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Research paper

Food sovereignty: a literature review

Global Climate Justice

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Food Sovereignty: A literature review

Introduction

At the forefront of the fight against climate change is the movement of climate justice, which highlights the relationship between environmental impacts to social justice issues. Simply put, climate justice is based on this premise: “Climate justice has emerged from the idea that historical responsibility for climate change lies with wealthy and powerful people – and yet it disproportionately impacts the poorest and most vulnerable.” (Gabbatiss & Tandon, 2021) Within climate justice, many social justice issues are included such as indigenous sovereignty, gender and queer liberation, black liberation, etc. In the following text, the issue of food sovereignty will be explored. More precisely, a literature and social movement review will be drawn on the following question: What are the links between climate change and food sovereignty? These links will be demonstrated by analysing the many definitions of the term, by establishing the context in which it emerged, and through an Indigenous lens. First, the different interpretations of food sovereignty will be explained through the concepts of agroecology and food democracy, and through its complexities. The second section will dive into the origins of the issue, mostly related to neoliberalism, while establishing the impacts of this food system on the environment and the differentiated effects on global North and South states. Finally, the third sections will address Indigenous food sovereignty and its importance in the issue, while demonstrating it through a case study.

Part 1: Food sovereignty definitions

To begin with, a literature and social movement review of the different definition of food sovereignty (FS) will be discussed through its most important concepts and complexities to create the link with climate change. The concept of food sovereignty originates from the international agrarian movement called La Via Campesina (LVC). The movement developed the concept in the 1990s and first introduced it to the public and international debate at the World Food Summit in 1996. It emerged in reaction to the liberalization of agricultural trade and the corporate-led model of agriculture. These

dynamics created and still create issues like rural poverty, hunger, displacement, and environmental degradation. (Claeys & Duncan, 2019, p.1) From there, the concept evolved to become an important piece of the fight against the global food system: “Since peasant movements introduced their notion of food sovereignty more than two decades ago, struggles to achieve dignity and autonomy and radically transform the global food system, have gained momentum in many regions of the world.” (Trauger & al., 2017, p.1) But what exactly does food sovereignty refers to? There is no one simple answer to that question. However, the foundational framework that used to define for FS is found in the 2007 Nyéléni Declaration:

A widely accepted definition was established at the 2007 Nyéléni Food Sovereignty Forum. The event included peasant movements, rural groups, and urban-based groups working towards a radical transformation of the international food system. The definition puts emphasis on the interests and rights of food gatherers, producers, and consumers, as well as the ability of local communities to determine their food systems. The definition from Nyéléni also focuses on the rights of local communities to control their food-producing resources such as land, water, seeds, and territories, without threats or interference from the state. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.3)

The 2007 forum was held in Mali, where over 500 food sovereignty defenders coming from 80 countries gathered to discuss this concept. The name of the forum, Nyéléni, is based on the story of ‘a legendary Malian peasant woman who farmed and fed her peoples well’. (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.432) The declaration conceptualized food sovereignty over six pillars: valuing food providers; localizing food systems; making decisions locally; building knowledge and skills; working with nature. Indigenous peoples of Canada then added a seventh pillar, which is that food is sacred. This seventh pillar recognizes the spiritual aspects of food sovereignty. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.4) In an updated 2021 Manifesto, LVC defined FS as the following: “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.” (LVC, 2021, p.1)

From the Nyéléni Declaration, it is clear that food sovereignty is a political project based on the value of solidarity: “We are committed to building our collective movement for food sovereignty by forging alliances, supporting each others’ struggles and extending our solidarity, strengths, and creativity to peoples all over the world who are committed to food sovereignty. Every struggle, in any part of the world for food sovereignty, is our struggle.” (LVC, 2007, p.3) The central role of solidarity within FS movements can be seen by simply looking into the number of varied actors participating in them. It includes both urban and rural social actors who fight against the global food system. This food system notably participates in the appropriation and commodification of natural resources like seeds, lands, and water. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.1) The diversity of FS advocates adds to the complexity of defining what it is exactly, since it can mean different things to different groups. The concept of food sovereignty is now multidisciplinary, and is discussed in global, political, and academic discourses. It mobilises a large range of actors from the global North and South such as: workers, scholars, farmers, peasant movements, food vendors, restaurant owners, public health workers, gardeners, activists, amongst others. (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.433) It also includes a large range of concepts and issues like: food politics, agroecology, land reform, fisheries, biofuels, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), urban gardening, labour migration, public health, climate change, etc. (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.433)

