

Fair Trade and Food Sovereignty

Discovering the paths of convergence and points of divergence.
Lessons from the Palestinian case.

Word count: 26,357

Thomas Vanlerberghe

Student number: 1511087

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Jeroen Adam

Co-supervisor: Prof. Dr. Koenraad Bogaert

Academic Dissertation

A dissertation submitted to Ghent University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Conflict and Development Studies

Academic year: 2019-2020

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Fair Trade and Food Sovereignty. Discovering the paths of convergence and points of divergence. Lessons from the Palestinian case.

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to uncover the points of tension and convergence between fair trade (FT) and food sovereignty (FS). Both concepts are highly relevant today in the field of rural development studies as they both claim to be preoccupied with the wellbeing of the small farmer in the Global South who is getting ever more affected and even existentially threatened by the current global conjuncture of neoliberalism in trade and agriculture. Nevertheless, small-scale farming still accounts for 70 percent of global food production today. Despite having very similar objectives it is utmost remarkable that both FT and FS each seem to have their own firm vision and approach on how this has to be done. In a first part, I will investigate these dynamics between the two movements through a critical assessment of the key documents of each movement. Applying a discourse-theoretical approach and building on the food movements framework of Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011), this will allow to make some observations on where the movements collide with each other and, more importantly, where they concord with each other. In doing so, I will propose some recommendations for each movement and highlight the entry points for cooperation that might be of value to challenge the hegemonic constellation of the current corporate food regime. I will argue that the variables of climate change and gender form major entry points, followed by democracy and farming with moderate potential for cooperation, and lastly trade, with rather weak entry points for convergence but with significant potential when taken up seriously by both FT and FS. The second part of the dissertation is rather empirical and fieldwork-based. Building on policy reports and interviews with Palestinian NGOs in the agricultural sector (including the national FT and FS organization), I illustrate how the unique case of agriculture in Palestine contributed to the discussion in the key documents. I further presume that, under the common threat of occupation, FT and FS in Palestine might coincide better than the key documents would suggest. Ultimately, this dissertation proposes some conceptual contributions to the field of discourse theory.

Keywords: fair trade, food sovereignty, food regime, Palestine, rural development, food movements, discourse theory

Acknowledgements

I would not have been able to write this thesis without the help of some people. First and foremost, I would like to thank my promotor Jeroen Adam, who assisted me with his genuine recommendations, fruitful insights and sincere encouragements. Second, I want to thank Catherine who assisted me to get in contact with people in Palestine, as well as Tom, Thierry, Marion and Jonathan of Oxfam Belgium for helping me and sharing with me their inspiring visions. An extra word of gratitude goes out to my aunt Ellen for proofreading and Jonathan Matthysen in particular for his useful comments when reading this thesis. I am also thankful to Tinus, Marie, Sira and Alexander who were keen to read other parts. I want to thank Alexander, Torben, Wout and Elsa who assisted me in some of the interviews for a group work that was related to the topic of this thesis. Their enthusiasm worked very motivational. Also thanks to Jan Orbie and Thomas Jacobs for providing me valuable insights regarding discourse theory. Lastly, I am eternally grateful to the many people working in the Palestinian agricultural sector whom I was able to interview, and who inspired me with their hope, courage and admirable perseverance. They gave me the energy to write this thesis. A special word goes out to my friends who were there to give me eternal support when I needed them most. I dedicate this thesis to my three brothers: Maarten, Jasper and Sander. I want to thank my parents and the University of Ghent for giving me this opportunity. In solidarity with the people of the Palestinian land.

*And on our eyelashes the grass of Galilee,
This land absorbs the skins of martyrs,
This land promises wheat and stars.*

(...)

*It is time for me to exchange the word for the deed
Time to prove my love for the land and for the nightingale:
For in this age the weapon devours the guitar
And in the mirror I have been fading more and more
Since at my back a tree began to grow.*

In "Diary of a Palestinian Wound", by Mahmoud Darwish

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Abbreviations

CFR	Corporate Food Regime (term introduced by McMichael (2009))
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
DT	Discourse theory (also called poststructuralist discourse theory (PSDT))
IOF	Israeli Occupation Forces
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
FI	Fairtrade International (Before: FLO. Focuses on the certification of food products)
FS	Food Sovereignty
FSM	Food Sovereignty Movement
FSP	Food Sovereignty Pillar (plural: FSPs)
FT	Fair Trade (in the broad sense, not only the FLO-certificated products)
FTM	Fair Trade Movement
FTO	Fair Trade Organization
FTP	Fair Trade Principle (plural: FTPs)
LVC	La Vía Campesina
LOA	Logic of antagonism
LOD	Logic of difference
LOE	Logic of equivalence (see also: teleologic of difference (TLOE))
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture (in Palestine)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PARC	Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees (a Palestinian agricultural NGO)
PAS	Palestinian Agricultural Sector
PFU	Palestinian Farmers' Union (a Palestinian agricultural NGO, focused on advocacy)
PNGO	Palestinian Non-Governmental Org. (here: the agricultural NGOs, as UAWC, PARC, ...)
SOG	Sindyanna of Galilea, an Israeli Fair Trade Organization
ssf	Small-scale farmer(s)
TLOE	Teleologic of equivalence
TNCs	Transnational Corporations (see also: agribusiness, multinationals, monopolies)
UAWC	Union of Agricultural Work Committees (a Palestinian agricultural NGO)
UN	United Nations
WB	West Bank
WTO	The World Trade Organization (In the same vein as TNCs, part of the CFR)

1. Introduction and problem statement

Our food system is in crisis. The current era of neoliberalism in the world's agriculture results in the enclosure of land, seeds and markets. It severely weakens our global ecosystem and biodiversity, and threatens to destroy the livelihood of most of the planet's 2.5 billion small-scale farmers (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013, p. 97). While on one side of the globe obesity is growing, the number of hungry people is increasing on the other. Even more disturbing is that among these 800 million people going hungry, the majority are small-scale farmers (World Health Organization, 2020; Arsenault, 2015). The current COVID-19 pandemic only intensifies the vulnerabilities and inadequacies of our global food system as at least another 80 million people may go hungry in 2020 (UNICEF, 2020). These developments hinder our ability to cope with climate change (Holt-Giménez & Altieri, 2013, p. 97). This neoliberal food and agricultural system in which we live today – the corporate food regime as McMichael (2012) calls it – only contributes and further exacerbates the alarming effects of the climate crisis. In fact, these crises are far from exceptional. Instead, they are becoming a creeping normality of the current food regime. To put an end to these practices, our global food system must change. This implies regime change (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011, p. 132). Therefore, it is of utmost importance to find alternatives to this regime and democratize our food system. According to Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011), a strategic alliance between progressive and radical food movements, of which fair trade and food sovereignty are arguably the most important ones, have the potential to build a strong countermovement that could eventually challenge the current food regime.

Despite their considerable clout as international movements operating in our global food system, the empirical and conceptual relations between fair trade (FT) and food sovereignty (FS) are underexplored in academic research (Bacon, 2015). When adhering to Holt-Giménez and Shattuck's call for an alliance and simultaneously building on their conceptual (food movements) framework, such a comparison might be of great value in the light of finding entry points for possible cooperation in the future. Therefore, the central question in this thesis will be how FT and FS can build a strategic alliance in order to challenge the current corporate food regime (CFR). Of course, this question is far too abstract and broad to give a coherent answer. Guiding questions that might underpin this central problem statement are the following. What are the points of divergence and convergence between FT and FS? What are the common themes addressed by both FT and FS? Where do these themes concord and differ? What are possible entry points? To give an answer to these questions, I will focus on the discourse of both movements, more specifically on their key documents. For FT I will investigate the International Fair Trade Charter of 2018, and for FS the Nyéléni Declaration of 2007, as these texts are considered the key documents by their advocates. In comparing both key documents I will apply discourse theory, a qualitative method that has its foundations in the pioneering work of Laclau and Mouffe (1985). This unique analytical tool is especially useful when profoundly scrutinizing the discourse of actors to eventually relate it to the political level. It further allows me to conduct research that is both descriptive and exploratory in nature. I will delve deeper into its working mechanisms in

the chapter about methodology. Additionally, these observations on FT and FS will be related to and tested on the highly unique case of Palestine. Can they contribute something to the agricultural sector in Palestine? Or better, can the case of FT and FS in Palestine add something to the concepts of FT and FS (in the light of future cooperation)? In answering this second set of questions, I will draw on policy documents, literature and online interviews I conducted with several representatives of Palestinian agricultural organizations (PNGOs). It must be said that this second part on Palestine is rather exploratory in character and does not form the focal point of this dissertation.

By comparing the discourse of FT and FS, this research aims to contribute to literature on the food movements, and more specifically to the existing gap in the comparative literature on FT and FS. This research might be innovative as it is arguably the first time that discourse theory is applied in comparative research on FT and FS. Furthermore, by using this upcoming method of discourse theory, I will not only reflect on the additional value of applying discourse theory when comparing FT and FS, but I will also look at what this comparison can eventually contribute to the relatively new field of discourse theory in academic research.

I will end this introductory chapter by providing background information on the conceptual framework that forms the backbone for the central problem statement of this dissertation. Besides, I will also provide some clarity on the concepts of food security, food sovereignty and fair trade, as well as the broader movements of the latter two. Thereafter I will give an overview of the comparative literature on FT and FS. In the second chapter on methodology I will present my research design as well as some critical reflections on the sources and on conducting online fieldwork. This chapter will also bring clarity on some of the basic concepts on the method of discourse theory for the next chapter. The third chapter is the actual corpus and consists of three parts. A first part assesses the core values of FT and FS and draws some empirical observations on which the second part will be structured. This second part entails a more profound discourse-theoretical analysis of the key documents as this will allow to construct some sort of dialogue between FT and FS in which points of convergence and divergence are uncovered. A third part shows how the case of FT and FS in Palestine relates to the discussion of the key documents. Lastly, in the fourth chapter that is the conclusion, I will reflect on the central problem statement and discuss the possible entry points for cooperation as well as the obstacles that may hinder this cooperation between FT and FS.

1.1 The conceptual framework

The conceptual framework on which this dissertation builds, is proposed by Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011). By combining Polanyi's concept of a "double movement" with McMichael and Friedmann's food regime thesis, Holt-Giménez and Shattuck propose a valuable framework to analyse the different trends within the current food regime and how they relate to each other. The reason why

many researchers might have skipped a comparative assessment of FT and FS is because many conceive of them as a movement that is trade-based (FT), and the other as food/peasant-based (FS), which is of course true to a certain extent. However, if we conceive of FT and FS as social (food) movements that both engage in food and aim to improve the well-being of small farmers this might be overcome. In other words, if we consider both FT and FS as countermovements of the current neoliberal regime, a more workful approach arises. The food movements framework is especially useful in that it allows to juxtapose and unite FT and FS in a countermovement that has the potential to challenge the current hegemonic food regime. To better understand this framework, I will first explain Polanyi's concepts of a double movement and countermovement. Then I discuss the food regime theses, to eventually come back to the framework of Holt-Giménez and Shattuck.

Polanyi (1944) speaks of a so-called double movement which occurs when there is a period of market liberalization, i.e. a self-regulating market that is based on free trade. This ultimately leads to the domination of the market over the fabric of society, by which the latter is almost automatically obliged to obey to the rule of the market. In this case, the market is no longer embedded in society as it was before, instead, it is the other way around. As a reaction, the social field and all the social relations that it entails, are increasingly becoming pressured which causes them to form a countermovement that will oppose the logic of the market and aims to re-embed the market back into society. In short, vital for the countermovement is the protection of society (Polanyi, 1944, p. 136). Today, under the neoliberal era of liberalization, we could speak of several countermovements, somehow (still) very dispersed, that rose as a reaction to the CFR. Eventually, both FT and FS can be framed in such a movement.

In the food regime analysis, first proposed by McMichael and Friedmann (1989), the authors combine political economy, political ecology and historical analysis to explain how certain tendencies in food production and consumption are central to the reproduction and functioning of capitalism. The food regime is a rule-governed structure of food production and consumption on a world scale (McMichael, 2009, p. 142). It is valued for its analytical utility, serving as a lens to investigate global food systems. We can distinguish three food regimes. In a first food regime (1870-1930s) raw materials and cheap food was massively exported from the settler colonies (such as the US) to Europe, where wheat and meat formed the dietary staples for the European working class (Friedmann and McMichael, 1989, pp. 99-100). While the first food regime was dominated by British hegemony, a second food regime (1950s-1970s) was under domination of the US. This regime re-routed the flow of food from South to the North as the US' food surpluses were now transported to the South under the pretext of food aid, thus creating food dependency (McMichael, 2009, p. 141). This period was characterized by the Green Revolution, which meant a global spread of industrial agriculture, also in the Global South. This new market-oriented form of industrial agriculture weakened the peasantry in favour of increasingly powerful landowners and pushed many rural people to the urban slums. A third food regime (1980s - present) is the corporate food regime (henceforth CFR), proposed by McMichael (2009). This regime emerged from the economic shocks of the 1970s and 1980s and ushered in the current period of

neoliberal capitalist expansion. The hegemonic power in this third regime is in hands of a few Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and the agribusiness that have a monopoly on our world agriculture (McMichael, 2005, pp. 292-295). Their hegemony is further underpinned by rules of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) implemented by institutions as the World Trade Organizations (WTO), the World Bank and the IMF (McMichael, 2009, pp. 288-293).

