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EL FUTURO DE LA ALIMENTACIÓN Y RETOS DE LA AGRICULTURA PARA EL SIGLO XXI:

Debates sobre quién, cómo y con qué implicaciones sociales, económicas y ecológicas alimentará el mundo.

THE FUTURE OF FOOD AND CHALLENGES FOR AGRICULTURE IN THE 21st CENTURY:

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***Convergence as political strategy:
Social justice movements, natural
resources, and climate change***

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Abstract

Critical scholars and activists have been contending with a widely recognized convergence of global crises for nearly a decade. The issues have intersected decisively, with staple food sources proving inaccessible for the world's poor, banks foreclosing on the most vulnerable, fuel sources causing war and impacting migration, and climate change-related instabilities shaking low-income communities to their core. At the same time, agrarian, environmental, indigenous, and fishers' movements—among others—have used this moment to converge in their own right. This article explores this intertwining of social justice movements with an eye on such interrelated challenges. Its overall objective is, on one side, to provide some broad empirical brushstrokes of the intertwining of transnational social justice movements at the local, national, and regional scales as they work with and trade frameworks of food sovereignty and climate justice. On the flip side, this article offers a new set of tools to analyze and understand the politics of convergence as political strategy—as a means of advancing global social justice—against the rising tide of climate-related resource grabs.

Keywords: Convergence, climate change, agrarian justice, environmental justice, social movements, natural resources

Introduction

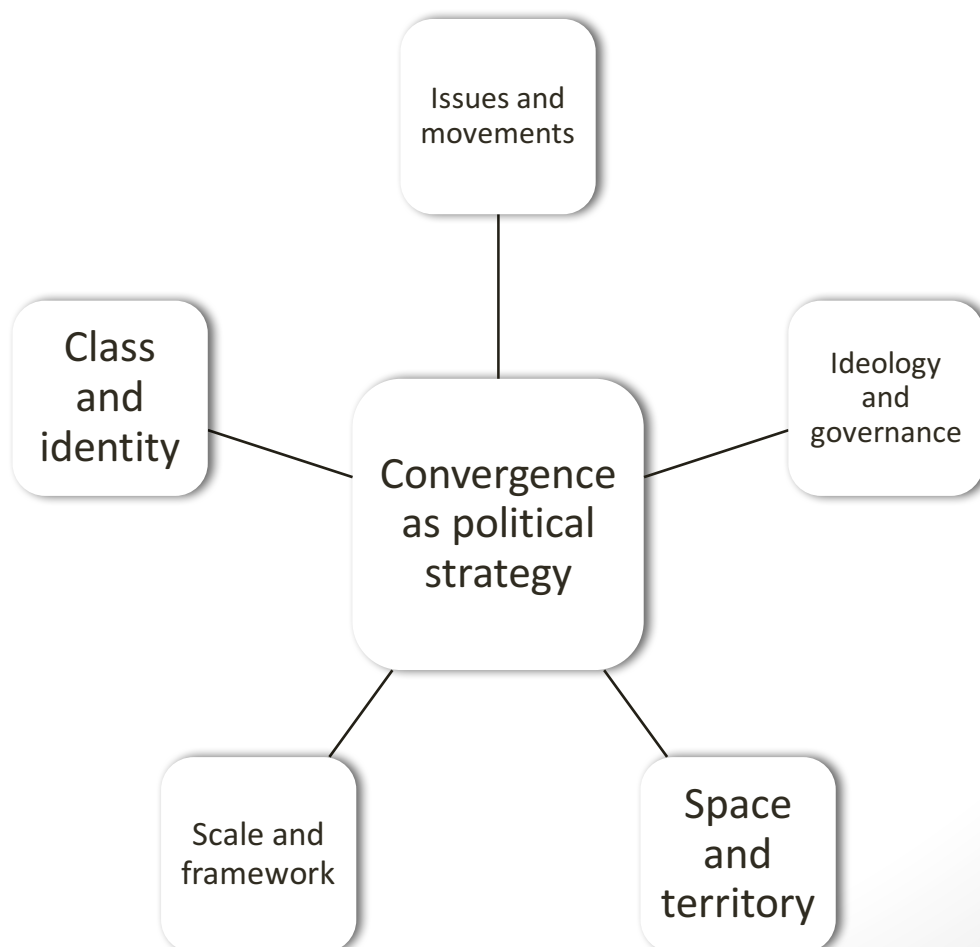
Agrarian and environmental issues have always overlapped, and constitute a political relationship that is marked by ebbs and flows. Today, gaining and maintaining not only access to, but also *control over* (Ribot and Peluso 2003) land, water, forest, and ocean for working people has been complicated by the contemporary twin challenges of resource grabbing and climate change mitigation. Much of this takes place through 'green' and 'blue' initiatives (Fairhead et al. 2012; Benjaminsen and Bryceson 2012) that are closing off terrestrial and aquatic spaces and territories like never before, and the majority of such mitigation attempts come on the heels of the fourfold food price, financial, fuel, and climate crisis. Programs modeled in the likes of REDD+ have essentially allowed rich countries to continue practicing pollution by purchasing offsets in the forests, farmlands and fisheries of the global South and have contributed to a transnational *carbon complex* (Tramel 2016a). This point where resource grabbing and climate change coalesce is providing an unprecedented tidemark indicating the surge of natural resource dynamics in the anthropocene—a *new enclosure*.