Agroecology

A very important component of food sovereignty is the concept and practice of ‘agroecology’, which presents different values than the current dominant agriculture while focusing on nature. It is based on the goal of simplifying the production and consumption processes of food to bring it “from farm to the table”, having in mind ecological, economic, and social sustainability. (Mann, 2019, p.863) Most of the literature and social movements understand it as the following: “Agroecology is a holistic approach to food production that uses—and creates—social, cultural, economic and environmental knowledge to promote food sovereignty, social justice, economic sustainability, and healthy agricultural ecosystems. Ultimately, agroecology means bringing agriculture back into harmony with human ecology, including our biology, our environment, and our cultural and political structures.” (Canadian National Farmer’s Union) Agroecology defenders argue that this practice and way of life protects the environment, builds resilient food systems, and

nourishes communities by valuing the farmer's traditional knowledge and practices. (Mann, 2019, p.865) However, again, agroecology does not have one single definition. As per example, Indigenous movements define agroecology according to traditional farming systems that are based on cosmic calendars. On the other hand, peasant farmers use agroecology principles to ensure low-cost production based of local resources instead of international corporate ones. (Mann, 2019, p.866) Another example comes from the term "afroecology", which values afro-Indigenous ways of knowing, embraces the ancestral and communal forms of knowledge from Africa that persists in diasporas, and was born out of the traditions, legacies, and struggles of Black experience in the Americas. (Climate Justice Alliance) Despite these different conceptions, it is clear that food sovereignty and agroecology both complete each other in proposing projects respectful of nature that counter the global food systems and its many shortcomings: "Agroecology and food sovereignty are social, political and ecological visions that unite multiple groups within a single movement to challenge business-as-usual, build relationships with nature and defend systems of shared control over and access to the requirements of life." (Climate False Solutions, 2021, p.18)

Food Democracy

Another important part of food sovereignty is the concept and practice of food democracy. It is important since it includes public and local participation into the FS discourse. It can be defined as followed: "Lang and Heasman (2004) define food democracy as a more inclusive approach to food policy making: "Its ethos is 'bottom-up,' considering the diversity of views and interests in the mass of the population and food supply chain; the needs of the many are favoured over the needs of the few; mutuality and symbiosis are pursued" (Andrée & al., 2014, p.26) Again, food democracy can be viewed and defined in different ways. One thing FS movements try to avoid when referring to food democracy is to putting the ability of defining one's food system in the hands of individual such as through purchasing power. This is because it falls into market-based solutions and is opposite to the radical or emancipator political projects FS proposes. Examples of this include pushing the idea that the organic industry or the fair trade movements will create sustainable and just food systems. (Andrée & al., 2014, p.27)

Additionally, to include democracy within FS's framework, global actors of the movement have used two mechanisms. First, the usages of constituency categories (using groups of people like pastoralists, Indigenous peoples, fishers, etc) to ensure the different lived realities are presented. Second, the usage of quotas to guarantee diversity and hear from the most marginalized. (Claeys & Duncan, 2019, p.1) This allows, for example, the different lived realities from people of the global North and South on issues like climate change to express their situation. This has allowed for a form of democracy within the global FS movement: "The use of constituencies and quotas has supported two distinct but related objectives of the movement: alliances building and effective direct representation in global policy-making spaces." (Claeys & Duncan, 2019, p.1) This system reflects on smaller-scale FS projects, where models like cooperatives, which are based on democratic principles, have been created: "*Campesino* movements have been at the forefront of this process, organizing social movements to oppose neoliberal free trade agreements as well as constructing alternatives to industrial agriculture such as agro-ecology and social economy models of economic organization (farmers' cooperatives, for example)." (Clark, 2016, p.184)

But, like any concept, food democracy faces the obstacle of the term sovereignty. This is because in many states today, farmers represent a minority of the population. In some global North countries, farmers sometimes make up of only 1 or 2 percent of the population. Conversely, consumers are the large majority, and both of these groups do not always agree with each other. It therefore makes it hard to define what food democracy is in the first place. (Andrée & al., 2014, p.27)