By uniting both Polanyi's double movement and McMichael's CFR, Shattuck and Holt-Giménez bring up a whole new perspective of how we can conceive of the (four) different trends in our current food system. Therein they distinguish two tendencies who rather reinforce the current CFR. Here the authors mark a neoliberal trend firstly, and secondly a reformist trend. The authors refer to the discourse of the first trend as a corporate-driven *food enterprise discourse* that is engrained in ideologies of economic liberalism and free-market fundamentalism. The reformist trend employs a *food security discourse* and seeks to mainstream less environmentally and socially damaging alternatives into the extant market structures. On the other hand, they discern two food movements who critically question the food regime: a third, progressive trend and a fourth, radical trend. In the third and fourth trend, respectively FT and FS are situated. The progressive tendency is primarily based in northern countries and is possibly the largest and fastest growing trend in the food movement. They apply a *food justice discourse* based on empowerment orientation directed to the poor. The radical trend goes back to the root problems of the CFR as it advocates for structural changes to food and agriculture. With their *food sovereignty discourse*, they argue for entitlement and the redistribution of wealth in the food system through agrarian reform. Ultimately, the authors state that, when building a strategic progressive-radical alliance (between FT and FS), it might gather enough clout to bring about significant transformative change in the CFR.

It is worth noting that FT is not the only movement within the progressive trend, nor is FS the only one in the radical trend. In the progressive trend we find several other initiatives such as the slow food movement. In the radical one we find La Vía Campesina (the intellectual mother of FS), as well as other agrarian-based farmers' movements and many food justice and rights-based movements. Besides, neither is their position in these trends fixed, but rather fluid instead. When taking the broader fair trade movement (FTM) for instance, we note that there is a mainstream FT and an alternative FT movement. The first one is Fair Trade USA and is situated in the reformist trend, perpetuating the CFR. The second one is more progressive such as Fairtrade International (FI) and the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) which I will take as object of study in this research. It is important to note that when I use the abbreviation "FT", I am primarily referring to this progressive trend and more specifically to the FI and the WFTO.

However, some groups of the progressive trend can shift towards reform and neoliberalism, or towards more radical and class-based engagement (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011, p. 133). In fact, this implies that the progressive trend is a pivotal trend or key player in the relationship between the CFR and the food movement. This means that reformist-progressive alliances are likely to threaten and weaken the

food movement.¹ Instead, strong strategic progressive-radical alliances are needed to strengthen it. Whether these alliances will trigger substantive changes to the food regime will depend largely on whether the pivotal groups within the progressive trend ally themselves with reformists or with radicals (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011, p. 136). This implies that FT among others, has a crucial role to play in this regard. The transformation of the CFR would demand a major shift from societies embedded in the market economy to markets and economies that are re-embedded in society – or to put it in the words of FT: “people and planet first” (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 15).

1.2 A note on the concepts

Food security

As The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations stated in their final report of the World Food Summit in 1996, food security exists “*when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life*” (FAO, 1996). The FAO further identified the four pillars of food security as availability, access, utilization, and stability.

Food sovereignty

However, food security says nothing about where food comes from or how it is produced. This criticism was taken up by La Vía Campesina (LVC) and its disciples when they raised the concept of food sovereignty, notably at the same Food Security Conference in Rome in 1996. LVC was founded in 1993 in Mons, Belgium, by a group of farmers’ representatives – women and men – from different continents. At that time, agricultural policies and agribusinesses were becoming globalized and small farmers needed to develop a common vision and struggle to defend it. Small farmers’ organizations also wanted to have their voices heard and participate directly in the decisions that were affecting their lives. As of today, LVC is arguably the largest international peasant movement that represents around 200 million small and medium size farmers, landless people, indigenous people, rural women and youth, migrants and agricultural workers from around the world (LVC, 2020). At the Forum for Food Sovereignty in Mali, 2007, about 500 delegates from more than 80 countries adopted the “Declaration of Nyéléni” which describes FS as follows:

¹ These reformist-progressive alliances increasingly came to the fore as a response to the food crisis in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis with an upcoming discourse around sustainable *and* industrial agriculture, free trade *and* certified fair trade.

“Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations. (...) It offers a strategy to resist and dismantle the current corporate trade and food regime, and directions for food, farming, pastoral and fisheries systems determined by local producers. Food sovereignty prioritises local and national economies and markets and empowers peasant and family farmer-driven agriculture” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 9).

FS includes the right to food security, but moves beyond the concept by recognizing “food as a fundamental right of all peoples and identifies it as the common ground, starting point and guiding theme for achieving economic, social and political justice” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 13, 16). In literature FS is considered as a broader concept than food security as well. Food is not merely seen as a commodity, but instead it promotes peasant access to land and nations’ rights to protect their producers from dumping (Edelman, 2005, p. 339). In doing so, Schanbacher (2010, p. 74) states that FS and the food sovereignty movements (FSM) present a challenging critique of the current neoliberal and developmental-oriented concept of food security. Yet, this does not necessarily imply that FS the adversary of food security, rather it is the premise for genuine food security (McMichael, 2005, p. 290).

Fair trade

The FTM is a complex node of several FT organizations (FTOs), campaigner and companies, trading practices, a philosophy and labelling organizations (such as the FI and WFTO). The latter manages to bring together more than 1.7 million farmers and workers, around 1.600 producer organizations, and countless trade unions consumers and campaigners from all over the world. Additionally, the FT supply chains help to connect primarily producers from the Global South with consumers in the North (FI, 2020, p. 6, 23). Fridell (2004, pp. 12-13) ascribes two phases of the FTM. A first phase (1950s-1988) has its origins at the end of the 1940s when Christian NGOs in Europe and North America started selling handicrafts that came from producers of the Global South. In Europe, these efforts were led by Oxfam and a Dutch FTO. This steadily led to a growth of the movement. Fridell distinguishes a second phase that started in 1988 as the FTM underwent a significant re-orientation in order to comply to the demands of the capitalist world market. This phase was precluded by the establishment of the first FT label in 1988, Max Havelaar. This caused a mainstreaming of FT as many products with a FT certification were now sold in supermarkets (Fridell, 2004, p. 15). This caused a significant increase in the sales of FT products as well of the FTM, but on the other hand the FTM was now more inclined to the reformist trend as it was operating in the global food market. This growth led the different FTOs to establish the Fairtrade Labelling Organization International, today known as Fairtrade International (FI). Another important player in the FTM was established in 1989 and is now known as the WFTO. It is a membership-based organization that is responsible for the advocacy of FT as well as the monitoring

system for FTOs (Sarcauga, 2016). In 2001, the main global networks of the FTM agreed the following definition of FT:

"Fair trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair trade organizations, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade" (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 11).

1.3 Literature review

The literature on FT and FS is vast and voluminous. Both started receiving considerable academic attention starting from the 2000s and steadily incrementing by the end of the decade (Barros et al., 2015, p. 329; Edelman, 2014, pp. 964-965) This dissertation cannot and does not pretend to cover the burgeoning literature on FT and FS. Instead, I will here primarily focus on the literature that has both FT and FS as their central objects of study and pay special attention to how FT and FS relate to each other in this literature.

The most relevant work in this respect might be that of Bacon (2015). In his study on the relations between food security, FT and FS, he claims that comparative research on these topics are underexplored. In his case on an influential Nicaraguan FT cooperative he found that most farmers and cooperative leaders consider these projects as compatible, not contradictory. Therefore, he argues that the FSM should not overlook tools that enable fairer avenues of market access. He further argues that the diversified FT coffee-exporting smallholders could be part of a FS agenda. Besides, certain cooperatives can enhance both FT and FS goals. Bacon thus sees some potential between FT and FS drawing on his case study, however he points out that only specific versions of FT can be part of the FS agenda. When interpreted via de food movements framework, Bacon is referring here to the progressive side of FT which has some radical tendencies.

Burnett and Murphy (2014) might contribute in the assessment of FT and FS as they argue that trade remains central to sustaining the livelihoods of small farmers, including peasants in the FSM. Therefore, the authors allege that the FSM's ambiguous position on trade might exclude the needs and interests of small farmers whose needs depend on international trade. The authors recommend FS to further develop its position on trade, as this might be of strategic importance. This recommendation entails an opening for FT and will be taken into account when comparing FT and FS in the third chapter.

The latest work of Burnett (2017) investigates the efforts of both FT and FS to challenge international trade governance and how the seemingly divergent strategies of these movements are complementary to achieving economic justice (Burnett, 2017, p. v). In this regard, Burnett contends that FS, by resisting the extant system, has an “outside strategy”. FT on the other side, mainly focuses on existing opportunities within the system, and thus takes up a collaborative, “inside strategy”. This “inside strategy” might relate to what Fridell (2006) says about FT as a movement that operates “within and against the market”. She concludes that both movements’ strategies are necessary to change the international agricultural trade regime, and neither alone is sufficient. Lastly, instead of evaluating the movements in isolation, she makes a strong plea to consider the contributions they bring as a broader collection of movements and activities.

The concern of Burnett and Murphy (2014) pointing to FS’s silent stance regarding the question of small producers who depend on export production for their livelihoods, is taken up in the work of Soper (2016). In her work, Soper is critical of FS’s discourse that often simplifies the peasantry and thus often overlooks the interests of export-oriented peasants. Drawing on her case study in the Andean countryside, she found that small farmers engaging in FT networks often perceive of these markets as more fair than local markets prioritized by FS advocates. The export market provides them a more viable livelihood as local market is considered unfair because of oversupply and low fluctuating prices. Other works that found similar outcomes as Soper, are found in the work of Bacon (2005) and Jaffee (2014). This evidence implies that FS might not always be considered as the most viable way to go for small farmers and that FT can be a good alternative.

This finding by Soper is in line with Schanbacher (2010) who is convinced that FT could help FS in achieving its objectives. In fact, Schanbacher is not reluctant to a potential cooperation between FT and FS, at least when it comes to certain aspects. According to Schanbacher, the FT goals are inextricably connected to the same themes that FS activists address in their struggle against IMF conditionalities. FT is also a like-minded ally of FS since it denounces all forms of food dumping. However, FT is being more at risk of undergoing corporate takeover, and this weakness should be considered. Nonetheless, he is convinced that FT is an important player in the global food system that could help the FSM achieving its goals (Schanbacher, 2010, pp. 116-118).

More in contrast with these arguments in favour of the international market is the work of Babin (2015). By drawing on the Costa Rican case, he demonstrates that FS’ practice around farming, i.e. agroecology, might be more efficient and viable for peasants in times of crisis than FT. He illustrates that agroecological practices, when addressing agricultural development crises, efficiently cut costs and might be a better strategy than one that focuses on enhancing yields or establishing price supports, such as FT.

To conclude, most of these authors argue that FT could make some considerable contributions to FS regarding certain aspects that both have in common and their striving towards common goals or

opposing the same problematic issues. Especially the research of Burnett and Murphy (2014) implicitly states that FS' absent position on trade could be further elaborated by FT. In some cases (Bacon, 2015) FT might even be implemented into the FS agenda or form a viable alternative for unfair local trade (Soper, 2015). The only work that is in contrast with these studies is the case study of Babin (2015) who indicates that FS might be more apt than FT in providing a resilient alternative for peasants' livelihood in context of rural crises. As a significant part of these insights are drawn from case studies, this might mean that how FT and FS relate to each other is very context dependent. For my research, this might imply that not only investigating FS' position on trade will be of importance, but also investigating the Palestinian case to see how FT and FS relate to each other in this unique context and how they might contribute to the general concepts of FT and FS.

2. Methodology and research design

In this methodological chapter, I will first turn to the research questions that underpin this research that is qualitative in character. Then I will discuss how I collected my data and make some critical reflections on it and, lastly, I will explain more clearly how the method of discourse theory (DT) works and how it will be applied in my research.

2.1 Research questions

The central question is (1) how FT and FS can build a strategic alliance in order to challenge the current CFR. This question, building on the food movements framework invites to make reflections on the hegemonic level. These kind of reflections on the hegemonic level are further encouraged by DT analysis. In order to answer this question, I will pose a few sub-questions:

- (2) What are the points of divergence and convergence in the discourse of FT and FS based on their key documents?
- (2 bis) In other words: what are the themes and topics they (do not) have in common in their discourse? (Note that this implies an inductive method which is characteristic of DT)
- (3) Do these common themes form possible entry points for cooperation? Where do they concord and differ internally on these topics?
(This will be a useful central question in the assessment of the key documents and it will be answered by applying DT and the use of *logics*)
- (4) Based on this, what are the recommendations in the light of future cooperation?

Regarding the case of Palestine, I pose the following questions:

- (5) What can a comparison of FT and FS contribute to FT and FS in Palestine?
- (6) How can the case of FT and FS in Palestine contribute to the concepts FT and FS in general?

It should be noted that these questions will be answered through the method of DT, which invites to obtain answers inductively. In doing so, the reader should keep in mind that DT rejects to find a final or absolute truth. Instead, DT interpretations can only be regarded as potentially true (Howarth & Torfing, 2005, p. 328). By conducting research that partly focuses on Palestine, I am also partly drawing on the case study method. The importance of the case study is that critical cases such as the one of Palestine can be an important means to test and build theory (Howarth & Torfing, 2005, pp. 330-332). By including the extreme or deviant case that Palestine is, it might contribute to exploring new frontiers of the research subject, i.e. a comparison of FT and FS (Mortelmans, 2013, p. 159). That is exactly what I aim to do by involving the Palestinian case in my research. The implication of involving extreme cases is that they may not adhere to the normal course of events when FT and FS are in place on a practical level.