Transnational actors including states, corporations, global governance entities, social movements, and others have been pulled into the rip current ensuing from these practices and become entangled there. Yet struggles against the contemporary enclosure reach back to earlier processes of accumulation and dispossession in the likes of commodity fetishism and the metabolic rift. They are indicative of balances between a self-regulating market ‘from above’ and social protection mechanisms and resistance ‘from below’ (Polanyi 1957). For radical, and traditionally sectoral, (trans)national agrarian and environmental justice movements, resistance through convergence is increasingly used as a strategy to counter the modern iteration of enclosure. This is seen, in part, through intricate organizing practices that utilize scale as a tool to reflect the global in the local, while at the same time ensuring that the political priorities of transnational movements are grounded in local struggles and solutions. For radical movements, system change is a dominant master frame to counter a neoliberal order rooted in capitalism, colonialism, and empire. Two key components of this systemic focus are food sovereignty and climate justice—both of which are concepts and political projects that are strategically interchangeable within the realm of agrarian and environmental/climate justice movements. Together, movements are governing from below and building political power—a *new alliance*.

This article explores the symbiotic nature of this contemporary alliance, how movements react, interact, and decisively act based on the most recent waves of agrarian and environmental issues. To unpack these elements, ten key points that apply to convergence as political strategy are considered, each broken down into two factors that effect the outcome of convergence, or as it may be, divergence. This five-pronged analytical framework, the *pentagonal approach*, is organized as follows: issues and movements; class and identity; ideology and governance; scale and framework; and finally, space and territory. Separately, the factors are ordered into a typology of convergence (see table 1), and when paired into sets are understood as the analytical framework, the pentagonal approach (see table 2). The pentagonal approach is probed through its application to three vignettes of social justice movements at different scales in Navajo Nation, Indonesia, and West Africa. In each case, alliance building through convergence is a prioritized strategy of local, national, and regional resistance to swells of transnational enclosure in the era of climate change.

Table 1: Typology of the political strategy of convergence

Issues	Resource grabbing	Climate change
Movements	Agrarian justice	Environmental justice
Class	Poverty	Wealth
Identity	Race	Ethnicity
Ideology	Radical/outside	Mainstream/inside
Governance	Rights-based legislation	Policy implementation
Scale	Local	Global
Framework	Food sovereignty	Climate justice
Space	Global South	Global North
Territory	Land/forest	Sea/water

Table 2: Pentagonal approach to convergence

Snapshots of convergence

Vignette one (regional): agrarian justice (?) → environmental/climate justice (?)

West African agrarian justice movements have predominately engaged with the framework of food sovereignty—rooted in agrarian justice—to articulate their grievances against land and water grabbing. As key actors, farm-based peasants and their fisher and pastoralist counterparts use food sovereignty as a way to express their positionality—opposite to that of mere hunger reduction through food security promoted by public-private partnerships and large-scale agribusiness. The food sovereignty forum held at Nyéléni in 2007 reflected that stance, where Malian peasants hosted allied West African and international agrarian and environmental justice movements to pen the declaration detailing the concept as a political proposal. At its core is the ‘right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems’ (Nyéléni 2007). However, over the course of the decade that has followed, the struggle in Mali and neighboring West African countries has increasingly shifted towards climate-related resource capture including biofuels and climate-smart agriculture (see Vermeulen and Cotula 2010). This has caused movements, in turn, to adopt frameworks of climate justice to complement—but not override—their existing work on food sovereignty. A good example is a focus on agroecology (Altieri and Toledo 2011; Rosset et al. 2011), which emphasizes and is itself a strategic frame bridging food and climate struggles (Borras 2016). With these fresh environmental narratives have come a host of new political alliances and opportunity structures. The Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles – West Africa¹ is one such iteration of this process, as its members incorporate environmental/climate justice into the new movement’s political platform that is focused on putting a stop to natural resource grabbing. Concurrently, the Convergence is looking inward to consolidate national platforms throughout the sub-region that is economically connected through the Economic Community of West African States, and outward to seek new partners at the transnational level.

Vignette two (local): environmental/climate justice (?) → agrarian justice (?)

Radical North American environmental justice movements, with intentional divergence from their issue-based mainstream counterparts, are rooted in struggles for racial justice under a legacy of colonization and slavery. By choosing to engage with the framework of environmental, and later climate, justice, movements are acknowledging both historical and current injustices. Capitalism and modernity, as promoted through European conquest, has been continually underpinned by a fear of nature and desire to dominate it—and since non-European ‘others’ were associated with nature, they too became the subjects of systemic fear and domination (Pellow 2007). For movements of indigenous people

¹ Please see Global Convergence (2015), Tramel (2015), and Tramel (2016a) for context of this nascent movement.

and people of color, especially in the global North, the systemic target has remained consistent with environmental justice as its entry point. However, in terms of coalition building, the environment has proven to be an elusive political pursuit that largely lacks a rights-based framework (Keck and Sikkink 1998). Teaming up with food movements and borrowing agrarian frameworks such as food sovereignty to complement existing environmental justice work is partially remedying that challenge. Contemporary resource grabbing has raised that point where injustices related to climate and capital accumulation are resurrecting struggles for sovereignty. The U.S./Canada-based Indigenous Environmental Network through its strategic membership positions in the U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance and the Climate Justice Alliance shows how food sovereignty strategies are informing its most local constituents. The Navajo Nation-based Black Mesa Water Coalition is a pilot project for the greater alliance and is converging with agrarian movements through new food sovereignty initiatives, which has offered its members opportunities to promote their indigenous and environmental struggles and solutions that may have otherwise remained confined to the climate movement. At the same time, Black Mesa Water Coalition maintains an indigenous identity and uses that for convergence as well, as witnessed through its participation and leadership in the struggle against Dakota Access Pipeline where more than 280 tribes have gathered on Standing Rock Sioux territory in a largely water-inspired political battle.