Complexities and contradictions

Over its development, food sovereignty became more diverse and complex, which created richness and some complications:

The meaning of food sovereignty has changed and expanded significantly beyond the traditional framing given by LVC of rural/agricultural. Now, it includes a large set of socio-political and economic dimensions such as: rural/agricultural, rural/non-agricultural, urban/agricultural, urban/non-agricultural, production, trade, consumption North/South divides, as well as other attributes and identities. This expansion indicates the relevance and the power food sovereignty now has as an idea, a social movement, and an analytical framework. On the other hand, it also shows that it can be a

complicated concept to deal with when considering the views held by social classes and groups across societies. (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.433)

One important complexity facing food sovereignty movements is in the process of policy formation. This process becomes hard considering the radical stance of many food sovereignty movements such as the one proposed by La Via Campesina: “LVC and their allies oppose both the authority of the state and market to control food production and the limits to autonomy that liberal states offer in terms of food production and consumption.” (Trauger & al., 2017, p.5) Therefore, a challenge is to institutionalize the radical changes at the heart of the food sovereignty project, especially in a world where the state predominates. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.2) This relationship will be discussed later in this text.

Also, food sovereignty literature such as in Holt-Gimenez and Shattuck (2011), portrays this concept or movement as “radical” since it aims at countering the current failures of agriculture and ultimately provide sustainable food security. Thus, food sovereignty initiatives need to address structural causes of agricultural problems. However, some non-radical food movements have claimed to participate to the FS movement, which puts into question what is and what is not FS: “They posit that food sovereignty differs from what they call the “progressive” alternatives such as organic agriculture (...) They suggest that food sovereignty would lose its political distinctiveness and become like other—co-opted—progressive food movements if it does not work to rectify systemic injustices enabled by both states and markets.” (Trauger & al., 2017, p.4)

Another complexity coming from food sovereignty as a discipline comes from its multidisciplinary aspect. In the past decades, FS was introduced in various academic disciplines like: political ecology, international political economy, international relations, development studies, law, sociology, human rights, etc. (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.433) As it is expanding, FS is facing the danger of unification of discourse, which can eliminate the realities of certain groups of people. This is notably the case of with gender and FS: “food sovereignty – in its reorganisation of power dynamics within the food system – is well placed to explore gender dimensions. Yet they also caution that the unifying discourses employed by FS movements in advocacy and mobilisation campaigns blur important differences, such as experience and class, leading to a tendency towards homogenisation that glosses over gender dimensions.” (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.438) One thing for sure, food sovereignty

emerged from marginalized and oppressed groups by the current corporate food regime. It presents alternatives to the existing unjust and destructive system and has a potential to produce radical social change, something that inevitably brings in its loads of contradictions and complexities. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.5)

Part 2: Current global food system, climate justice, and food sovereignty

To continue, the failures of the current global food system will be presented, especially in terms of its impact on the environment. Moreover, the link between food sovereignty and climate justice will be made.

Food Regimes

To understand the power-dynamics shaping agriculture today, it is important to know what a food regime is. This is because it provides an account of the structure of the production and consumption of food on an international scale. (Mann, 2019, p.864) While every parts of agriculture history are important, this text focuses on the second and third (current) food regimes. What characterised the second food regime (1950-70s) was that surplus were sent to newly sovereign states (postcolonial) as food aid. This created a power structure of dependency and allowed Northern states, multinationals, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to intervene under the pretext of goodwill. (Mann, 2019, p.865) Then, from the 1980s and on to today, there has been an expansion of the second regime to emerging economies like China. Also, there has been a power shift to the retail sector (supermarkets), the creation of a food-fuel alliance, and a decreased influence of the World Trade Organization (WTO) that played an important role in the second food regime. (Mann, 2019, p.865) The food-fuel alliance is now of great importance, which exacerbates the climate crisis: “Beyond transport, agribusiness is intensely dependent on fossil fuels throughout the process of production—from machinery to fertilizers to packaging. Economically, the industry is supported by a combination of agricultural and fossil fuel subsidies.”(Eliason, 2021)