2.2 Data collection and reflection on the limitations

The data collection for assessing the discourses of FT and FS was rather evident. To compare their discourse, I drew on what Holt-Giménez and Shattuck (2011) considered as their key documents, as well as what policy advisors of Oxfam Fair Trade in Belgium indicated as the most important and representative document of FI and WFTO. In doing so, I eventually ended up comparing the FT Charter (2018) with the Nyéléni Declaration (2007). Despite that the Nyéléni Declaration dates back from 2007, many still consider it as relevant to the current context. As there are many other, primarily smaller FT-related labelling organizations, I decided to focus on FI and WFTO as they are considered the largest ones who have the biggest clout within the broader FTM, and subsequently these two large organizations could be considered as the main representatives of the FTM. Their visions are gathered in the FT Charter. However, sometimes I supplemented the FT Charter with some other key documents regarding a certain topic (gender for instance) to get a clearer view on their stance. These documents were found on the website of each movement. The Nyéléni Declaration seemed more detailed and comprehensive, so it was unnecessary to supplement it with additional sources.

It must be noted however, that the FT Charter might have a Eurocentric character, as it is its founders are of European descent. It was also in Europe where the FI and WFTO further evolved and where most of the FT products are sold. Even though WFTO tries to diversify its staff, still many of them have a (western) “European identity”. This flaw is not that present in the FSM as it is founded by farmers’ representatives from four different continents. Especially the key document of FS, the Nyéléni Declaration overcame this pitfall by gathering more than 500 delegates from all over the world, both farmers and their representatives, in Mali to make up the document.

The last part of the research results, the part on Palestine, is based on policy documents (such as annual reports) of the PNGOs, as well as semi-structured interviews with representatives of the PNGOs. This method of “triangulation” allows the sources to supplement each other and thus increases the quality of its data (Mortelmans, 2013, p. 343). I will now turn to the collection of the interviews.

In the context of this master’s program and dissertation I was planning to go on fieldwork in Palestine in April 2020. Accordingly, this would form the basis for the empirical observations that will be drawn in the last section on Palestine. However, due the hindering circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 crisis, I was forced to conduct these interviews online through Zoom or Skype. Nevertheless, I managed to conduct 20 interviews with 12 different respondents (see appendix) through the method of snowball sampling. Via an intermediary who works for Oxfam Belgium I managed to get in contact with other colleagues of Oxfam Belgium as well as with the Oxfam office in Ramallah, Palestine. In turn, the latter brought me in touch with representatives of the PNGOs.

These interviews were semi-structured, open ended and in-depth in character. I structured the interviews around the “IKAPEG”-method proposed by Stroeken (2019). In doing so, I was able to order the interview questions in advance around the variables that tested a person’s *Identity, Knowledge, Attitude, Position, Evolution and Group relations* regarding the Palestinian agricultural sector (PAS). Out of these twelve respondents, four were representatives and policy advisors of Oxfam Belgium who are experts in the field of FT and FS and sometimes even had substantial knowledge on the case of Palestine. Eight respondents were from Palestine and primarily have a leading role in a PNGO. Most of them are experts regarding the PAS and some of them are members of the broader FTM and FSM. The data I collected from these interviews are based on the notes I took during the interviews, as well as from the recordings which allowed me to relisten them and to complete significant gaps in the notes. The perks of conducting online interviews are that they facilitated me to efficiently take notes on my computer while listening and still making virtual eye contact with my interviewee. Despite the delicate political situation under which Palestinians live (and the risk of being bugged or arrested for almost no reason), all interviewees allowed me to record the conversations. This was agreed in the beginning of each interview through oral informed consent. The length of these interviews ranged from forty minutes (often due to the time limit on Zoom) up to two hours and a half. Despite the difficulties of online interviewing and the delicate political context in Palestine, most interviews went very well as many respondents were very open-hearted and helpful. Many of them were thankful and willing to be able to share their story about the many struggles that Palestinian(s) (farmers) daily encounter. Besides, I also let the main PNGOs fill in a questionnaire (see appendix) where I will tell more about in the research results. Since I gathered a load of information from these interviews and questionnaires, I regret the limitedness of this paper as I am convinced that one is able to write a full-fledged dissertation based on the fruitful insights alone that can be distilled from the interviews.

As only two out of twelve of my interviewees were women, there might be a gender bias which could be pitfall that should be considered. Another concern is that my fieldwork is based on elite interviews. This means that the people I interviewed, representatives of influential PNGOs, have a certain access to power and decision-making. Despite that it is often difficult to arrange an elite interview (many of them are very occupied), they have the advantage of getting access to valuable inside information (Mortelmans, 2013, p. 286). Besides, the hierarchic position that they hold might have a positive influence on the quality and accuracy of their answers. A pitfall could be that the information that they provide is merely a “public version” of their intern policy and thus leaving out some crucial information. Although I did not have the feeling that they were withholding any information, on the contrary. Due to the restrictions of online fieldwork I was not able to interview any small-scale farmers in Palestine. Also the gender and elite-biased character of the interviews must be seen in the light of the impediments of online fieldwork.

2.3 A note on discourse theory

Discourse theory (DT) is an analytical and problem-driven method that was first elaborated by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) and is considered a useful toolbox that can be applied on a multitude of research areas, although this is not something that has been largely recognized in cultural studies. In that regard, my research could as well be a contribution to this issue. Besides having a strong poststructuralist and post-marxist character (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 59), DT draws on the premise that (the existing) discourse is constructed through hegemonic struggle and is co-extensive with the social (Howarth & Torfing, 2005, pp. 9-15).

Without delving too deep into DT's ins and outs, I will here mainly give an overview of the most important analytical tools of DT that will also be of value in comparing the discourse of FT and FS as will become clear in the next chapter. Important to know is that DT contends that a discourse consists of empty signifiers that are structured by nodal points (words that frequently reoccur in a discourse around a certain empty signifier). An example is the notion "democracy" which could be considered as an empty signifier in that it means a lot, but in the meantime almost nothing when considering it is a contested concept that is defined differently by several (political) actors. Hence, in the discourse of one actor, this empty signifier might be filled with meaning through nodal points like "elections", "parliament", and "representative". For another these might be "grassroots", "participatory" and "community". On its turn, there are several signifiers that form the discursive network around a nodal point.

These signifiers relate to each other and to the nodal point and itself in two unique manners (Jacobs, 2018, pp. 6-7). One is the logic of equivalence (LOE)², which connects these signifiers with each other. This is ultimately equal to what Mouffe (2018) calls a "chain of equivalence". Another is the logic of difference (LOD) which separates them from one another. When reflected on the social field, the LOD makes the world around us more complex by introducing more nuances and differences, while the LOE renders the social sphere simpler. A third logic is that of antagonism. Although it is not coined as such in DT, I will call it a LOA for the sake of conceptual symmetry. A LOA, in short, implies that the articulation of elements as moments frequently leads to a structural dualism, where two large discursive structures will stand opposite to each other, dividing the social world into two antagonistic camps. Antagonism is further framed by Laclau and Mouffe as both the reason why all structures are inherently unstable and dislocated, and as the provider of temporary and contingent stability (Jacobs, 2018, p. 8). This is in line with the premise where DT starts from: that the (hegemonic) discourse and the social world around us is contingent, i.e. it could always have been different. In other words, "hegemony presupposes an open and clear field that can be hegemonized in an infinite number of ways" (Jacobs, 2018, p. 3). In short, these three logics within DT will be important tools in my assessment of comparing FT and FS.

² To put it in more clearly, the LOEs eventually generate a "chain of equivalence".

All these 'logics' are so-called middle-range concepts that serve to bridge the gap between the empirical case at hand (the ontic level) (e.g. a certain phrase), and the abstract theoretical principles of DT (the ontological level). In the end, these logics also make it easier to apply DT to a concrete situation by describing this situation with a set of concepts (Jacobs, 2020, p. 20). A pitfall of DT is that the analytical activity of finding logics is not guided by straightforward methodical instructions or checklists of conditions for the identification of a logic. Logics are situational and subject to the interpretation of the analyst applying it (Glynos & Howarth 2007, p. 152). However, the DT approach that is central here allows to compare FT and FS in a consistent and authentic fashion. As this starting point is rather exploratory, this does not mean that the observations I will draw from them are unique and nowhere to be found in other literature. Instead, I hope to formulate some valuable insights through a DT vernacular.

3. Research results: comparing fair trade and food sovereignty

3.1 Comparing the core principles

Before starting off with a more profound discourse-theoretical analysis of the key documents of both movements (see next section), I deem it necessary to have a look at the core values of each movement. This allows the reader to get some main insights on the values of each movement, but also to get used to some discourse-theoretical approaches. Below, one will find different logics (LOE, LOD, LOA) that I discussed earlier. These logics will prove to be useful when analysing the discourse of both movements. Firstly, the logics will be applied *within* the discourse of both FT and FS, i.e. DT on the *intradiscursive* level. Then later, some reflections will be made on the logics that are applicable *between* the discourses of FT and FS, i.e. on the *interdiscursive* level. Lastly, this might allow to make some reflections on the third, more abstract level of hegemony, and provides a window to look at the potential entry points for convergence between the two movements (see next section). This third level eventually relates back to the food movements framework. The logics thus serve as useful levers to make reflections on the three levels I just mentioned.

I begin with the FT principles and then move on to the FS pillars. This order is particularly useful when we keep the broader food movements framework in mind. Hence, starting with FT and moving on to FS, thus moving further to the right in the framework (and more to the left in the ideological spectrum), will allow the reader to eventually denote a shift from more moderate progressive demands (of FT) to more radical demands (of FS). Seen the fact that FT is considered as the pivotal player in building these progressive-radical alliances, I will primarily point out the reformist (or radical) inclinations of FT.

In order to save space and avoid repetition of certain words while explaining a certain logic, the specific word that is central to the logic, or where the logic starts from, will be put between quotation marks and emphasis will be added. The word *marginalized* for example will be transformed into "*marginalized*". The other words that are part of the logic and proceed from this "*central word*" (or empty signifier if you will) will be emphasized (in *italics*), as for instance in the word *women* (which could be considered as a nodal point). When there is no central word in a LOE, the words will be put in *italics*. A concrete example in a given phrase: "In the policies of the organization, the "*marginalized*" are supported in their daily practices, these "*marginalized people*" include *small farmers*, *women*, and the *elderly*. Thus, in this example, there is a LOE between "*marginalized*", *small farmers*, *women*, and the *elderly*. For the same purpose of saving space, some minor LOEs or other logics will not be mentioned but might be noticed by the reader when reading carefully.

The 10 Principles of Fair Trade

In 2017, the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) published and prescribed 10 principles that Fair Trade Organizations (FTOs) “must follow in their day-to-day work” (WFTO, 2017, pp. 1-4). The WFTO ensures that these principles are upheld by carrying out monitoring.³

1. Creating Opportunities for Economically Disadvantaged Producers

In this first principle FT makes clear what its target group is, i.e. the “*marginalized*” and “*disadvantaged*” and “*small producers*” who are grouped in cooperatives. The key part of FT’s aim is that *poverty reduction* and *income security* of these marginalized producers will be achieved through “*trade*”, so that they can move *towards economic self-sufficiency* and *ownership*. Two LOEs can be distinguished here. A first one is between the marginalized, disadvantaged and small producers. A second LOE is found between trade, poverty reduction, income security, economic self-sufficiency and ownership. This second LOE clearly reflects the vision and aim of FT.

2. Transparency and Accountability

FT ensures that it is transparent in its management and commercial relations and promises accountability to all its stakeholders. In these relations, FT proposes *participatory* ways to involve *producers, members, and employees* into this “*decision-making*” process. This second principle forms a LOE between decision-making, participation and producers and employees. Ultimately, this LOE implies the democratic character present in the working methods of FT.

3. Fair Trading Practices

According to FT, profits should not be maximized at the expense of marginalized small producers and unfair competition should always be excluded. Hence, when FT says that it does not exclude profit gains and competition, these can only occur when they are fair and not at the expense of small producers. In this third principle, FT articulates a logic of difference (LOD) and this might be directed as an implicit criticism towards the logic of the market, i.e. the neoliberal and reformist trend.

Additionally, FT is concerned with the social, economic and environmental well-being of the marginalized producers. In the rest of the paragraph, some LOEs are made within and among the empty signifiers “*social*” and “*economic well-being*” of the small producers (cf. *infra*). The environmental well-being is rather left out here but will appear mainly in principle 10.

³ In the analysis below, the WFTO will henceforth be referred to with simpler abbreviations such as FT and the FTM. I add to this that the meaning of the concept of FT is determined by many organizations, of which WFTO and FI are the most important ones.

In both FT food and handicraft products, a *pre-payment* of at least 50 percent can be made on request. This is a mechanism to provide income security to the small producers so that their *income* is less of a season-bound issue. When an order is cancelled, producers are *compensated* for the work already done. Regarding the economic well-being, there is a LOE between pre-payment, compensation, and income.

The FTO maintains a long-term relationship based on *solidarity* that contribute to the *growth* of FT. In these trading relationships, the parties involved seek to *increase the volume of trade*, by which the *producers' incomes* are expected to *grow*, as well as FT itself. In this part, another economic well-being LOE is formed wherein the vision and aim of FT is also reflected very well. It aims to increase the volumes of trade, and this is something that will benefit the farmers' income, as well as the growth of the FTM. This reasoning (in contrast with the LOD above) resonates very much with the hegemonic logic of the market and might thus only increase FT producers' dependency on it – or at least that is what FS advocates might think about it.

In all the above, the *“cultural identity”* and *traditional skills* of producers should be protected in the process of producing *food and handicrafts*. Here we find a social well-being LOE between the protection of cultural identity, traditional skills of small producers and their food products.

4. Fair Payment

For FT, a *“fair payment”* is *negotiated and agreed by all* via dialogue and *participation* and means *equal pay* for equal work by *men and women*. This fair payment thus builds a LOE with between dialogue, negotiation, participation, agreement by all, and equal pay. Within “equal pay” one might detect another implicit LOE between “men” and “women”. Eventually, we can also say there is a LOE between the gender and democratic character of this phrase. According to FT, a fair payment is made up of fair prices and fair wages based on a local living wage.