Vignette three (national): multiple convergences as seen in one country

Indonesia is at the ultimate confluence of resource grabs and climate change mitigation. With the third largest tropical rainforest area on the planet, the world's longest combined shoreline, and an extractivist past that continues with no end in sight, social justice movements in the country have been fiercely divided over how to manage the islands' cornucopia of natural resources. These tensions come on the heels of decades of neoliberal oppression under the Suharto regime and previous periods of European colonization. Indonesian agrarian and environmental social justice movements have been particularly influenced by outside forces, whether transnational social movements or NGOs since the 1990s. On the radical side, alliances between community organizations and La Vía Campesina led to the birth of Serikat Petani Indonesia (Indonesian Farmers Union) that would host La Vía Campesina's international secretariat for eight years (Edelman and Borras 2016). Those relationships also fed into the creation of WALHI, the Indonesian branch of Friends of the Earth International that remains one of its most active. At the same time, mainstream environmental actors immersed in corporate partnerships have successfully persuaded many indigenous communities into supporting, and even managing, REDD+ and related carbon sequestration and conservation programs—something they had not been able to successfully achieve in parts of the world like Latin America.² Fishing communities, in particular, are under mounting pressure to abandon livelihoods that have already been compromised by pollution from the expansion of oil palm in order to make way for Blue Carbon projects, the oceanic version of REDD+ (Damanik 2015). The intertwining of social justice movements in Indonesia is thus moving from

² Personal communication with Serikat Petani Indonesia/La Vía Campesina International leader, December 2014, Lima, Peru.

issue-based sectoral outreach (i.e., agriculture, indigenous, climate, fisheries), where tensions erupted through support of or opposition to carbon sequestration, to one that is horizontal and multi-sectoral, which has become clear in agrarian, oceanic, and environmental resistance to the *carbon complex* (see Tramel 2016a).

From the above vignettes, we can see points of convergence and divergence listed in table 1 that, in pairs, revolve around convergence as political strategy as diagramed in table 2. Following is a discussion based on those typologies using the empirical examples of the previous vignettes to highlight theoretical trends.

Issues and movements

Resource control grabs and climate change mitigation, having intersected decisively in the contemporary political landscape, have changed the nature of relationships between social justice movements and their grievances that result in protest. Charles Tilly's (1986: 4) concept of *repertoires of contention*, 'the whole set of means that a group has for making claims of different kinds on different individuals or groups', is useful here. Put another way, these repertoires serve as toolboxes of protest devices. Whereas the previous generation of new social movements kindled by the contentious structural and institutional shifts of the 1990s such as land, trade, food, GMOs shared common repertoires, the accelerated commodification of nature through the *carbon complex* occurring today has resulted in even more common grievances. Since radical agrarian and environmental movements are converging on the broad basis of system change, the protest devices within their repertoires of contention can be assembled in accordance with political opportunity. Currently, the realm of climate change has eclipsed national liberation and trade as choice political opportunity that cuts across categories.

For example, in the first vignette, the international political opportunity is climate change. As West African movements branch out to engage in transnational political spaces under the banner of the Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles—whether 'outside' such as the World Social Forum, or 'inside' such as the UNFCCC civil society processes—they are increasingly drawing from not only environmental, but also agrarian and fisheries protest issues within their repertoire of contention. At the regional level, the new convergence of West African social movements chose to link local and national policy asks by organizing a caravan³ to meet with groups of activists as well as politicians—a tactic that South Asian and Latin American agrarian movements have used for years (Edelman and Borras 2016). By adding a strong focus on environmental/climate justice to their 'asks' in meeting with leaders as part of the caravan and within the context of natural resource grabbing, the new convergence was able to express their firm stance against land and water grabbing in a way that was less threatening to authorities without diluting their message.

³ For some brief contextual discussion of the West Africa caravan, see Tramel (2016b)

Indeed, the intersection of issues has added more protest tools to the given repertoire. Analyzing the first vignette with that in mind shows that if resource grabbing were entirely unrelated to climate change, environmental grievances may not be such a large part of agrarian movements' repertoire of contention—and therefore, climate justice would probably not be an appropriate protest tool. Arguably, in order for convergence to occur, movements must share common repertoires of contention, but not necessarily the same prioritization of their contents.

Pushing repertoires of contention a step further is seeing their construction as a form of collective action that is the base of any given social justice movement. Tilly and Tarrow (2015) theorized that collective action, when brought together with two other familiar parts of social life, contention (consisting of claims, subjects, and objects) and politics, results in *contentious politics*. The presence or absence of governance is a key piece of contentious politics, namely that 1) people in control of governments have advantages over those who do not; 2) governments decide the rules of the contention process; and 3) coercive means such as military and police forces answer to governments. The role of the state is critical, yet the prevalence and current surge of *global* governance has complicated this scenario, as will be discussed shortly. Since 'social movements are a *historical*—and not a universal—category' (ibid: 11, emphasis in original), they will reprioritize the tools within their repertoires of contention according to local realities shaped by past injustices when engaging in contentious politics.

Such becomes apparent in the second vignette. The people of Navajo Nation, like many indigenous communities throughout the Americas, are marked by waves of dispossession that occurred when colonial settlers restructured their territory and accumulated capital. Black Mesa Water Coalition identifies itself as an environmental movement that has fought against the depletion of the Navajo Aquifer, and is networked nationally with the Climate Justice Alliance, regionally with the Indigenous Environmental Network, and transnationally through the Grassroots Global Justice Alliance. Even though environmental justice through water is at the heart of its work, the coalition is borrowing food sovereignty, in opposition to resource grabs, as a concrete political strategy as it interfaces with national, as well as tribal and state governmental structures. A concrete way that this movement is addressing the intersection of the issues is by offering agroecology as an alternative that binds the contentious politics of both resource grabbing and climate change with a focus on water.

