter mentions how this discrimination is argued when referring to identity.

The objective of giving this general demographic context is to show the reduced population that comprises a state-recognized agrarian population in Colombia. Unfortunately there are no previous Agrarian Census that situate this population to compare this information with older data to evidence fluctuations. Also, the data gives a sense of the gendered and generational tendencies of this state-defined population and complements the information given in the chapters.
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