5. Ensuring no Child Labor and Forced Labor

In this regard, FT complies with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and national and local laws. Any case wherein children are involved is always disclosed and monitored by FT.

6. Commitment to Non-Discrimination, Gender Equity and Women's Economic Empowerment and Freedom of Association

FT warrants its organizations will not discriminate between the employment or remuneration based on race, national *origin, religion, disability, gender, sexuality, disability or political affiliation*. FT also guarantees the right of all employees to form and join trade unions and to bargain collectively. This statement clearly entails a democratic character. In doing so FT acknowledges diversity within its organization, and thus we might also uncover an implicit LOE between these groups that make up the diversity in the movement.

The organization supports gender equality that assures that men and women should have access to the resources that they need to be productive. Women are enabled to become active members of the organization and take up leadership positions. This LOE creates a strong nexus between gender and the democratic, in which gender equality is connected with words such as “access to resources” (in order to be productive), “active membership” and “leadership roles”.

7. Ensuring Good Working Conditions

FTOs adhere to local and national laws and ILO conventions on health, safety, and working conditions, tries to raise awareness around them and improve them.

8. Providing Capacity Building

FT seeks to support *small producers* in improving their management skills, *production capabilities* and “access to markets” *local, regional, international, fair trade* and even *mainstream* as appropriate. FT intermediaries should support to develop the capacity of marginalized producers they work with. The LOE that is constituted here is that productivity should be instigated and hence be channelized through markets. Note here that these markets include local and regional markets, as well as international mainstream (non-FT) markets.

9. Promoting Fair Trade

FT raises awareness on the aim of FT and the need for greater justice in world trade. Advertising and marketing techniques happen in an honest way.

10. Climate Crisis and Protecting our Planet

Up until recently, this tenth principle was called “Respect for the Environment”, but during the Lima Summit of the WFTO in September 2019, its members voted to call for climate emergency and update the tenth principle to make a clearer stance towards climate change (WFTO, 2019). Even though the title of the tenth principles is changed, the content of it stays the same anno 2020. However, the FTM decided to set up a working group to drastically change the content and related requirements of this principle. As to date, the working group is still further elaborating the new content of the principle (Matthysen, personal communication, August 15, 2020). In this regard, it will be important that FT will clearly articulate climate change as a real and alarming threat.

FTOs that produce FT products commit themselves to maximize the use of raw materials from *sustainable* origin, buying them *locally* when possible. In order to minimize greenhouse gas emissions and *reduce energy consumption*, they use production *technologies* and *renewable* energy. Goods are preferably transported overseas. They also aim to *minimize the waste* in the supply chain (for instance by using recycled and biodegradable packing). The “FT agricultural *commodity* producers” seek to minimize their environmental impacts by using *organic* and *low pesticide* production methods.

If we take part of the title, “*protecting our planet*”, as an empty signifier, we see that there are several nodal points (cf. the emphasized words) that are linked to each other via a LOE. The fact that FT declares that raw materials should preferably be bought locally, is something that some might consider an ironical claim, as FT mainly engages in global trade networks. As organic production is mentioned under the umbrella of climate protection, it leads us to uncover another nexus arising between the farming aspect and the environmental (climate change) aspect.

The 6 Pillars of Food Sovereignty

LVC’s founding principle and main objective was and still is FS. FS was first defined by the LVC, then shared and developed jointly with other social movements. The core principle of food sovereignty is that all peoples of the earth – food producers in association with other citizens – have the right to define and construct their own food system, from the local level to the global level (Hubert, 2019, pp. 23-24). It comprises six pillars that are discussed below.

1. Focuses on Food for People

FS puts people at the centre of food. These “*people*” include those who are *hungry*, *under occupation*, *in conflict* and *marginalized*. This “*food*” should be *sufficient*, *healthy* and *culturally appropriate* for all *individuals*, *peoples* and *communities*. FS rejects that food is considered as a commodity or as a component for international agribusiness.

In this first pillar, just as with FT, the target group and main vision of FS is revealed, starting from the idea: “*food for people*”. This slogan contains a LOE between the notions “*people*”, *marginalized*, *under occupation*, *in conflict* and *hungry*. Noteworthy is that these last three words in *italics* also strongly comply to the Palestinian people. Thereafter we also encounter a first antagonism (LOA) between food and commodity, and between food and agribusiness. FS wants to make clear that, in their vision, food has an antagonist relation towards commodities and international agribusiness.

2. Values Food Providers

FS supports and respects “*those who cultivate and process food*”, namely *peasants*, *small-scale family farmers*, *pastoralists*, *fisherfolk*, *indigenous peoples*, *migrants*, *men and women*. After establishing a LOE among these groups of people, FS pronounces a relation of antagonism (LOA) between these people and the policies and programmes that undervalue them. It is not yet clarified what specific programmes and policies are meant, but FS here refers to the WTO and TNCs as we will see in pillar 3.

3. Localises Food Systems

Pillar 3 somehow brings pillar 1 and 2 together. The first one rather focused on “*food for people*”, which could be considered as a synonym for the “*consumers*” (they could be producers at the same time as well of course). The second one is rather about the food providers (or producers, who are

obviously also consumers). This first and second group are conveyed in the third pillar, as it states that consumers and producers are closely brought together by FS. Even more so, FS puts them at the centre of decision-making on food issues. This third pillar strongly contends a democratic aspect and is linkable with FT principle 2 (Transparency and Accountability). If we compare pillar 1 and 3 with FT, we note that FT is more precise and pragmatic in this regard, whereas FS (so far) remains rather abstract on *how* it wants to put these people at the centre of decision-making.

Furthermore, we notice two LOAs. A first LOA is established between “*food providers*” and *food dumping*, and between *food aid in local markets*. Another LOA is made between “*food consumers*” and *low quality, unhealthy, inappropriate, and genetically modified food (GMOs)*. FS is thus strongly opposed to this kind of (industrial) food. Second, FS also antagonizes (LOA) *unsustainable and inequitable international trade, big corporations* (cf. earlier agribusiness), and any governance *structure or agreements* that support it. Later in the Nyéléni Declaration, we will see that FS is referring to the WTO, FTAs, TNCs and agribusiness. In this regard, FS should articulate here whether it means that any form of “international trade” is by definition inequitable and unsustainable, or whether most - but not all (for example FT) - international trade is. In the light of a potential coalition with the FTM, it is important that FS further clarifies this.

4. Puts Control Locally

FS places “*control over natural resources*” such as land, water, seeds, grazing, livestock and fish populations on *local* food providers. These natural resources should be used and shared in socially and *environmentally sustainable* ways that conserve *biodiversity*. Additionally, FS acknowledges that “*local territories*” often cross *geopolitical borders*. When approached interpretatively, this implies a logic of difference (LOD) between local territories and geopolitical borders. By this phrase, FS may intend to say that local territories do not necessarily coincide with the (national) and geopolitical borders established by governments. Consequently, FS might utter a critique towards nationalist tendencies that might attempt to hijack FS’ discourse. Next on, in contrast with the local control of food providers over natural resources, FS antagonizes the *privatization* of natural resources (LOA).

FS also supports interaction and cooperation between food providers from different sectors and in different regions as this might help to dissolve internal conflicts (or conflicts with local or national authorities). We see another reference to Palestine entailed in this statement that might be of value later in this dissertation.

5. Builds Knowledge and Skills

FS builds on the “*local knowledge*” and skills of *food providers* and their local communities that conserve *localized food systems* and wisdom that can be passed onto future generations. FS antagonizes technologies that threaten these, such as genetic engineering (GMOs) (LOA). Note that this pillar links up with FT principle 3.

6. Works with Nature

In the last pillar, FS declares that its farming (“*production and harvesting*”) methods use the contributions of *nature*, which means *low external input* and *agroecology* which maximizes the contribution of *ecosystems* and improve *resilience* and *adaptation*, in particular in the face of *climate change*. On the other hand, FS and its idea of “*agroecological*” farming sets a manifold antagonist relation (LOA) with *harmful methods for the ecosystem*, high energy depending *intensive monoculture*, *livestock factories* (slaughterhouses), and *industrialized* production methods, which damage the “*environment*” and contribute to “*climate change*” and “*global warming*”. In this respect, we see an implicit LOE emerging between “*agroecology*”, “*the environment*” and “*mitigating climate change*”.

Concluding thoughts

FT offers a rather extended and pragmatic manual that is ready to be put into practice. The principles are built on/in practical experience and global food networks that already existed for many decades. Consequently, FT is trying to bring change from within and that may cause the movement to possess some reformist-inclined tendencies as I will explain below. This relates to what Burnett (2017) called the “inside strategy”. FS in contrast, is rather brief, abstract but at the same time idealistic. Its pillars seem to stand further from what most people might consider “normal” regarding agriculture and might therefore indeed be perceived as radical. With “normal” I manifestly refer to what most discourse theorists will call “hegemonic”, and this is also strongly related to what discourse theorists call a social logic.⁴ On the other hand, it must be said that FS remains quite abstract and unclear on *how* it wants to bring its ideals into practice.⁵ An example is FS pillar 1 and 3 where it is stated that food providers and food consumers should be at the centre of the food system and at the centre of decision-making issues regarding food. A pragmatic manual on how this can be achieved is thus far not communicated. So for now this could be a criticism on FS, but we will see how and whether FS will clarify this in its key document.

In the discourse of the FT principles there are mostly LOEs, and there are barely any LODs (only one) or LOAs (none) detected. According to DT, this refers to a simplification of discourse. This would mean that FT renders the world around it more simple and thus might be less critical about it. At least less

⁴ The social logics are the patterns that are experienced by all their subjects as normal and common sense. Then there is also the political logic which describes the contestation and counter-contestation of social norms (cf. the social logic). Of course, normal patterns entailed by social logics can become controversial and vice versa.

⁵ We might take this as an assumption: the more “radicalized” a discourse (inclining to the radical trend), the more idealistic or abstract it might become and the more difficult to bring it into practice. Nevertheless, this might still be of great value as Mouffe (2018) would argue that these alternative discourses are necessary to challenge the hegemonic discourse. In this case, the discourse of FS (and partly that of FT) might become important challengers of the hegemonic neoliberal discourse of the UN’s discourse around food security, up until the point where FS becomes a counterhegemonic discourse. In this respect, Mouffe states that “every existing order is (...) susceptible to being challenged by counter-hegemonic practices, practices which attempt to disarticulate it in order to install another form of hegemony” (Mouffe, 2018, pp. 87-88).

critical than FS, because in every single pillar we can detect a strong antagonism. In doing so, FS clearly communicates what it stands for and where it is against. FT is probably much more careful to establish too many antagonisms because it is for a great part operating in the (international) networks which are criticized by FS, such as Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). This involvement of FT in FTAs was also uttered by a FT representative, when weighing the pros and cons related to it (Meyvis, personal communication, April 14, 2020). So in a way, the clear, open and antagonistic communication of FS lays bare the sometimes ambiguous practices and networks in which FT is engaging. Note that these are practices that were not mentioned (or were silenced) in the 10 FT principles and might explain why FT is inclined more towards the reformist trend. Remark also that all these words that are framed as an antagonist group by FS, are somehow interrelated and so they form a LOE among each other. In short, all the LOAs taken together merge into one LOE. Often, the actors, policies and agreements to which these antagonisms are directed, imply a hegemonic constellation against which the FSM is rebelling (and in which the FTM is partly engaging). This difference in the use of LOEs and LOAs between FT and FS demonstrates how FT, as a progressive movement, might indeed be inclined to the reformist side, whereas FS seems clearly rooted in the radical trend. This observation underpins and confirms the risk where Holt-Giménez and Shattuck warned for, i.e. that FT as a pivotal trend should be conscious not to incline too much to the side of the reformists.

The following observation might illustrate this more clearly when critically delving into the discourse of the FT principles. At first glance it seems clear that FT holds several progressive ideas, but when taking a closer look, we can detect quite some reformist tendencies that might escape the eye of the reader. For instance, in FT principle 6 it is declared that women should have access to resources, which is at first sight a very similar (equivalent) claim that is also to the one made by FS (“access to natural resources”) as we will see in the next section. Later we read that for FT this “access to resources” is a means “to be productive”. When we link this statement back to what is said in principle 3, namely that FT actors should “seek to increase the volume of trade in order to increase their income”, we might wonder if this is the same kind of “access to resources” where FS talks about. It rather seems like FT is here following the logic of the market that strives for ever more growth. We will delve into this kind of nuances and differences in discourse more profoundly when comparing the key documents of each movement in the next section.

In its principles, FT talks about “small producers” (mentioned fifteen times), while barely using the word “farmers” or “peasants”. FS on the other hand talks about “peasants”, “small-scale farmers”, and more broadly about “people” of which “food providers” and “food consumers” make up the vast majority. Nonetheless, FT and FS are generally involving the producers and consumers in their speech. This is only a side note, but it could be of value to pay attention to how both movements will frame their target groups in the key documents that will be discussed below in order to see how inclusive they are.