Class and identity

Class differentiation reaches back to canonical debates over the 'agrarian question', focused on whether or not capitalism had the ability to fully penetrate the countryside. The unique trajectory of rural agricultural movements suggests that it has thus far failed to do so (Edelman and Borras 2016). Such a path in the history of agrarian movements diverges from many other social movement alliances, among these, labor unions, fishers, and indigenous

environmental/climate justice movements—the very coalitions used to explain most political science theories on movement building. Taking these differences related to proletarianization into consideration, a serious examination of the potentials and limitations of class politics and identity within the parameters of convergence begins with the agrarian question.

The Great Soviet Encyclopedia (1979) defines the agrarian question as ‘the question of the laws of development of capitalism in agriculture, the relations between classes which arise on this basis, and the class struggle connected with it’. Pulling apart the components of this query, Bernstein (2010: 22-23) posed four sequential questions that get to the core of the social relations of production and reproduction: ‘*who owns what?*’; ‘*who does what?*’; ‘*who gets what?*’; and, ‘*what do they do with it?*’ Together, these questions provide an analytical arsenal for root cause analysis of the nature and state of capital. Bernstein reminds us that they are not solely applicable to agrarian societies but are useful across time, space, scale, and territory—making them quite relevant to environmental movement actors confronted with the same or similar forms of enclosure as their agrarian counterparts and compatriots. Sequentially, ‘social relations of property shape social divisions of labor, which shape social distributions of income, which in turn shape the uses of the social product for consumption and reproduction—which, in the case of capitalism, includes accumulation’ (ibid: 24).

Despite the applicability of the agrarian question to ecological geographies, it arguably does not go far enough in explaining the intricacies of capital in relation to the biosphere. In a comprehensive assessment of the agrarian question, Haroon Akram-Lodhi and Cristobol Kay (2010: 269) posited that a reformulation of it should also probe ‘ecological relationships and the ways in which they impinge upon and alter the resolution or otherwise of the agrarian question, and in doing so address contradictions of class and ecology if it is going to explain social change’. For Daniel Buck (2007), the ecological question must be centered on the fact that natural resources from which material commodities are derived are being depleted faster than the very ecological, biochemical, and physical processes that produced them are able to regenerate. Taking that notion one step further, Philip McMichael (2013: 64, emphasis in original) noted that the ecological question must ‘refer not simply to ecosystem degradation and/or restoration, but also to *human* ecology issues including over-urbanization’. He suggested drawing from Farshad Araghi’s reconceptualized work on the agrarian question in regard to the ‘great global enclosure of our times’ in addition to Harriet Friedmann’s ‘population biology’ that deals with industrial agriculture and its harm to self-organizing ecosystems (ibid; Araghi 2000; Friedmann 2006). Reformulating the agrarian question, according to McMichael, could simply be a matter of asking ‘who shall farm the land and to what socio-ecological end?’ (McMichael 2013: 65). However, any ecological question—especially in the era of climate change—is one that must be inclusive of those who do not farm or make their living from the land. Against the backdrop of resource grabbing and climate change mitigation, and with the array of social actors themselves reformulating in resistance in the rural world and in relation to it, ecological concerns bridge class and identity politics. As the New Left historian Thompson (2016) observed in the

context of the English labor movement, alliances of *working-class* people may use solidarity, collectivism, mutuality, political radicalism, and religious identity as a manifestation of concerted agency.

The nature of transnational agrarian and environmental justice movements, particularly as they converge in the current global space, is rooted in class and identity concurrently. Scholars have oftentimes drawn a line between these two factors, where class-based movements have tended to be theorized as movements for *redistribution*, while identity-based movements have been widely viewed as movements for *recognition* (Fraser 1999). These two paradigms inevitably inform ideology and governance. In the first, redistribution, dealing with injustice likely involves income redeployment, labor reorganization, or rudimentary economic structural transformation. The second paradigm, recognition, suggests the need for symbolic or cultural change that respects identities on bases such as race and ethnicity. Fraser (1999: 8) posited that ‘virtually all real-world axes of oppression are bivalent’, calling for an analytical approach that tackles the primary and mutually reinforcing root causes of maldistribution and misrecognition at once.

Transnational agrarian and environmental/climate justice movements show such features, particularly as they converge and exchange/meld frameworks. Such is true in each vignette featured in this article. The vignette that treats multiple instances of convergence within the borders of Indonesia is a useful example with which to unpack some of these concepts. While the national agrarian justice movement Serikat Petani Indonesia is a culmination of smaller groups battling class differentiation in the countryside, WALHI is tightly connected to cultural and identity struggles including ‘environmentalism of the indigenous’. Those efforts clearly overlap, and even do so outside of the politics of convergence and in formulations that are not necessarily linked to those movements. For instance, Togean Island peoples in Sulawesi used ‘indigenous knowledge’ political discourse as a means to reclaim land that had been reallocated for a national park. In contrast, Sumatran Sosa people positioned themselves as *masyarakat adat* (‘customary law’ peoples) in order to salvage their ancestral lands that had been grabbed by private and state oil palm corporations (Afiff and Lowe 2007). Both groups were balancing the need for redistribution and recognition in the face of maldistribution and misrecognition at once, and in doing so, providing empirical testimony to the bivalent nature of class and identity politics.

Ideology and governance

Returning to Table 1, it is possible to disaggregate points of alliance across a spectrum of claims, subjects, and objects delineated by convergence as a political strategy. A key feature of that process is how movements ideologically grasp the issues on which they interact, the circumstances under which those issues occur, and how that relates to governance. Is it a matter of looking forward to interim market-based solutions? Or is it one of reaching backward to dig deep into root cause analysis? For environmental/climate justice movements that insist upon

system change rather than climate change, and for agrarian justice movements making claims for land, water, and *territory*, as well as food *sovereignty*, the battle is clearly the latter, one that challenges capitalism from a pro-poor perspective.