Correspondingly, the third and current food regime has been shaped by neoliberalism, a system of economic deregulation and incorporation into the international agenda: “including the liberalization of interstate trade and investment rules, further deregulation of the global economy, cuts in public spending and social services, the opening of financial and

capital accounts and the removal of foreign exchange restrictions, privatization of government-owned services, shifts towards voluntary modes of industry self-regulation, the de-legitimization of the trade union movement, and still deeper tax cuts.” (Andrée & al., 2014, p.33) This regime is focused on economic profits and making farmers dependant on the intensive use of machinery, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides. It is built for large-scale production for global markets, where supermarkets are the most important consumers. (Oosterveer & Brons, 2020, p.285)

The second and third food regimes have allowed for a stronger collaboration to be built between biotechnology, chemicals, and agribusiness industries, which in turn encourages for a larger amount of power to be held in the hands of a few. As a consequence, both farmers and consumers have fewer options over what is produced, how it is produced, and what they eat. (Andrée & al., 2014, p.34) The neoliberal policies have also made the community aspect of peasant work futile: “If what counts as work must produce for sale on the market, then both “women’s work” within households in terms of food production and peasants’ work that is bounded by households and communities cannot be demonstrably integrated in the neoliberal food system.” (Andrée & al., 2014, p.29) This neoliberal regime and its many shortcomings is part of the reasons behind the emergence of food sovereignty in an attempt to give the control back into the hands of the of the people: “...[it is] a form of resistance and of deconstruction of dependence on commercial seeds, pesticides and fertilisers which are becoming increasingly expensive, and of the possibility of building and salvaging knowledge which is part of a sustainable relationship between humans and nature, based on ancestral knowledge, culture and territorial diversity.” (Mann, 2019. P.865)

Impacts on the environment

First thing to note is how polluting the current global food systems are. When studying every aspect included in food and agriculture, the emissions of that industry accounts for about one-third of global greenhouse emissions. Agricultural production itself contributes to over 80 percent of the total food systems’ emissions. Likewise, these food regimes pushing for monoculture models to be adopted have impacted biodiversity: “Already peasants and Indigenous Peoples have contributed to humanity 2.1 million varieties of 7,000 domesticated plant species. Commercial breeders focus only on 137 crop species, and just 16 of these

account for 86% of the world's global food production.” (Climate False Solutions, 2021, p.18) Both social movements and the academic literature claim “The world's food systems are reaching a critical juncture, bringing urgency to the call for transitions to more sustainable and equitable agricultural practices. The dominant model of export-oriented, cash agriculture that drives profits and supports cheap, largely urban-based labour has contributed to a devastating paradox.” (Mann, 2019, p.862) The agricultural system based on a capitalist logic reinforces the climate justice crisis:

The now dominating global capitalist food system is highly influenced by multilateral institutions, liberalised trade, transnational oligopolies, global value chains, the dominance of supermarkets, and the grain/oil/seeds complex. These policies have been at the center of global-scale crises like species extinction and climate change. Vulnerable populations and communities have been disproportionately affected by these crises, which at the same time expanding the agenda of food sovereignty. (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.436)

Ultimately, it creates a dynamic where cheap food found in supermarkets does not take into account the environmental costs produced from these systems. (Mann, 2019, p.863)

Industrial agriculture also reinforces existing systems of exploitation. While a lot of farm workers are working under harsh conditions, the land they are on is intensively overworked until there are no more nutrients and nothing can grow anymore. Since the goal is to make as much profit as possible, industrial agriculture does not value local communities and their people. The mixture of fertilizers, pesticides, and greenhouse emissions worsen the conditions of life of both the people and the land. (Eliason, 2021) Again, “Industrial agriculture negatively impacts the viability of rural communities across the globe, through its effects on health, nutrition, the environment, and local economies.” (Eliason, 2021) This is why movements part of LVC oppose the privatization of the agricultural means of production within capitalism since it creates environmental damages reinforcing injustices. They propose alternative forms of political autonomy and governance within agriculture under the form of food sovereignty. The literature makes it clear that “as these conditions extend across farming regions and the entire food chain, their costs are externalised and manifested in climate change, loss of biodiversity and the poisoning of water and soil. Accordingly, ‘the trajectory of the corporate [third] food regime is constituted through resistances: both

protective (e.g. environmentalism) and proactive, where ‘food sovereignty’ posits an alternative global moral economy.” (Mann, 2019, p.865)