In the same vein, regarding the (non-)use of certain words, it is striking that FT remains surprisingly silent when it comes to the topic of farming. Only in principles 3 and 10 the notion was softly touched upon. Being a broad international movement that is involved in trade and food, it seems rather odd that FT remains silent about the central aspect that farming is when engaging in food chains. To ally more with the FSM that openly promotes the farming methods of agroecology, FT should speak out more loudly and audaciously on such alternative farming methods in its principles too. Because, at the heart of the matter, FT, just like FS, cares about the well-being of small farmers. And thus, almost automatically, they should be concerned about the appropriate ways for producing our food and this should be more clearly communicated in their principles. Obviously, these alternative ways should not collide with the local and traditional knowledge that is valued by FT in principle 3, as well as by FS in pillar 5. A similar criticism can be made for FS that tends to overlook the omnipresence of trade in our food system in its pillars. A worthy remark is that FS mentioned the word “share” when it came to natural resources. Another one is that FT recommended its FTOs to “buy locally” as much as possible, when purchasing raw materials (cf. FT principle 10). These and other peculiarities will be discussed in the next section

Based on the introductory analysis of the FT principles and FS pillars above, there are a few empty signifiers, even though not always explicitly mentioned, that recurred and shimmered through in many of the principles and pillars that were discussed. These empty signifiers include: trade, gender, democracy, farming and climate change (environment). These variables are somewhat empirically and interpretatively chosen, but in the meantime, they are also chosen because of their societal relevance as well as their paramount importance regarding our future world food and agricultural system. They will form the building blocks around which the next section is structured.

Below I listed the five empty signifiers in table 1 in order to give a clear overview on the analysis of the FT principles and FS pillars. From table 1 there are a few more observations that can be drawn. A first observation is that there are two variables, trade and farming, that seem to be very present in the one movement, but rather absent in the other. The one very central to FT, “trade”, is marked in blue. The other is “farming” and seems rather particularly central to FS. It is marked in red. The other three variables that are present in both FT principles and FS pillars (gender, democracy and climate change) are marked in purple.

A second observation concerns the logics of equivalence (or LODs or LOAs) that are composed *between* the variables *within* FT and FS. I will henceforth refer to these kinds of logics as “intersectoral logics”, i.e. logics that are constructed (in the discourse of FT or FS) between two or more different empty signifiers/variables of the five I listed above. For example, the following sentence “*women should be at the centre of democratic decision-making regarding farming issues and seed distribution*”, implies an intersectoral LOE with gender, democracy, and farming. For FT we find two intersectoral LOEs, one between gender and democracy, and another one between farming and the environment. The logics in the discourse of FT are interwoven in such a manner that both sides of the same chain reinforce

each other. This, despite some of the criticisms made above, might point to a strong degree of coherence in FT's reasoning. For FS we find a weak (read: implicit) LOA between democracy and (international) trade, but also a weak (implicit) intersectoral LOE between democracy and farming (see "people at the centre of the food system"). Next on, we notice a strong (explicit) LOE between farming and climate change. The reasoning of FS in its pillars contains a noticeable degree of coherence as well.

Third, as to the establishment of intersectoral logics *between* the variables of FT with those of FS it would be premature at this stage of the analysis to make any hard statements already. Intuitively, it seems that hitherto the strongest LOEs between FT and FS might be situated on the topic of gender, farming and climate change (the environment). Nonetheless, more decisive answers on this issue are expected to be given in the next section.

Table 1: Overview of the empty signifiers (variables) and their nodal points in the discourse of the FT principles and FS pillars.

<u>Empty signifier</u> →	Trade	Gender	Democracy	Farming	Climate change/en vironment
Fair trade					
FT Principle	1, 3, 8	4, 6	2, 4, 6	3, 10	10
Intersectoral logics*	(weak LOE with democracy +/-)	LOE with democracy	LOE with gender	weak LOE with environment	weak LOE w. farming
Nodal points	1)Poverty reduction; income security; economic self-sufficiency; ownership; 3)Economic well-being; no profit on behalf of small producers; pre-payment; compensation; solidarity; growth of FT; increase volume of trade; growth of FTM; increased income; 8)Production capabilities; access to markets (all markets);	4)Equal pay; equal work; equal (= <u>women</u> and men) 6)No discrimination; gender equality; access to resources; active (female) members; (women in) leadership positions;	2)Transparency; accountability; confidentiality; participatory (producers participate in DM); <u>decision-making</u> (DM); open communication; 4)fair payment, mutually negotiated; dialogue; participation; equal pay; 6)no discrimination; gender equality; active members; right to trade unions; bargain collectively;	3)Protects cultural identity; <u>traditional skills</u> ; 10)organic; <u>low pesticides</u> use; - small <i>producers</i> -	10)Sustainable sources; buy local ; technologies to reduce energy; renewable energy; minimize waste; organic farming; low pesticide use; recycled/biodegradable packing;
Food sovereignty					
FS Pillar	3	2	1, 3, 4	3, 5, 6	6
Intersectoral logics*	weak LOA with democracy	/	weak LOA with international trade; weak LOE with farming	weak LOE with democracy; strong LOE w. environment	strong LOE w. farming

Nodal points	3) No unsustainable and unequitable international trade, no unaccountable corporations 4) (<i>share</i>)	2) Rights of <u>women</u> and men;	1) People at centre of food; food for all; peoples and communities; 3) providers and consumers at centre of <u>decision-making</u> ; 4) Local control over resources; share; interaction;	3) No GMOs; 5) <u>local skills / knowledge</u> ; local food systems; 6) agroecology; <u>low external input</u> ; ecosystems; resilience (climate change); no monocultures; no intensive farming; no industrial food production; - <i>peasants</i> ; <i>ssf</i> -	6) Agroecology; resilience; adaptation; no monocultures; no intensive farming; no industrial food production
FT and FS compared**					
FT and FS: Common nodal points	/	Women	Decision-making	Traditional / local skill or knowledge (indigenous); low external input	/
Similarity in orientation	-	++	- +	- +	++
Similarity in discourse ***	--	+?	+?	-	+

Legend.

* A “weak logic” is here used to refer to an implicit connection, a “strong logic” to an explicit one.

** These variables and the (dis)similarities that exist among FT and FS regarding discourse and orientation will need to be reconsidered after studying the main documents of each movement to have a clearer view on their actual stance. The question marks refer to the fact that it is rather premature to give a definitive answer on this issue, as the discursive material of the principles and pillars is rather limited.

*** The grades regarding (dis)similarity in discourse and orientation are interpretative and involve an unavoidable level of subjectivity of myself, the interpreter. The different grades that are distinguished are: -- (weak similarity); - (rather weak); - + (moderate); + (rather strong); ++ (strong).

3.2 Comparing the key documents

In the previous section we distilled five variables (trade, gender, democracy, farming and climate change) that were to a greater or lesser degree present in most of the FT principles and FS pillars, but are undoubtedly of paramount relevance with regards to our future food system. The aim is now to subject these five empty signifiers to critical analysis by profoundly looking at the key documents of both FT and FS in order to see how both movements fill these - at first sight - hollow words with meaning (significance). By looking how FT and FS will do this, each in their own way, will not only allow to make observations on how related or differentiated the discourse and objectives of both movements are to each other, but also to lay bare certain critical issues that are silenced by either of their discourses. Subsequently, this will allow to make some reflections on the movements' potential paths of convergence, as well as on the obstacles that may hinder its paths.

The sources that will be used for the analysis of the key documents primarily consist of the International Fair Trade Charter (WFTO & FI, 2018; henceforth FT Charter) for the FTM and the Nyéléni Declaration (Nyéléni, 2007) for the FSM. Despite that they are considered the main document of each movement, the FT Charter will frequently have to be complemented with a second set of sources (reports, publications and other notable documents), as some information regarding a certain topic remains too limited in the FT Charter alone. A first critical remark is thus that the key documents of the FTM are way more dispersed when it comes to finding FT's opinion on the five topics/empty signifiers that will be addressed below.⁶

Before I start off with the analysis, I deem it appropriate to make a short comment on how the logics will be applied. In contrast with the previous section, I will not necessarily explain every logic. Yet, when a noteworthy logic is detected, I will refer to it with an abbreviation (LOE, LOD or LOA), sometimes only at the end of a sentence between brackets. Note that a LOD will mostly refer to a difference with the other movement. This will help the reader to detect the logic on her/his own when it is not explicitly explained. The main signifiers (or nodal points) that are involved in a certain logic, will be emphasized in *italics*, and the central signifier will eventually be put between quotation marks and in *italics*. This is done especially for the LOEs *within* a discourse in the analysis below. However, the focus this time will lie more on the intersectoral LOEs *between* the five variables (intersectoral) *within* and *between* each movement. So to a certain extent, there will be a focus on the *intersectoral logics intradiscursively (within)* which may point to a degree of coherence of a discourse. The other focus will be on the *intersectoral logics interdiscursively (between FT and FS)*. Using this newly introduced intersectoral logic, when applied interdiscursively, will thus become a utile instrument that facilitates to make reflections on the (dis)similarities between the movements (for instance by looking at the intersectoral LOEs they have in common). This in turn allows to look at the probability of building

⁶ A FT representative of Oxfam Belgium explained that this is due to the fact that FT is a grassroots movement and very diverse (Matthysen, personal communication, August 17, 2020).

strong alliances between the two movements. These insights will be elaborated for each variable under the sub-title “concluding thoughts” at the end of this section.

Trade

Trade and exchange are undeniable as they are at the heart of every food system. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to see both movements’ ideas on this topic.

Fair trade

Especially for FT is “*trade*” at the heart of its organization. It is a means by which it manages to bring together more than 1.7 million farmers and workers, around 1.600 producer organizations, and countless trade unions consumers and campaigners from all over the world. For FT, the international trading practices in which it operates are clearly a chain that connects producers and consumers worldwide. To do so, FT partners with more than 4.000 *businesses* and works with *governments* to deliver fairer trading practices which are crucial for *sustainable economic growth*. Furthermore, the FT supply chains help to *connect* producers and consumers (FI, 2020, p. 6, 23).

In the *mainstream* and *conventional markets* small-scale farmers are often excluded. FT presumes to give them *access* to these markets and introduce FT values in these global trade structures. FT strives for wider *reform* of international trading rules, to achieve the ultimate goal of a fairer international trading system (WFTO & FI, 2009, p. 8). In their Charter of 2018, the statements proposed by the FTM seem to have made a shift towards the more radical trend in its discourse. Where it initially had an accommodating stance towards the conventional market (as was also the case in FT principle 8), it now has a more uncompromising attitude towards what it now calls “the neoliberal model of free trade based on weak regulation” (LOA) (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 15). However, the solution to this failed model “does not lie in policies that simply reinforce *protectionism* and *restrict* international trade, rather the need is for trade to be *managed* in a *better way*” (LOD) (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 15).

FT is convinced that by “improving *access to markets*” for more producers in more countries, a fairer trading system would *correct the imbalances of power* in supply chains in which many markets are dominated by a *handful of firms*.⁷ FT is aware that “these firms have the power to set the terms of trade for their suppliers, forcing prices down, often to levels below the costs of production, leaving small farmers with a low income” (LOA) (WFTO & FI, 2018, pp. 14-15). Here, FT for the first time

⁷ It should be noted that the WFTO nor FI really claim that their system, on its own, can correct the imbalances of power. However, both believe in the assumption of the positive potential of trade (Matthysen, 2020, pp. 34-35).

antagonizes with the monopolist firms that dominate the market, and openly communicates the bad consequences that they have on small farmers. Furthermore, FT articulates a LOD with these monopolist firms as it claims to seek “to *transform* trade into a force *not just for economic growth* but also for *social justice* and *sustainability*” (LOD) (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 15).

Further, the Charter states that a FT system provides “*citizens with information on supply chains* and trading terms so they can make purchasing choices *according to their principles*” (LOE) (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 15). This sentence encloses a certain responsibility of the consumers who, when informed, will buy according to their principles. In literature this is referred to as consumer sovereignty, which means that consumers as a group steer the market and not vice versa (Fridell, 2009, p. 83). However, the LOE that is established here is somewhat taken for granted. Practice shows that even though consumers are ethical and aware, they will not necessarily buy the FT product. This reasoning leads to what I would call a teleologic of equivalence (TLOE). It implies the presence of a too short-sighted taken-for-grantedness in the speech of a speaker and a lack of scientific proof that one thing will lead to another and could thus be seen as a shortcoming in the reasoning.⁸

Food sovereignty

Along the whole Nyéléni declaration (consisting of 76 pages) there is only one explicit reference made towards FT and it is an important one to bear in mind when further analysing the key documents. “We will support fairness in trading and “fair trade” where it contributes to food sovereignty” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 27). This would imply that FS is not rejecting the whole FTM. Even more so, it would even mean that cooperation is possible, but only under the strict condition that FT will contribute to FS’ objectives.

Further we read that FS “*does not negate trade*, but rather, it promotes the formulation of *trade policies* and practices that serve the *rights of peoples* to *safe, healthy* and *ecologically sustainable* production. “*International trade*” needs to be *reduced* and *re-scaled* to the *local* level as much as possible so that *local markets* will be given priority (LOD). Furthermore, international trade is currently based on *unsustainable production* systems and is controlled by Transnational Corporations (*TNCs*) who destroy livelihoods and local economies” (LOA) (Nyéléni, 2007, pp. 26-27). With regard to the stance of FS towards trade in general, we notice a LOD that may be applicable to FT. An antagonist stance is rather taken with regards to international trade and more specifically against the TNCs that dominate international trade.

⁸ When a TLOE is detected in a discourse, it allows the speaker to be held accountable for lack of articulation, scientific proof and clarification of how one thing would lead to another (e.g. “how” awareness would “automatically” lead to consumers buying FT). Note that the detection of a TLOE is partly subject to the interpretation of the analyst.