This ideology falls in step with a tripartite of political tendencies in governing the global land grab (Borras et al. 2013), and is equally relevant to the governance of other natural resources and the climate crisis. The first tendency is *regulate to facilitate*, meaning that land grabbing (or, in the eyes of its proponents, land deals) is a positive solution with which to solve multiple crises. For this camp that includes the World Bank along with many state and aligned elite actors, resource accumulation provides relief from hunger by large-scale monocrop agricultural production and the job creation that is necessary to manage such enterprises (ibid; see for example Deininger 2011). Second, there is a tendency to *regulate to mitigate* negative impacts and maximize opportunities. Those who throw their hats in this ring are likely to do so based on the assumed ‘inevitability’ of the dominant model of resource capture and the ‘impossibility’ of redistributive resource policies. The ‘big greens’, along with the majority of intergovernmental bodies that are charged with soft law such as the UNFCCC and FAO are predominately located in this camp—focusing their efforts on private-public partnerships and related mechanisms and agreements. The final tendency is *regulate to stop and rollback* land and resource grabs, with those ascribing to this position seeing the current enclosure as a threat that has little to do with solutions and everything to do with the root cause of capital accumulation (Borras et al. 2013). Put another way in the context of climate change mitigation, ‘capitalism itself needs to be transformed if we are to “decarbonize” the global economy’ (Böhm et al. 2012: 1617). Each empirical social movement vignette explored in this article falls squarely into this category, coming from an anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anti-neocolonialist perspective. Related to the political strategy of convergence, and instances of divergence, it is fundamental to understand the connections between not only those who seek to stop and rollback resource grabbing and those who favor facilitation, but also the dynamics that arise between the stop and rollback pole and the more centrist stance of mitigation. Climate change initiatives have proven to shed light on that relationship in a way that land grabs of previous configurations were unable.

The third vignette is again useful to unpack the dimensions of these political alliances and contestations. The national experience of Indonesia is one shaped by its heterogeneous indigenous population across a seemingly infinite island archipelago geography straddling two oceans. It is also a history wrought with waves of colonial conquest and rural massacre and repression (see Peluso et al. 2008). During the ‘New Order’ regime led by Suharto, an era that coincided with the birth of the environmental justice movement, radical agrarian activists calling for agrarian reform were in large part forced to work clandestinely. One successful way to operate an agrarian activism network underground has been to double as an environmental coalition, and use that organization as a front. Since environmental targets (e.g., clean air, biodiversity conservation) are less threatening and more elusive than agrarian ones such as income redistribution

and comprehensive land reform, groups working with them in mind have been able to avoid authoritative crackdowns on their operations.

This strategic shift is hardly unique to Indonesia, where agrarian activists simultaneously engaged in struggles for national liberation and democracy around the same time borrowed from environmental repertoires of contestation to mask related agrarian issues that were seen as a threat to the state or occupying power.⁴ Contemporary environmental movements in parts of the world where (trans)national agrarian movements are largely absent—among them the former Soviet Union, China, the Middle East, and North Africa—may therefore be key arenas of political struggle against resource grabbing and contain more radical elements than may appear on the surface. In the event that political space should open up for such civic alliances, one of two things may occur within a given network, as was the case in Indonesia. First, environmental movements are free to continue organizing with the less threatening—and not coincidentally, more *fundable*—repertoire of contention, thus gaining access to critical inside spaces such as the UNFCCC COPs. This has not surprisingly been the path chosen by the ‘big greens’, with the transnational indigenous organization IIPFCC largely moving in that direction as well. Second, environmental movements in transitioning regimes may choose to engage in radical *justice* work that includes root cause analysis. The change in WALHI’s rhetoric after the collapse of Suharto’s rule is an example that falls within this category. When that political space suddenly opened, the movement quickly aligned itself more closely with its umbrella organization Friends of the Earth International as well as with La Vía Campesina as an outspoken critic of resource grabs. While these kinds of actions portend divergence within environmental movements, they also open up space for convergence between multi-sectoral movements. The unveiling of the *carbon complex* that combines resource grabbing with climate change mitigation in Indonesia and elsewhere has yielded such results. Hence, radical environmental, agrarian, indigenous, and fishing movements are finding new ways of unifying their resistance to these new forms of capital accumulation and territorial restructuring—and in doing so, configuring a more robust repertoire of contention.

Scale and framework

Food sovereignty and climate justice, with agroecology at the interchange, are political proposals and frameworks being used by and exchanged between agrarian and environmental/climate justice movements. This subsection explores these frameworks in relation to scale. The first two vignettes in West Africa and North America, respectively, are indicative of a trifecta of orders within processes of transnational contention mapped by Tarrow (2005) that is a helpful to examining scale as it applies to convergence. Each order is presented as a set of actions, ranging from the local to the global. The first order consists of *global framing*, or the ‘mobilization of international symbols to frame domestic conflicts’,

⁴ For a comprehensive study on protracted and complex strategies for land and labor organizing in hostile political environments (Eritrea, South Africa, Palestine, and Nicaragua), see *Rethinking Revolution* (Connell 2001).

and is followed by *internationalization*, meaning a ‘response to foreign or domestic pressures within domestic politics’ (Tarrow 2005: 32). Second, an order of *diffusion*, or the ‘transfer of claims from one site to the other’ takes place coupled with *scale shift*, where the ‘coordination of collective action at a different level from where it began’ unfolds (Tarrow 2005: 32). The final set of processes consists of *externalization*, the ‘vertical projection of domestic claims onto international institutions or foreign actors’, and *transnational coalition formation*, the ‘horizontal formation of common networks among actors from different countries with similar claims’ (Tarrow 2005: 32). Tarrow (2005: 33) explained that these six processes tend to occur in combination, but can also take place alone. Additionally, it is possible for a movement to move through the trifecta of orders in the opposite direction. The following empirical discussion looks at both scenarios.