Global North and South differences

The global food regime in place has differentiated effects in the Global North and South, therefore impacting FS. In fact, the neoliberal food policies create more direct impacts in the global South:

Since the 1980s, international organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) have discouraged intervention of global South states in agriculture. These organizations have also worked to restructure local agriculture model so that they fit into the global food regime (called structural adjustments policies). These structural adjustments included a move away from domestic production, an increased dependence on international markets, an emphasis on monocultures to increase exports to the global North, and the ownership of food going in the hands of international speculators. (Andée & al., 2014, p.34)

Despite being in a food regime profoundly shaped by neoliberal policies and the control of a few multinationals, some states in the Global North like the United-States, the European Union, and Japan send massive subsidies in agriculture. These have important impact around the world, since farmers elsewhere cannot export certain products to highly subsidized markets (it is not competitive). It ultimately undermines local agriculture and the livelihood of small and medium-sized farmers. (andrée & al., 2014, p.33)

One important critiques of industrial agriculture from the global North came in 1939 in Carey McWilliams’ *Factory in the Fields*. In this context, it was mostly a critique of the impoverishment and racialization of farm workers that served agriculture’s emergence. This work is still relevant today, especially from the labour perspective: “Just as the now-familiar features of capitalist agriculture – corporate control, land concentration, and increasingly biotechnological industrial inputs and processing – have spread throughout the global North, so too has the system of cheap, radicalised foreign agricultural labour that has long underpinned it.” (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.435) In other words, today’s neoliberal agricultural system relies on cheap and radicalized labour in the global North to sustain itself. They are often landless contract farmers selling their labour power. They contrast the other rural workers notably through class and identity such as race or ethnicity. Ultimately, this

disconnects rural workers and creates further distance between the producers and consumers, something the food sovereignty movement wants to eliminate. (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.435) Here again, the connections between FS, the climate, and injustices is made clear

Moreover, the original actors involved in FS differ depending on their localization: “Food sovereignty’s original social base is located in the peasantry of the global South and the small-scale, family farm sector of the global North (...) has spread across food system struggles to urban and peri-urban areas of the global North, where students, socially conscious consumers, farm and food workers and food justice advocates have embraced it as a banner for social justice and food system transformation.” (Fradejas & al., 2015, p.436) Consequently, the negative impacts caused by the third food regime do not affect the same people everywhere: “Neoliberal policies adopted during this period have reduced public investment in agriculture and harmed small-scale and peasant producers, deepening the phenomenon of depeasantization across the global South and the decline of the family farm across the global North.” (Clark, 2016, p.185)

Part 3: The role of the state

In this section, the role of the state in FS according to academics and social movements will be examined. As of so far, this angle to studying food sovereignty received less attention, especially in terms of policies a national government would have to put in place to achieve food sovereignty. Thus, historical analyses over what has been done in the past in that regard has been underwhelming. (Clark, 2016, p.184) A reason behind this lack of literature is the fact that the movement of food sovereignty emerged in opposition to the state and the international food regime:

The alliance between neoliberal states and transnational agribusiness interests have been at the heart of depeasantization and a reason behind the call for food sovereignty. Therefore, states are often perceived as working against food sovereignty. Since food sovereignty is part of a broader anti-globalization movement, it emerged from below and above the national level politics and institutions. Academic literature put much of its focus on movements from below such as the Zapatista communities in Mexico or the Landless Worker’s Movement (MST) in Brazil. An analysis of the international level has also been done, notably by examining international institutions working to

constrain food sovereignty or the importance of transnational alliances in peasant movements. These two points of analysis have overshadowed the study of the state in the whole process. (Clark, 2016, p.185)

However, despite neoliberalism being a driving force, the national level still holds a good amount of control over the regulation of agricultural systems. As per example, the volume of subsidies, the regulation around labelling, and the negotiation of international trade agreements still fall in the hands of the states. (Clark, 2016, p.185)