Nevertheless, FS proposes alternatives to trade and moves beyond the mere idea of trade. In FS pillar 4 the word “share” already came to the surface and in this paragraph I will touch upon some similar phrases. I will put the differences (LODs) that FS articulates regarding FT in parentheses at the end of a sentence. In this light the Nyéléni declaration further states that: “women’s knowledge, as well as the variety of the seeds they conserve, is enriched by *interchange and exchange* among equals [LOD]. In this way, they challenge *hegemonic* and vertical systems of technical support and rural extension” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 24). In the same vein the FSM declares that it will “strengthen *direct links* between *consumers* and food *producers* [LOE] in the *North* and the *South* to build an appreciation of the value of *local* and *seasonal foods* [LOD] (...). We will create opportunities for an “*alternative market*”, and initiatives such as community funds and product *exchanges*, such as *bartering* and *seed fairs*, which reinforce links and *solidarity* among small-scale food providers” (LOD) and a bit further FS stresses that it will promote *non-market* food production” (LOD) (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 53). The FSM eventually declares that it will strengthen *local formal markets* as well as *informal markets* through promoting community supported agriculture (CSA). This support for informal markets might be better understood when the report further clarified that FS strives for “trade to be *outside the capitalist market*” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 27, 50). These actions, centred around non-market production or exchange-based partnerships, is what van der Ploeg (2010, pp. 9-12) would refer to as “distantiation” from the market.

Gender

Arguably around 70 percent of the world's food is cultivated by small-scale family farms. Most of these farmers are poor and primarily women and above all they make up about 70 percent of the world's hungry people (Holt-Giménez, 2017, p. 38). The recognition of women’s agricultural contributions should not only be based on the fact that women produce around 80 percent of the foodstuffs in countries considered poor, but also on their knowledge and technology (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 24). Let us have a look at what both movements say about the issue of gender equality and women empowerment in their key documents.

Fair trade

This topic of gender equality and women empowerment mainly builds further on FT principle 6 we discussed earlier. FT clearly acknowledges that women have a paramount role as the main providers of labour and that, nevertheless, they are often still restricted from accessing land and credit that could enhance their opportunities for economic and social development. Once again, FT stresses that women should receive equal pay and should have the same opportunities as their male counterparts (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 20).

In line with its principles that mentioned objectives around women participating in FTOs, taking part in decision-making and promoting female leadership, the FT Charter mentions some of its accomplishments on women empowerment in the field. The FT projects would arguably have provided the first opportunity for millions of women to make decisions about *household income*, and evidence shows this improves outcomes in areas such as *health, education and social development*. For FT, especially women are *leaders* of FTOs as they are powerful *entrepreneurial role models* for young people (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 20). In figure 1 below we find an overview of the leadership roles that women take up in FTOs who are WFTO-certified. The figure shows that the ratio of women in these positions is significantly higher (above 50 percent) than that of conventional businesses (between 10 and 25 percent).

This information on its achievements in practice further remains rather limited, but if we look into some other notable publications of the FTM, we distinguish a few observations that clarify FT’s contributions in the field. We find for example that FT runs *gender leadership schools* and facilitates *seed funding* for women’s initiatives through the *FT premium*. The FT premium will be touched upon more broadly in the topic of “democracy” below. Further evidence finds that women, and youth and migrant workers alike (notice the LOE here), in rural communities are better equipped and more confident to take part in *decision-making* in their FT cooperatives (Hawrylyshyn, 2019). Another source within the FTM declares that FT helps women to earn *better wages, diversify* their income, and *tackle stereotypes* of women’s work (FI, 2020, p. 4).

By empowering women, the democratic aspect is also clearly enhanced. Both gender equality and democratic enhancement are thus intimately intertwined with each other in the discourse of FT - we can thus speak of a strong intersectoral LOE between the two. Furthermore, it is undeniable that FT has had some considerable impacts on the practical level.

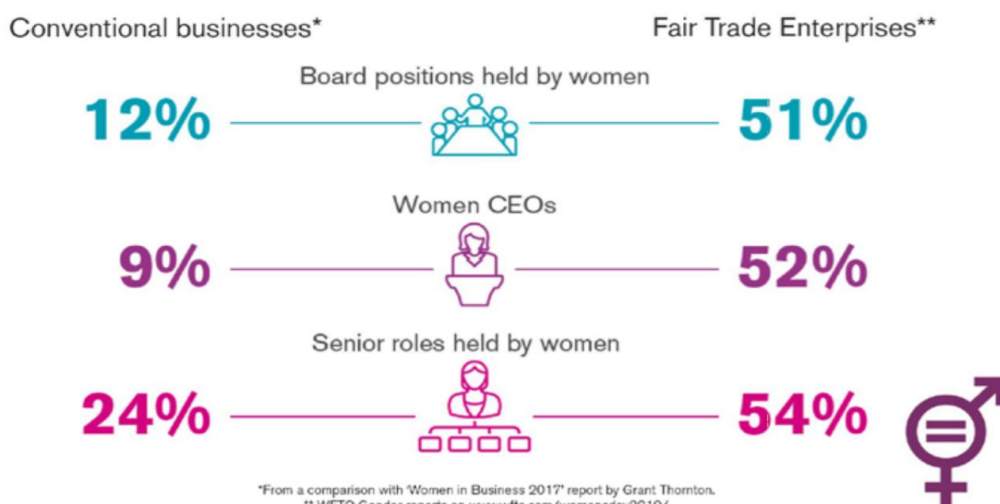


Figure 1. Women in leadership positions: conventional business compared to FT enterprises (WFTO, 2019, p. 18).

Food sovereignty

The FSM stresses the paramount role of women in the agricultural system as they produce circa 80 percent of the food in countries considered “poor”. On the Nyéléni forum two issues emerged strongly: women’s *access to land* and the assertion of *women’s knowledge* of food production and preparation. These establish women’s *autonomy* and FS addresses this as a condition for food sovereignty (Nyéléni, 2007, pp. 23-24). The declaration clearly uses an intersectoral LOE between women and farming, as they are considered as “the principal custodians of biodiversity and seeds” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 14). Furthermore FS affirms the destructive impact that “*unsustainable farming*” methods, such as *monocultures (agrofuels among others), chemicals and GMOs*, have on the environment and thus the (reproductive) health of women and their families (LOA) (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 47). Throughout this antagonism we find another intersectoral LOE between women and the importance of sustainable and ecological farming (see also the discussion on the topic of “farming” later on).

In its struggle for *equality between the sexes*, FS wants to put an end to the oppression women face worldwide and in the market system. Instead, they propose a “world based on the principles of *respect, equality, justice, solidarity, peace and freedom*” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 48), and where capitalist, neoliberal, sexist and patriarchal structures are rejected (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 47). The FSM thus antagonizes (LOA) strongly and openly against certain groups and structures which impede women in their struggle for FS.

Additionally, there are two parts in the text that strongly remind of FT, for instance when the Nyéléni declaration indicated the need for equal pay between men and women (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 24). This need for equal pay is something that is also clearly expressed in FT principles 4 and 6, and it is actually something that FT is already applying on a large scale in its organizations. A second set of resemblances with FT is found in the following paragraph.

“We are mobilized. We are struggling for *access to land, territories, water, and seeds*. We are struggling for *decent working conditions* [principle 7]. We are struggling for *access to training and information* [principles 2 and 6]. We are struggling for our *autonomy* and the right to make our own decisions and participate fully in *decision making bodies* [principle 6] [emphasis added]” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 48).

This paragraph almost entirely relates to what is also stated in FT principles 2, 6 and 7, and subsequently contains a democratic character as well. We can thus state that, *interdiscursively*, there is a strong intersectoral LOE between FS and FT and this aspect of women empowerment. This can be noted especially as they are using the same nodal points in order to clarify what they exactly mean by

the empty signifier of “women empowerment”. As to bringing these goals into practice, FS should not neglect what FT has already achieved in this respect.

Democracy

Nowadays our food system is controlled by a handful players, of which TNCs, agribusinesses, the WTO and the FTAs are the dominant actors. Therefore, supporting the radical leadership of women, people of color, peasants, farmers, and food workers globally and locally will be a crucial component that needs to be taken into account when challenging the CFR and eventually establishing a militantly democratic food system (Holt-Giménez, 2017, p. 173, 232). Hence, I will now turn to how both movements aim to enhance the democratic power of their target groups, i.e. small-scale farmers.

Fair trade

The democratic aspect of FT mainly arises from principle 3, which is “Fair Trading Practices”. Next on, the FT Charter only involves one passage which briefly refers to how it conceives of democracy within its organization. It declares that FT aims to strengthen social capital by partnering with “*inclusive*” and *democratic organizations* that are active in supporting *education, health and social facilities* within their (local) *communities* as a way of *spreading the gains of trade* as broadly as possible (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 19).

When delving in other documents of the FTM we find more about the internal organizational structure of the FTOs which relates to the democratic. Around the empty signifier “*democracy*” we can detect several nodal points (in *italics*) that construct and fill it with meaning. FT builds democracy from the ground up by striving to build effective, accountable and “*inclusive*” institutions in its own internal governance. FT claims to be the only global ethical label 50 percent owned and run by farmers and workers themselves.⁹ The FT *cooperatives*, which form an important central pioneer in the democratic aspect of FT, must accordingly abide by the FT standard requirements of being “*democratic*”, *transparent* and “*inclusive*”, can “*negotiate*” better deals with traders and *access credit*, insurance and other financial services (Hawrylyshyn, 2019). FT further assures that its organizations must have a Board elected by the General Assembly which is made up of its members (Darko, Lynch, & Smith, 2017, p. 8). We can conclude that the organizational structure of FT is a layered democratic one in which “*democracy*” is supplemented with main nodal points like *inclusive, transparency, negotiation* and

⁹ This might be a misleading claim as the Símbolo de Pequeño Productores (SPP), a Latin American FT label, is 100 percent owned by small farmers and workers. Their vision and aims relate strongly to that of FS.

(implicitly) *participation*. It is clear that the members *within* any FTO are significantly enhanced in their democratic potential.

Now I return to FT's efforts on the more practical level. This paragraph will elaborate upon FT principle 3 and will further clarify what can be understood under "Fair Trading Practices" as I will approach through a discourse-theoretical lens. My personal interpretative approach of the democratic aspect in FT discourse, is that it is partly entailed in the discourse around the term "*fair price*". To make things more intelligibly, I will here set "*fair price*" as the empty signifier of the discourse of FT around "Fair Trading Practices". The three nodal points that structure the discourse around this signifier will be discussed below, being: the "FT minimum price", the "FT premium", and "democratically invested".

A first mechanism is the *FT minimum price* that forms a safety net for 1.7 million farmers and workers in more than 75 countries, protecting them from volatile markets and ensuring they can better cover their cost of sustainable production, eventually reducing poverty, and allowing long-term planning (Hawrylyshyn, 2019). A second is the *FT premium* which is paid to small producer organizations based on sales and it enables rural communities to invest what they consider important for their local community. In 2017 each FT producer organization received on average €111.000 in FT premium with which they have funded schools, healthcare and clean drinking water, among other things (FI, 2020, p. 5). Farmers and workers are also encouraged to form so-called FT premium Committees, governed by a General Assembly, to manage the FT premium in an inclusive, transparent and accountable way (FI, 2016, p. 9, 11). A third step in this process is that farmers decide, in line with their democratically-agreed priorities, on how to invest the FT premium, whether (1) "improving productivity" or (2) "addressing their community's sustainable development priorities" (FI, 2020, p. 6). Referring to the food movements framework, this first (1) option would be rather clinging to the reformist side, whereas the second (2) could be interpreted on the progressive or radical side - depending on how exactly it is spent.

Now I come back to the empty signifier "*fair price*" that I set beforehand. It is clear that it is ultimately a democratic concept which allows producers, throughout an international trading network, to decide for themselves (through the cooperative) how they wish to invest the fair price in their local community. It further adheres to and thus underpins earlier mentioned nodal points like participation, inclusive and transparency and so on.

Food sovereignty

Before we start off, it is clarifying to understand how FS perceives an empty signifier like "*democracy*". FS argues that it uses the term democracy "even though we are aware that it is a term which (...) has been captured by international institutions; for us it highlights the concepts of *people's power* and *participatory democracy*" (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 44). FS here implicitly constructs a LOA with (hegemonic)

institutions such as the WTO, the World Bank and others, who have co-opted the term and instead articulates a more radical alternative.

The vision of FSM regarding democracy is an important one, in which the term is emphasized a lot. For FS democracy includes democratic control over natural resources, food distribution, and local development. Everything that can be produced and consumed locally should be (LOD). FS further indicates that it will struggle for access to, and truly *democratic control of, land* and other *natural resources* by the *peoples*, especially *marginalized* communities and social groups, including women (intersectoral LOE). We will struggle against capitalist privatization, exploitation and accumulation (LOA). We will struggle for social justice, equality and solidarity” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 45). First, FS constructs a chain of equivalence (LOE) between the people that should have control over natural resources to then antagonize (LOA) the practices that exacerbate the undemocratic conditions for these people. Instead it articulates a set of values that are necessary to counter this.

Other initiatives that FS will undertake to bring its democratic ideal into practice is its support for food cooperatives for both producers and consumers, and in particular women’s cooperatives for processing and marketing their products. To further underpin its support for cooperatives, FS will promote “*local processing, consumer forums and solidarity economies that favour local markets and “fair prices” for small-scale producers*” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 27, 53). Later, FS goes even further than that as it states that:

“Food (...) should *not be simply a tradable commodity*. In order to ensure the *right to sustainable food for all (...)*, we must build new mechanisms for fairness in trading, with “*fair prices*”, that are *in the hands of producers and consumers*, that are *transparent* at all steps in the food chain, and where priority is given to *local production for local markets*” [emphasis added] (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 26).

First of all, we notice that FS here establishes an intersectoral LOE between democracy, trade and gender. Secondly, it seems as if FS is openly challenging FT with its reference to “fair prices”. More precisely FS puts forward a different understanding of the empty signifier “*fair price*” than FT - and this implies a minor LOD between FT and FS. Where both FT and FS agree on is that a “fair price” must be fair to small producers. However, FS adds to it that a fair price is built around nodal points like the *local processing* of food wherein the *consumers* also have a strong say via *forums*, and through *local and solidarity markets*. Besides, all steps in the food chain must be *transparent*.