In the first vignette, we can see the West African movements looking *outward* through an attempt to externalize their struggles at the global level and build a new coalition, the Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles. They have done this in part through global framing, as the new name for their movement indicates, while remaining committed to domestic concerns that impact member organizations such as strengthening national platforms through specific local campaigns. By focusing on the internationalized struggles of land and water grabbing, the Convergence has easily matched the issues to the primary alternative master frames of food and seed sovereignty and a more secondary strategic framework of climate justice. From there, the West African convergence began to diffuse these claims to different geographies, first across Francophone and Anglophone countries in the sub region, and then more transnationally during peak protest moments such as the World Social Forum and COP21 in Paris—resulting in a scale shift. These actions set the stage for the final set of orders, externalization and transnational coalition formation. The complementary frameworks of food sovereignty and climate justice have proven to be integral to this step: the Global Convergence of Land and Water Struggles is able to provide the foundation for a transnational movement even outside of peak protest opportunities while engaging in regional actions such as its West African caravan for land, water, and seeds. This allows the movement space for growth while remaining fundamentally focused on localized struggles.

The second vignette in North America paints a slightly different picture, where transnational environmental/climate justice actors are, in part, looking *inward* in attempts to concretize their claims at the grassroots level through subnational/local movements such as the Black Mesa Water Coalition. The Indigenous Environmental Network, especially through its relationship with Grassroots Global Justice Alliance and other global actors like Friends of the Earth International and No REDD in Africa, has already established itself as a vertical claim-maker at the transnational level. Thus, scale shifts in the opposite direction toward internalization. Global claims are diffused to inform grassroots processes of collective action, where the larger coalition offers support to national, subnational/tribal, and local movements—indeed different sites from where the frameworks of climate justice and food sovereignty were popularized in

transnational social movement processes. At its most local level, Black Mesa Water Coalition benefits from well-established and internationalized global framing that solidifies its actions on the ground in Navajo Nation. Those frameworks additionally provide political leverage for tribal intervention in national political struggles in the U.S. Such is unfolding at the time of writing in Sioux territory of Standing Rock in the struggle against the Dakota Access Pipeline, and is proving to be a vital space for convergence between and within indigenous environmental/climate justice movements.

Undoubtedly, these are somewhat messy configurations and are in no way cut and dried. It is important to underscore that the goals each of the two previously mentioned movements are not confined to the scale direction highlighted. Indeed, as mentioned, the West African vignette is in an intense process of consolidation of local movements and national platforms, while the North American vignette is actively pursuing political opportunities and alliances at the transnational level. However, both the outward focus explored in the West African context and the inward emphasis in North America are consistent with Tarrow's (2005) trifecta of orders of transnational contention political processes. This effectively maps the global in the local, through global framing and internalization, as well as the local in the global, through externalizing contention and building transnational coalitions.

Space and territory

Space and territory are often interchangeable concepts that encompass geographies that are both asymmetric and interrelated. Socially constructed notions of a global South and North and the separation of land/forest from sea/water resources are increasingly blurred and redefined with the occurrence of resource grabbing in the anthropocene and the complexities of global governance. Likewise, social justice movements grapple with these contexts as they define and organize their base members. For example, agrarian reform may be a political ask for farm-based peasants in a given part of the world, while for fishers elsewhere it reformulations of private property may be less valuable.⁵ Two useful theoretical handles that aid in deciphering empirical realities posed by these threats and opportunities are uneven geographical development and the metabolic rift.

The theory of uneven geographical development was intended by Harvey (2006:71) to interpret the 'extreme volatility of contemporary political economic fortunes across and between spaces of the world economy (at all manner of different scales)'. Using four conditionalities that are at once independently specifiable and symbiotically dynamic, Harvey outlined the uneven nature of geographical development. The first conditionality is 'the material embedding of capital accumulation processes in the web of socio-ecological life' (Harvey 2006: 75, 77-90). This point connects geographical idiosyncrasies with the processes of capital accumulation, social struggle, and environmental transformation. Second, uneven geographical development is characterized by Harvey's well-known

⁵ See Rosset (2013) for further insight on territory and agrarian/social justice movements.

‘accumulation by dispossession (a generalization of Marx’s concept of ‘primitive’ or ‘original’ accumulation under which pre-existing assets are assembled—as labor powers, money, productive capacity or as commodities—and put into circulation as capital)’ Harvey 2006: 75, 90-95). Accumulation by dispossession assumes that Marx’s primitive accumulation had to repeat itself in order for capitalism to escalate, but in doing so, was consistently met by its counterweight—dispossession. The third conditionality of uneven geographical development is ‘the law-like character of capital accumulation in space and time’ (Harvey 2006: 75, 95-109). This point operates under the assumption that since accumulation has already been unleashed within the project of accumulation, cycles of expansion and crises of capital are inevitable, but can be corrected through temporal shifts or spatial fixes. Finally, uneven geographical development addresses ‘political, social, and “class” struggles at a variety of geographical scales’ (Harvey 2006: 75, 109-115) with varied provenance, structures, and meanings. For social movements, accumulation and dispossession are internalized in different ways but often tell similar stories of land and water struggles and can help identify vertical and horizontal geopolitical trends (Harvey 2006).