Moreover, within the concept of “food sovereignty” is the word sovereignty, which is sometimes associated with the national level. While sovereignty itself is a highly contested concept, the early definitions given by LVC in the 1990s referred to ‘national self-sufficiency’, falling right in the state-centric conception of sovereignty. As the literature and peasant movement evolved, the term also evolved; the 2002 definition incorporated the right of peoples over their food system while the 2007 Nyéléni definition put emphasis on the sovereignty exercised by non-state actors while still noting the importance of the national economies and markets. (Clark, 2016, p.186) This contradiction over the term sovereignty highlights the importance to look more closely at national governance in food sovereignty movements: “within the contemporary global political economy, it is very difficult for the autonomous local development models favoured by LVC to expand without both state protections from unrestricted free trade policies and supportive state policies for FS schemes.” (Clark, 2016, p.186) From what is seen across the international food systems, national governmental use a centralist and top-down approach to agriculture. What is demanded by many food sovereignty movements is that public policy in that area be designed and implemented in a participatory way to achieve food democracy and give more power to the local. (Clark, 2016, p.189) But once more, building such as relationship in the current power-dynamics is exposing important contradictions: “The paradox of FS in relation to the state is that while ‘agrarian citizenship’ depends upon the state or national government protections or guarantees, the ‘contents’ of FS (agro-ecology, cooperative or collective organization of producers, practical and ancestral knowledge of farmers, farmer control over seeds etc.) are ultimately embedded ‘in society.’” (Clark, 2016, p.188)

Part 4: Indigenous food sovereignty

In this section, the role and importance of Indigenous perspective within food sovereignty movements and in the literature will be explored. Over the past centuries, colonialism has acted as a disrupter of Indigenous' activities and ways of life, which notably affected their control over traditional food systems. One way colonial powers have tried to erase knowledge and control over food is through erasure. An example of erasure is the way colonialists destroyed food in times of war to get in the way of food-related knowledge transfer. (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.5) These strategies by colonial governments have been prevalent over North America: "US and Canadian governments introduced farming projects to the latter in order to assimilate them, disrupt their hunting cultures, and expand the agricultural frontier-even as the best farmland was often usurped by non-Indians." (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.5) While colonialism highly affected Indigenous food systems, so does climate change today: "Climate change has led to declining sea ice in the Arctic, forced community relocations, shifts in plant and animal populations around North America, changes in river flows affecting water availability for crops, and broadening of the ranges of disease organisms. All of these changes over the past century have impacted Indigenous food systems." (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.6) It is through these power-systems and impacts that Indigenous food sovereignty initiatives emerged:

Now, all over Indigenous lands, traditions, concerns, and initiatives related to food are being carried out. This is in response to high rates of diabetes and obesity in communities, environmental destruction, pollution, resource depletion, poverty, and the difficulties of access to healthy food. Communities and grassroots organizations have worked on many projects to restore balance like: food summits, farmer's markets, seed distributions initiatives, cattle and bison ranches, landscape restoration, community and educative gardens, economic development, activism, and legal procedures. These efforts go in line with eventually achieving what activists refer to as "food sovereignty". (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.4)

From Indigenous perspectives, food sovereignty means a range of different things, and it must be studied for anyone to understand what this concept means and represents. In this context, it means that the foundation upon which food sovereignty should be built is social justice ones in order to counter historical and structural injustices. Culturally relevant food have to be produced, consumed, and distributed with the goal of building stronger communities in an environmentally sustainable way. This vision does not see food as another

commodity upon which profits should be made, but rather as a way to highlight and nourish social connections found in the production and consumption of it. (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.9) Therefore, Indigenous food sovereignty goes beyond simply focusing on food systems, and is part of a larger set of anticolonial fights: “Put simply, Indigenous food sovereignty “refers to a re-connection to land-based food and political systems,” and seeks to uphold “sacred responsibilities to nurture relationships with our land, cultures spirituality, and future generations.”” (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, P.11)

Having this in mind, links between climate justice and Indigenous food sovereignty can be made. This is because a distinctive aspect of Indigenous climate justice is the focus on food; it is a great subject-area to further understand the relationship between the changing climate and justice. (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.320) Again, this is notably in the way food is perceived in Indigenous communities and knowledge

The word “food” in the English language often means something way simpler than what many Indigenous persons invoke when the phrases “food justice” or “food sovereignty” are used. Depending on the peoples, food refers to collective self-determination; it includes ecological, cultural, social, and political dimensions of being member of an Indigenous community or nation. Additionally, almost all Indigenous communities in the world do not confine societal membership and kinship to the humans (it includes other species), and some do not even privilege the humans. (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.321)