For the rest, some of FS’s ideas on democracy seem rather idealistic as they remain quite abstract and unclear on how to put them into practice. Their slogan “power to the people”, is characteristic of one of their most radical objectives, which is a genuine agrarian reform (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 33). This agrarian reform is, among others, built around customary rights and community-based management of resources. An agrarian reform must ensure priority in the use of land, water, seeds and livestock for

food production and other local needs rather than production for export (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 56). The FSM itself acknowledges that this plan remains quite abstract, it thus pleads for a common plan of action that must be developed to put this into practice. Yet again, FS is clear against who it should antagonize, being acts of privatization and the actions of TNCs as these ultimately undermine FS' democratic efforts.

Farming

Many studies have shown that industrial agriculture has destroyed up to 75 percent of the world's agrobiodiversity, produces up to 20 percent of the world's greenhouse gasses, and uses up to 80 percent of the planet's freshwater. While industrial agriculture represents the majority of emissions from global agriculture, ecologically based practices primarily used by small-scale farmers, not only contribute fewer emissions, but also withdraw carbon and other greenhouse gasses (Holt-Giménez, 2017, p. 54, 134). This illustrates the importance of a sustainable food system and therefore it will be crucial that both movements have a strong and clear say on how they conceive of agriculture, farming and what role small-scale farmers have in it.

Fair trade

To begin with, the impact of industrial agriculture is also something where FT is conscious of. They even assert that around 33 percent of the greenhouse gasses come from this type of agriculture (FI, 2020, p. 5). Although it is notable that FT does not openly antagonize industrial agriculture. Nevertheless, we might expect that FT will take a strong stance in favour of sustainable and ecological farming methods.

Once again, it is rather surprising that FT barely says anything new in the FT Charter around which methods farming should be organized when compared to what it stated in FT principle 10. The only words that FT uttered in this respect are that the protection of the environment and the long-term viability of natural resources and biodiversity are its fundamental values. Still, what can be considered as a strong point here is that FT establishes an implicit intersectoral LOE between farming and the environment, just like it did in principle 10.

In other documents of the FTM we do find a clearer stance of the movement regarding its vision on farming and agriculture, although this remains limited to a certain degree. FT claims that it is the only ethical standard working on both ends of the supply chain towards sustainable consumption and

production patterns.¹⁰ At one end, producer organizations are supported to comply with FT environmental and social standards that exclude child and forced labor and reject the use of GMOs (LOA), instead it embraces organic agriculture more and more (Hawrylyshyn, 2019; WFTO, 2019). Although there is not much clarified regarding the precise practices of farming, FT does highlight the essential role and centrality of small-scale farming in the agricultural system as they provide 70 percent of the world's population with food. In this regard they claim that small farmers worldwide should receive a fair price so they can have a bigger role to play in ending world hunger (FI, 2020, p. 3).

On the practical level we do find some nuances in academic research on the farming methods that are applied by FT. According to Darco et al. (2017, p. 18) FT objectives around farming are quite clear when it comes to the area of environmental protection. FT achieved to define environmental standards on such issues as management of water and soil use, control on the use of pesticides, fertiliser application (preferably organic fertiliser), and biodiversity conservation. These prescriptions are included as key components of FT standards to be met by organizations (Darko et al., 2017, p. 18). This implies that we again find an intersectoral LOE between farming and the environment.

However, based on the evidence of twelve studies on FT farming practices, Darco et al. (2017, pp. 18-22) find rather ambiguous outcomes in their research. At first sight, the research evidence shows positive impacts of FT certification and the application of environment-related standards on farming practices in small producer organisations of FT. However, given the prevalence of joint FT-organic certification, this may be due, in part, to the organic certification process - and not necessarily because of the FT certification. Other evidence suggests that these positive effects might result from the strength of cooperative organization or from agroecological approaches promoted by other organisations or the government, rather than from FT certification per se (Darko et al. 2017, pp. 18-22). This one example of FT's engagement with agroecologically based coffee farms is interesting as it relates to FS's preference of farming. In this light, Babin (2015) indicates that the agroecological case of Costa Rica might be instructive for the FTM as it demonstrates the benefits of a cost reduction strategy rather than (or in addition to) the price regulation mechanism inherent to FT. The consequence is that the two intersectoral LOEs between farming and the environment established above might not be as strong in practice as it is pretended in the discourse of FT.

Food sovereignty

FS similarly acknowledges the paramount role of farmers "as the custodians of thousands of years" of engagement in and sustaining of highly complex agroecological systems. These traditional agricultural systems that FS deems so important are built on "principles of *cooperation* and *dialogue with nature*".

¹⁰ This is a misleading claim of FT as the FSM is focusing on this issue as well, but it is just not working with standards like FT does. Besides there are other standards there are other standards that are working on this as well, such as Rainforest Alliance, SPP, or Fair for Life, with different degrees of credibility.

The peasants that sustain them are considered to have the knowledge and wisdom for FS. In these, it is essential to underline women's contributions and indigenous knowledge as central to local food and agricultural systems that are under control of the local community (Nyéléni, 2007, pp. 29-31). Once more, FS constructs a clear intersectoral LOE between farming and the topics of gender and democracy. Although FS does not further specify the term agroecology, it does plead for the need for more clarity regarding words like ecological, biological, organic and agroecology which are understood quite differently in different regions and cultures (Nyéléni, 2007 p. 43).

FS further declares that it will use ecological production, more specifically agroecology (but also pastoralism, artisanal fisheries etc.) as a direct strategy to fight TNCs (Nyéléni, 2007 p. 28). Hence FS seeks to oppose and antagonize (LOA) TNCs and agribusinesses through agroecology. In order to achieve this, FS heavily criticizes the negative impacts of industrial farming and agribusiness which include models and practices, such as intensive farming, monoculture, agrofuels production, GMOs, chemicals and pesticides. These methods are unsustainable environmentally, socially, and economically (LOA) (Nyéléni, 2007 p. 31, 44). Even more so, they are major contributors to the problem of climate change. In its discourse, there thus is a clear LOE between the group it antagonizes (industrial agriculture) and climate change (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 42). This somehow also implies an intersectoral LOE between farming and climate change/the environment. Interesting here is that FS at first sight seems to concord with FT's vision on farming (this implies a LOE), but it points to two critical differences where FT remains silent about. A first one is the issue of monoculture which in turn indicates to a LOD with FT. Especially large-scale monocultural production causes the erosion of genetic diversity. A second indirect criticism that FS makes about FT's farming model is the production of cash crops (such as coffee, cacao, bananas and so on) for export as they often result in food insecurity and corporate control (LOD) (Nyéléni, 2007, pp. 44-45). I will turn to this issue of monoculture and cash crops in FT by making an elaborate comment in the concluding thoughts below.

Besides that, there are three rather explicit implicit criticisms that the Nyéléni declaration seem to address to the FTM and other certification systems in particular. A first one is that "organic and other [FT] certification systems have been developed as a tool to capture higher prices on an export market" (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 53). In a second comment FS rather warns for certifications that are externally imposed and, thirdly, that they might put a large financial burden on small farmers. However, FS also points out that these certification systems, including FT, also have an important role in ensuring consumers in local markets of the integrity and value of local foods (Nyéléni, 2007, pp. 53-54).

Climate change

The most irreversible and threatening danger on our food system and our planet today is undoubtedly climate change. Crop losses, more intense droughts, and floods due to the effects of global warming, hit small farmers the hardest, threatening their hold on the land (Holt-Giménez, 2017, p. 134). Therefore, it is paramount to delve into this aspect of climate change and the environment to see what both movements declare about it and how they see the role of peasants in this regard.

Fair trade

As mentioned earlier in the section about the FT principles, the FTM recently gave an important signal by changing the name of principle 10 into “Climate Crisis and Protecting our Planet” - hereby calling out climate emergency. However, they are working to change the content up until today. In the FT Charter, there is only a small section dedicated to biodiversity and the environment. Besides a small reference to climate change and the environment and how they could be managed by the movement, there is no further elaboration on the topic in the Charter. This is quite disappointing as this threat is urgent and happening today already. However, the FT Charter acknowledges that small-scale farmers are “among the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and it is important they are supported in developing and investing in adaptation and mitigation strategies” (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 21). IN another, more recent document of the FTM we find a statement that does express the gravity of the topic of climate change very well as an all-encompassing crisis that “threatens to reverse progress on all levels” (FI, 2020, p. 2). When interpreted freely, we can detect an intersectoral LOE with all variables wherein FT engages on the one hand, and on the other we can perceive a LOA between (the efforts of) the FTM and climate change.

On the more practical level, we can refer to what the WFTO president Roopa Mehta uttered at the 2019 Lima summit of the WFTO, namely that many of the people engaging in FT “are already investing in *solar energy*, embracing *organic agriculture*, promoting *natural fibers*, and pioneering *upcycling* and *recycling*. We show how *people and planet* can be put first by *businesses*” (WFTO, 2019). Further we find that FT prescribes standards for its organizations that cover “*climate resilient agriculture*” such as *rainwater harvesting*, planting *shade trees*, *biogas* and *renewable energy sources*, integrated pest management, *organic fertilisers* and dynamic *agroforestry*¹¹ (LOEs) (FI, 2020, p. 5). These statements imply an intersectoral LOE between climate change and (sustainable) farming.

Furthermore, FT introduced the FT Climate Standard which is the first of its kind to address imbalances in the carbon market and ensure a fair financial return for producers (FI, 2020, p. 5). Another tool that

¹¹ Note that agroforestry is a technique that is very much related to agroecology. However, it is not clear to what extent FT uses this in practice.

the FTM proposes for FT farmers is the use of the “*FT premium*” to become more *resilient* to extreme weather and crop disease. FT enables farmers to better withstand these *climate shocks* and stresses (FI, 2020, p. 5). In a way, it seems as if FT lays a certain responsibility at the side of the farmers to adapt themselves to the effects of climate change. From this we can conclude that FT constructs another intersectoral LOE, this time starting from climate change with farming (agriculture), with trade and more implicitly with democracy.

Lastly, we do find one more interesting, but rather implicit reference to climate change in the FT Charter, where it states that the entire value chain should “ensure that the real costs of good environmental practice are reflected in [fair] prices and terms of trade” (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 21). This boils down to *internalizing environmental externalities* in the price of a product, which arguably also means a “fair price” for FT. We can subtract from this an intersectoral LOE between the environment and with trade.

Food sovereignty

With regards to climate change, FS does not utter many new statements when compared to what it stated in pillar 6. Like before, it establishes a strong LOA with industrial agriculture (including, TNCs and agribusiness) as a main contributor to climate change. Furthermore, the very same corporate-led agricultural model is also environmentally destroying nature’s capacity to adapt to climate change (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 42, 65).

A critical and interesting observation made by FS on these main contributors of climate change is worth mentioning here: “the same people who have provoked the climate chaos and species extinction now appear as our saviours” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 50). This is further clarified: “TNCs and governments have proposed technologies as solutions to climate change, but these are themselves threats: agrofuels, geo-engineering which is the manipulation of climate and environment” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 65). Implicitly, FS is here warning for the practices of greenwashing, which threatens to make people blind to face the real threats and the real root causes of climate change. This is a true obstacle as it tends to divide the people who actually stand behind the same cause of combating global warming. Furthermore, this points to a consciousness that the FTM should pick up as well in order not to incline too much with the reformist trend.

The relation between FS and climate change could be considered as a very strong one as it is underpinned by two LOAs. On the one hand, climate change is pictured as a threat that heavily impacts the efforts to achieve more FS. On the other, FS pictures itself as an effective response to the impact of climate change. Thus: FS risks to be weakened by climate change, but also contends to be a valuable response to it (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 65). In the discussion below, I will return to this, by arguing that this kind of antagonist reasoning can be referred to as a “double-edged LOA”.

In order to fight and resist climate change, FS proposes to develop strong strategies based on solidarity which are necessary for confronting so much injustice (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 50). This would leave space open for FT (and other movements) to join FS in their struggle against climate change.

Concluding thoughts and discussion

Trade

First of all, we notice that FS has taken a somewhat clearer stance on the topic of trade and that FT has taken a more progressive stance regarding trade in its key documents when compared to the core values. The latter can be seen by two common LOAs that FT shares with FS regarding TNCs and the neoliberal model. These common LOAs in turn leads to an equivalence (LOE) between FT and FS. Even more so, both FS and FT tend to implicitly express the need to reformulate the existing international trade policies, hence we find a second constructive LOE. A third common LOE is their aim to (partly) overcome the producer-consumer divide, although it must be said that FS does this with its emphasis on local and seasonal food through CSA (LOD). Another goal that both share is to tackle the North-South divide (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 67). On the level of solidarity links between producers and consumers of the South and North, FT might have achieved more than FS. This is illustrated in the work of Reynolds (2002, p. 404) on how FT is able to span the North-South divide.

Regarding their discourse on “international trade”, we might find a major LOD, as FS believes that international trade needs to be reduced and re-scaled, whereas FT believes that international trade just needs to be reformed in order to be fair. Yet, another concern that FS might have regarding FT is its partnership with companies and businesses and thus inclines to the reformist trend in this regard.¹² After all, just like one of the representatives of a FT organization uttered: “in the end, FT stays a business” (Lahav, personal communication, July 31, 2020). These reformist inclinations here are related to greenwashing of companies and corporate takeover of FT as uttered by several authors (Friedmann et al., 2019, p. 99; Schanbacher, 2010, p. 118; Jaffee & Howard, 2010). Another major LOD that FS established regarding FT were its efforts to distantiate itself from the market.