The conditionalities of uneven geographical development as presented by Harvey in theoretical form can be articulated empirically through the *carbon complex*. Within the vignettes presented at the beginning of this section, elements of the *carbon complex* are most apparent in case three that highlights Indonesia, but they run through each of the snapshots and reach far beyond that Southeast Asian island archipelago nation. Thus, the carbon complex is not contingent upon lines demarcating global South and North. Transformation of agrarian and environmental processes have compounded in widespread environmental degradation, deforestation, and ocean acidification over the course of several decades. Capital accumulation is both cause and effect, the former seen through industrialization and related mechanisms and the latter witnessed through the proposed response of payment for ecosystem services (Büscher and Arsel 2012) that set the stage for REDD+ and its spinoff programs. Dispossession ballasts this configuration where those who make their living from land and sea become subjects of resource grabbing under the guise of climate change mitigation, whether through expulsion or exploitation to make way for, or even manage, carbon capture projects. Subsequently, since such cycles have already been set into action, they are incorporated into policy.

In the case of climate change mitigation, that process took place at the highest levels of global governance—and it is one supported by intergovernmental institutions, signatory nation-states, and corporations. This point works at the juncture of the previously explored first and second tendencies enunciated by Borras et al. (2013) in relation to governing the global land grab: *regulate to facilitate* and *regulate to mitigate* negative impacts and maximize opportunities. The *carbon complex* is a mechanism that was unleashed by REDD+; its architecture is encroaching into farmlands through climate-smart agriculture and oceans and marine ecosystems through Blue Carbon. Uneven geographical development theory tells us that capital-driven initiative will be marked by highs and lows, cyclical periods of expansion and crisis that are in turn adjusted by

temporal shifts or spatial fixes. Global governance regulatory mechanisms may be interpreted as such shifts or fixes by incorporating clauses that seemingly align climate change mitigation to the interests of poor or otherwise marginalized working people. However, when the pendulum of accumulation and dispossession meets the gravitational force of social struggle based on class or other identity politics, social actors are likely to propel it in the direction that they see as concurrent to justice. Those working people, a large part of them rural, confronted with a *carbon complex* across differentiated spaces of global South and North are choosing to integrate into new horizontal alliances with vertical political targets.

Largely based on class analysis and human relations, uneven geographical development is useful for describing environmental processes such as the *carbon complex*, yet largely stops short at revealing the underlying *relationship* between humans and nature. Coupling uneven geographical development with the theory of metabolic rift helps to remedy that gap at the intersection of space and territory. Marx (1976: 283) presented a reflection of the dialectic relationship between humans and nature in *Capital* where he described labor as ‘a process between man and nature, a process by which man ... mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature’. The philosopher’s choice in describing the connection between humans and nature in metabolic terms was not lost on those who came after him. Notable among these thinkers were agricultural chemist Justus von Liebig in reference to soil science, Bolshevik revolutionary Nikolai Bukharin in his reconceptualization of *Historical Materialism* (1969), and theoretician Karl Kautsky in his own empirical exploration that led to the publication of the *Agrarian Question* (1988). But it was not until the turn of the 21st century that John Bellamy Foster (1999: 373) would coin the term ‘metabolic rift’, building on Marx’s advancement towards a ‘historical-environmental-materialism that understood the coevolution of nature and society’. He situated the rift in the 19th century second agricultural revolution, setting off a debate with Jason Moore who, although agreeing with Foster on the general attributes of the metabolic rift, periodized it within the *longue durée* of capitalism (Moore 2000).

A key feature of the metabolic rift is that it is indeed humans who mediate, regulate, and control it, which was clearly outlined in Marx’s original understanding of metabolism. The climate crisis and the *carbon complex* are contemporary manifestations of the metabolic rift, whereby through entering the anthropocene, human-driven processes of consumption, reproduction and accumulation are quite possibly moving towards a tipping point: ‘a moment of crisis in socio-ecological relations in which the particular relations in which the particular relationships that produce a lived environment take a radically different turn under the weight of their own contradiction’ (Taylor 2014: 115). The metabolic rift is especially useful in making connections between land and ocean as equally important parts of territory, where aquaculture and related oceanic resource capture have expanded it into new areas (Clausen and Clark 2005). In sum, theorizing enclosure and the climate crisis across space and territory through the lens of the metabolic rift is useful for more than just an understanding of the

problem that lucidly identifies the root cause. It is equally relevant in pinpointing solutions through human agency—*transcending* and *healing* the rift—at the juncture of agrarian and climate justice with, for example, food sovereignty through agroecology and the maintenance of artisanal fisheries (Wittman 2009; Schneider and McMichael 2010).

Convergence as political strategy

Transcending and healing the metabolic rift and related injustices and forms of oppression amount to a collective process of countermovement from below. Resource grabbing in the anthropocene has caused new convergences between and within agrarian, fishers', environmental, and indigenous justice movements. Yet those new alliances 'from below' are manifestations of historical courses of action that span the areas explored throughout the pentagonal approach as an analytical framework. Polanyi (1957) captured the nature of countermovement in *The Great Transformation* through his articulation of a double movement. In what was a scathing critique of laissez-faire economics, Polanyi referred to 'land' (nature) and 'labor' (human life) as 'fictitious commodities'—a constructed natural world (ibid; see also Escobar 1996). Within these polemics, he posited that 'the market expanded continuously but this movement was met by a countermovement checking the expansion in definite directions' (Polanyi 1957: 136). Essentially, the double movement has three characteristics. First, there is an 'action of two organizing principles in society', one of which is the principle of economic liberalism, and the other social protection. Second, the double movement was theorized on Marxist principles—with culturally specific empirical observances—that positioned it as a class conflict. Third, 'two vital functions of society—the political and the economic—were being used and abused as weapons in a struggle for sectional interests' (ibid: 139 – 140).