Across Turlte Island (or North America), many have made the link between how Canada and the United-States have enacted policies making Indigenous suffer to extract natural resources. These policies—such as the erasure of indigenous food systems and knowledge— created water and air pollution, and deforestation, which are part of the reasons behind the climate crisis. (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p.322)_These oppressive and destructive injustices are part of why Indigenous foods is at the center of their conception of climate justice. Indigenous food sovereignty is a project of collective continuance, where what is in line is the Indigenous collective capacity to adapt to change while respecting core values. Thus, anything involving Indigenous food sovereignty also involves climate change and climate justice. (Hoover & Mihesuah, 2019, p332)_The literature and social movement clearly highlight the following: “Food sovereignty is an affirmation of who we are as Indigenous peoples, and a way, one of the

most sure-footed ways, to restore our relationship with the world around us.” (LaDuke, 2019, p. xvi)

The case of food sovereignty in so-called Canada

The food sovereignty movement in Canada is still in an early stage of development. The National Farmers Union (NFU) and Union Paysanne, both members of LVC, principally introduced it. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.165) Therefore, the initial conversations around the concept were narrow in scope: “Because food sovereignty was introduced by two farmer-based organizations in Canada, the concept initially emphasized issues related to agricultural policy and production.” (Trauger & al., 2017, p.166) After the Nyéléni Declaration, the definition started to widen, and Indigenous voices started to be more included. Their voice notably contributed to a critique of the Canadian food sovereignty discourse that remains state-centric and focused on agricultural production. It therefore fails to consider Indigenous traditional food systems based on hunting, fishing, and gathering. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.166)

Additionally, these Indigenous activists argue this: “Furthermore, Indigenous critique emphasize the ways that Canadian food sovereignty has yet to adequately engage with how land, colonialism, and Indigenous sovereignty intersect with food systems.” (Trauger & al., 2017, p.166) The role of settler colonialism is very important to consider in Canada. Over the years, settler colonial practices have tried to deny and erase Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. At the same time, this power structure has legitimized settler occupation of the land. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.166) The lack of consultation with Indigenous peoples over food sovereignty has led to political and defensive local food sovereignty projects. What is referred to as defensive localism is initiatives that do not adopt socio-ecological objectives while focusing on local food systems as being end to themselves. This is seen in the Province of Quebec, where the political class and the Agricultural Producers Union (UPA) take a popular narrative based on defensive localism. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.128) While the non-Indigenous consultation is not the only reasons for these types of interpretations, it is still part of the explanation. As advocates and academics are becoming more conscious of their relationship with settler colonialism, true food sovereignty can begin to be thought about: “One of the underlying themes in my conversations with non-Indigenous food activists is the need to better understand how colonialism influences food systems and

relationships, particularly between Indigenous and settler communities.” (Trauger & al., 2017, p.169)

Building these relationships and supporting Indigenous critiques of current state of affairs is a crucial part of reforming Indigenous-settler relations in Canada, which is crucial in the creation of food sovereignty. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.1p.177) But what does this commitment look like? It requires for settler food sovereignty movements across the state to reconsider small-scale farming as not being a one-fits all solution. By allowing initiatives to change or become something else, it creates solidarity while repatriating land to Indigenous nations. (Trauger & al., 2017, p.177). All in all, food sovereignty would be shaped like this: “These actions are no meant to demand more of settler peoples working against the current industrial food system (although they may), but rather to create food sovereignty movements that are able to work in solidarity across difference, and in their incommensurability be stronger in struggling for people’s ability to determine their food systems in equitable ways.” (Trauger & al., 2017, p.177)

Conclusion

In conclusion, this text conducted a social movement and academic literature review of the term “food sovereignty” was made. The goal was to situate FS within the climate justice context, and draw the links where they could be drawn. To do that, the text analysed the many definitions attributed to FS, the global regime in which it emerged, the role of states within its implementation, and the Indigenous perspective on the subject. A big emphasis was put on the role LVC played and still plays in FC. The same thing was done with neoliberal policies in an attempt to demonstrate the links between the current global food regime and the climate crisis. The role of state in relation to FS was established as a complex one, notably because of the very nature of FS. Finally, a case study of Indigenous FS in Canada was analysed. All in all, one interesting subject that could be further studied is the role of women and gender within FS.

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