Polanyi contended that the nation-state and market economy should not be viewed as separate entities, but were rather compounded in a *market society* as witnessed through the greater project of industrialization. But as the second industrial revolution phased out and was followed by World War I and World War II, the market society slipped into the background of what the French deemed *les trentes glorieuses* 'thirty glorious years', an 'era of state-led development, rising real wages and living standards, and greatly expanded social protections' (Edelman and Borras 2016: 23). For Polanyi, society had learned its lesson with the market the hard way—and the decades that followed roughly matched his prediction. However, historical patterns repeated when Washington Consensus-modeled market-driven economic politics were implemented throughout the world as part of *neoliberalism*. Just like its liberal grandfather, the neoliberal project was met by a countermovement—sending many scholars to the bookshelves where they would dust off *The Great Transformation* in attempts to view new empirical realities through a tested analytical lens. That trend would continue as energy shifted from anti-WTO protests, to anti-war contentions, and into present struggles against land and water grabbing and the climate change mitigation (Palacios 2002; Silver and Arrighi 2003; Moore 2015; Büscher and Arsel 2012).

Contemporary resource grabbing in the era of climate change has arguably changed the nature of the countermovement in three key ways. First is a clear transition into the anthropocene, under which the today's countermovement is as much about environmental/climate justice as its predecessor was about the fight for economic equality. This evolution has shifted Polanyi's findings from primarily economic abstracts to an equal focus on *ecological* ones, bridging 'political economy and ecology in the context of a burgeoning environmental movement' (Paulson et al. 2005: 17). Second, today's countermovement to market-based macroeconomic processes is indeed *transnational*—and in the throes an intense process of convergence—a key assumption and starting point of this article. Because of this, it is important to rethink space, territoriality, and geographical scale (see Brenner 1999). The third and final variation is class in relation to other *identity* politics, and differentiation as it applies to Chayanovian notions around moral economy. Polanyi (1957: 192) recognized that while the 'organized states of Europe could protect themselves against the backwash of international free trade, the politically unorganized colonial peoples could not'. Concurrently, social actors across the world contend with new realities. Many colonies have won hard fought battles for independence, and still others remain engaged in national liberation struggles. In all cases, spillovers from the vestige of conquest based on the capitalist mode of production have changed the global landscape—observed particularly through migration patterns (see Delgado Wise and Veltmeyer 2016). All of these factors warrant serious empirical investigation of convergence as a restructuring of the countermovement related to political strategy.

Conclusion

We are currently witnessing a widely recognized trend of convergence 'from above' among multiple crises at the transnational level. This is exemplified through the fusion of resource grabbing and climate change mitigation, wherein green and blue initiatives are enclosing forests, farmlands, and fisheries areas in what has become a global *carbon complex*. In response to these interconnected issues, movements are converging and forming new alliances 'from below' in resistance and as an act of building political power. Analyzing and understanding such a convergence of agrarian and environmental social justice actors requires theoretical tools that respond to newfound empirical realities and respect historical contexts at once. This article provides some preliminary means for doing so by employing a pentagonal approach to the politics of convergence. Each set of factors is paired interactively, and designed to fit together within the structure of the polygon and revolve around convergence as political strategy.

First, the *issues* of resource grabbing and climate change have provoked reactions by agrarian and environmental justice *movements* within repertoires of contention connected to the emergence of a global carbon complex as a common grievance. These reactions have pushed historically sectoral contentious politics to a common tipping point. Second, *class* and *identity* politics have reshaped the agrarian question based on the issues and movements at hand towards one that is inherently ecological as well. Since land and labor collide in this formulation that

seeks to understand the overall political economy and political ecology at the transnational level, the contemporary convergence must be bivalent in respect to social movement priorities for both redistribution and recognition. Third, *ideology* and *governance* position social justice movements whose overarching goal is system change in a way that distinguishes their political asks. Such is the case with radical movements that wish to govern from below in order to stop and rollback resource grabs rather than considering such actions inevitable, or even useful. Fourth, *scale* and *framework* allow ample space for movements to converge and reconfigure their messages at the transnational level in accordance with political opportunity. Food sovereignty and climate justice are complementary political tools, and contain interchangeable elements that can traverse the spectrum from the local to the global. Today, agrarian justice movements are increasingly drawn to the framework of climate justice, while environmental/climate justice movements are likewise making headway in their work on food sovereignty—both diverging from original patterns to build political power through convergence. Fifth and finally, the carbon complex and interlinked processes have reconfigured *space* and *territory*, contributing to an unmatched form of accumulation by dispossession and the related metatheory of uneven geographical development. Such developments have reinforced the metabolic rift in the anthropocene.

The countermovement that has reconfigured itself in response to climate related resource grabs is one that is increasingly marked by elements of convergence as a means of political strategy. Some of the immediate takeaways based on new forms of political interactions between agrarian and environmental/climate justice social actors are as follows. First, water is emerging as a key point of struggle at the intersection of resource grabbing and climate change. As such, we are forced to rethink territory as it applies to social justice. This is most notable in that sea/water resources must be taken into account within the politics of the governance of territory—discussions that must also include grazing lands, forests, and other areas that are utilized by a diverse group of food providers. Second, new alliances of agrarian and environmental justice movements are resurrecting working-class debates that hinge on labor. Examples of movements that fall somewhere between labor unions based on class differentiation and agrarian movements practicing self-sufficiency with populist notions are indigenous peoples and fishers. These two constituencies need to be taken seriously, as their livelihoods move across a broader spectrum and increase the potential for increased radical political power from below. And finally, the ‘system change’ master frame shared by actors working to stop and rollback resource grabbing is a clear indication of the crisis of neoliberalism. With a parallel resurrection of right wing nationalism, racism, and the patriarchy currently sweeping across Europe and North America—itsself, in part, a punch back to a failed global economy—progressive peoples’ movements are in a position to chart the way forward before the other side turns back the clock on human and environmental rights. Where social justice alliances in opposition to trade and globalization have slipped somewhat quietly into the night, climate justice may just be the political opportunity we have been waiting for.

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