In total, we noticed three common LOEs between FT and FS regarding trade. This might not only mean that FT has taken a more progressive stance on the topic of trade, but also that there are certain entry points for collaboration if they would set these goals in a common agenda. In practice however, both FT and FS seem to differ significantly as is underpinned by three major LODs. In short, FS could learn from FT in that its international links of solidarity established through international trade could be of value for the FSM in enhancing links between North and South. FT might learn from FS in that it should try to find ways to distantiate itself from the (international) market and move beyond the mere act of trading in order to incline more towards the side of the FSM.

With regards trade, there is one more relevant comment to make. In the whole Nyéléni declaration, the word “access” is used 58 times, mostly in relation to “land”, “natural resources”, “seeds” and so on. Out of those 58 records, “access to markets” is only used three times and that was concerning the

¹² This criticism coincides with the mainstreaming of FT in the late 1980s. This is the period wherein FT started to sell its products in supermarkets through the establishment of the label of Max Havelaar (Fridell, 2004, p. 15).

topic of Palestine (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 39). This could imply that in extreme situations, such as Palestine, the discourse of FS might shift (almost invisibly) more towards that of FT. This hypothesis will be tested in the next section.

Gender

FS's and FT's discourses on the topic of gender and women empowerment have some clear resemblances. This could be seen in by the common intersectoral LOE that both established between the variables of gender and democracy. Furthermore, there was one section where FS allied strongly to what FT already mentioned in its FT principles (this could be seen in the use of common nodal points). In this regard we detected, on the *interdiscursive* level, a strong LOE between FS and FT on the aspect of women empowerment. Further we saw an intersectoral LOE between gender and farming that FS managed to establish and FT not. In this regard, FS manages to make stronger connections between these essential topics than FT does. Additionally, there are some differences between FT and FS when it comes to *how* and *by whom* they address the issue of gender. For FS it is clear that the women forum themselves in Nyéléni made up these objectives around women, and thus they speak of "we" and "us". To put it plainly: while FS *speaks for oneself*, FT tends to *speak for another*. In doing so, FT might fall into the trap of patriarchy which FS openly condemns.¹³ And let this be precisely also one of the obstacles impeding the goal of gender equality. This renders the discourse of FS on gender more inclusive and democratic after all, as women themselves decided on it. Ultimately, this is a lesson that FT could take from FS. Conversely, FS should recognize FT's efforts that are already put into practice regarding women empowerment. It thus matters that FS acknowledges that it can find a strong running mate in FT with regards to women empowerment. I argue that this is clearly a domain where both can cooperate and converge with each other.

Democracy

First of all, it is significant how FS's vision on democracy is clearly mirrored in its key document, the Nyéléni declaration, whereas this is not the case for FT in the FT Charter. Instead, this information for FT is relatively dispersed so it could be a recommendation for them to be more transparent and clearer about it in their key document in order to live up to its values. However, it must be said that FT succeeds to significantly enhance the democratic voice of small producers *within* its FTOs and to a lesser extent *within* international value chains. This is arguably very similar for the FSM as it is a grassroots organization which centres peasants and their representatives at the heart of its internal structure. FS' discourse on democracy is more radical considering its plea for an agrarian reform. When compared to its pillars, FS' stance regarding is now more articulated, but still remains abstract on how exactly this should happen.

¹³ This relates also back to the origins of each movement. Whereas FT is established by European benefactors, FS is erected by peasants from the Global North and the Global North.

In general, FS manages to establish more intersectoral LOEs: starting from democracy with other variables such as farming, gender and trade. Hence the logics prove to be useful in demonstrating that democracy should be at the heart of everything for FS. In FT's discourse on democracy we only detected an intersectoral LOE with trading, as the democratic values of FT are strongly engrained in its trading process. Besides, FS also establishes some clear LOAs and thus clearly positions itself towards its opponents (TNCs and WTO) who will undermine democracy in the end. FT could pronounce more clearly what the threats of these actors could be regarding the democratic voice of the small producers that FT aims to support.

The DT approach of the empty signifier further illustrated that FS partly challenges (or contributes to) FT's conception of a "fair price". This might point to an obstacle in the light of building a strong countermovement and therefore both FT and FS should agree on what a fair price should look like (this could include a re-scaling of international FT to more regional FT).

Lastly, I want to elaborate on how FT could approach its mechanism of the FT premium towards a direction that is more FS inclined, because this ultimately depends on how it is spent. When we refer back to a crucial quote earlier mentioned by the FSM ("we will support 'fair trade' where it contributes to food sovereignty"), we see that it is here that FT could be more assertive and jump in to support small farmers in the direction of agroecology and FS, and helping them to distantiate themselves from the international market (and thus from the reformist trend) investing in right necessities. However, this is not always evident, as Soper (2016) demonstrated how local markets can be more "unfair" and harmful for the livelihood of small farmers compared to the international ones. Yet, this is very context dependent. I want to make a plea here for stronger cooperation between FT and FS as I believe that experts of each movement could assess the unique and specific local cases and support and steer them in what the most convenient decisions for the village or region at hand might be. Even though the decisions taken might initially seem to go into the direction for engagement in international markets in the short term, it might as well be - depending on the context - the shortest way to achieve more FS in the long term. Given both movements' strong focus on cooperatives, these could form the ideal lever on the local level to enhance this cooperation between FT and FS in practice.

Farming

Both FT and FS seem to point at the importance of ecologically sound farming practices and the paramount role that small-scale farmers have to play in it. Both movements also manage to establish intersectoral LOEs between farming and the environment (or even climate change in the case of FS). Although it was shown that the equivalence that FT established between farming and the environment was weakened because of its ambiguous outcomes in practice. Differently put: FS manages to construct stronger LOEs between farming and the environment by also involving an antagonism (LOA) into its discourse that openly points to the negative impact of industrial agriculture on the climate

crisis, and hence forming another threat to small farmers. This connection is only implicitly and indirectly made by FT. Another strong point of FS is that it manages to set other intersectoral LOEs that ultimately connect the topic of farming with values of democracy and women empowerment.

However, the discourse of FS laid bare some practices that are silenced by FT and thus points to some LODs between both movements. A first LOD was a set of criticisms directed to the certification system by which FT operates. In this light, it is up to FT to improve and prove the unambiguous outcomes of its certification system. Further we saw a second LOD pronounced by FS which uncovered FT's engagement with and inclination to monoculture and cash crops. The topic of monoculture indeed merits some attention when talking about FT-related farming. FT remains remarkably silent when it comes to mentioning how much percent of its farmers actually engage in monoculture-inclined farming practices. That many FT farmers are actually monoculture-inclined is assumable (or at least more likely to be the case than farmers who engage in agroecology) as they often mainly produce cash crops destined for the export market (Soper, 2016). Despite the FT minimum price and FT premium, this entails a certain risk of becoming income and food insecure in times of crises and serious crop failures. Even more so, specialisation into cash crops may lead to monoculture with higher risks of outbreaks of pests and plagues, and a decreasing productivity and quality of the produce. This is partly due to overexploitation of soils, overuse of insecticides and degraded ecosystems that go along with it (Achterbosch, van Berkum & Meijerink, 2014, pp. 33-34).

To set things straight, I do not mean to suggest here that most of the FT farmers are automatically engaging in monocultural and unsustainable practices (using pesticides, GMOs and so on). Instead, I want to make clear that farmers participating in FT, which implies engaging in cash crops among others, tend to be more inclined to monocultural practices. In other words, by engaging in the production of cash crops destined for the international market, the step towards fully monocultural mode of farming is more easily made with all potential risks that come with it. This discussion confirms the idea of FT's inclination toward the reformist trend also regarding the topic of farming.

Climate change

Regarding the topic of environment, FT and FS seem to show rather strong resemblances. Both FT and FS establish a LOA against climate change, and both acknowledge that climate change forms a real threat that may undermine its efforts in practice. FS, however, goes a step further by pointing to and antagonizing the main contributors of global warming. This arguably renders its discourse a bit more radical. Although, it must be said that FT also succeeds to clearly articulate that small-scale farmers are at the frontline of facing the negative effects of climate change (LOA). FS also concurs with this vulnerable position of small farmers regarding climate change, but this happens rather implicitly throughout many parts in the Nyéléni Declaration. Furthermore, we also notice that FT's efforts around climate change are more embedded *within* its trading practices (the so-called FT process) and thus

again are more pragmatic. FS objectives remain less outspoken, although it also has a practical offset within its efforts around agroecological farming as we read in the topic of “farming”.

Thereafter, we noticed a common intersectoral LOE between climate change and farming, for both FT and FS. In the discourse of FT we detected another, broader intersectoral LOE between climate change, trade and democracy in which FT seemed to lay a certain responsibility (or autonomy) at the side of the small farmers to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. FS on the other hand, upholds a remarkable reasoning in this regard, by establishing two LOAs that have the effect of a double-edged sword. On one side of the sword climate change endangers FS’s efforts, on the other, FS quasi portrays itself as a potential solution to fight climate change. In other words: the more one side will be pushed through, the more it will cut out space of the other and vice versa. I will baptize this kind of logic with the name of a “double-edged antagonism” or a “double-edged LOA”¹⁴. Additionally, the strong antagonism FS directed towards the main contributors, implies that the latter have the biggest responsibility to take up in the climate crisis.

Furthermore, FS’ implicit reference to forms of greenwashing and risk of corporate takeover indicates to a potential threat for FT and the rest of the food movement as this implies an undesirable alliance with the reformist trend. This was also mentioned under the discussion on “trade”. It is a consciousness that the FTM should pick up, take a clearer stance on, and communicate about it more transparently in its key documents.

Despite the strong criticism above, I would like to end with a positive note here. I am especially referring here to the potential of cooperation between the two movements in combating climate change as both seem to be rather like minded in orientation and discourse on the topic. As FS stresses the importance of cooperation and solidarity with other movements in order to achieve its goals, it seems to reach a hand to FT. It stands in solidarity with those other social movements “that are the expression of various actors in food and distribution” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 11, 66). The established FT networks of solidarity and awareness could be of great importance in connecting their efforts with the struggle for FS in both the global North and South. Or as one attendee of the Nyéléni summit uttered: “consumers [also those in the North] can and must be mobilized!” (Nyéléni, 2007, p. 67).

An overview of all these insights on the variables and how both FT and FS resonate with each other regarding orientation (discourse) and practice, can be found in table 2 (see appendix).

¹⁴ See appendix for a more elaborated definition.

3.3 Fair trade and food sovereignty in Palestine

In this third section, I will juxtapose the most prominent FT organization in Palestine (Al Reef) with its FS counterpart, the Union of Agricultural Workers Committee (UAWC). The focus however will lie on how these two organizations (along with other PNGOs) relate and contribute to the findings on the key documents of FT and FS. Due to place restrictions, I will pay less attention to the DT approach here. Besides observations from Al Reef and UAWC, this part is also based on observations from the fifteen interviews with six different PNGOs and some questionnaires I conducted with its representatives and directors. Referring to what Bacon (2015, p. 474) wrote – that researchers thus far have not examined the intermingling of FT networks and FS concepts within smallholder cooperatives – was part of the outset when conducting interviews with these PNGOs in the agricultural sector.

Background on agriculture in Palestine

The people in Palestine are struggling. Palestinian farmers have to fight for access to their natural resources due to the daily threats they suffer under Israeli occupation. The PAS today is deteriorating under the Israeli occupation. Since 1967, circa 200 settlements that house more than 620.000 Israelis, have been illegally built in the occupied Palestinian territories. Besides land, water is a prime target for the occupation as Israel controls more than 80 percent of Palestine's water (B'tselem, 2017). Also the building of an Apartheid wall and daily settler attacks can all be framed within Israel's (neoliberal) policy that aims to expel Palestinians of their land in order to confiscate it. Also in trade policy Israel hampers Palestinian agriculture. Practices of subsidized food dumping and internal mobility constraints enable settler farmers to outcompete Palestinians (Gelvin, 2005). Nevertheless, the PAS remains the main absorber of labour as it is crucial in ensuring employment and even represents 39 percent of the informal sector. Additionally, small-scale farming makes up more than 80 percent of the PAS (Taweel, 2019). This context places Palestinian farmers in the forefront of the struggle.

Trade

All PNGOs I interviewed agreed that the main aim of production should be for the local market. If Palestinian farmers' first objective would be the international market, they would be too vulnerable to its whims (Milhem, personal communication, April 9, 2020). Also the director of Al Reef agreed on this, however he pointed to five specific cases in Palestine wherein he demonstrates that the local market alone is not enough and where access to international markets becomes of great importance for Palestine. A first one is that the PAS suffers from movement restrictions imposed by Israel which makes exporting very difficult. Therefore, Al Reef provides necessary support to export produce to foreign markets. A second reason is that the local Palestinian market is becoming very weak because of Israeli

food dumping. This makes it almost impossible for Palestinians to compete with the very low prices imposed by Israel. Consequently, it is more profitable for many Palestinian farmers to sell their product, such as dates, through a FT market to sustain their livelihoods. A third one is that there are often seasons with a lot of overproduction in olive oil. The access to foreign markets through FT hence forms a better opportunity for farmers compared to when they would sell through mainstream markets. A fourth reason is that FT enables the farmer to share their story of oppression with consumers in European markets and elsewhere, which raises awareness where about their precarious situation (Abu Ghazaleh, personal communication, May 6, 2020). The effect of this awareness instigated by FT can be seen in a fifth observation which demonstrates the enhanced international solidarity. Palestinian farmers receive more visits from international delegations which ultimately protects them from settler attacks (Abu Ghazaleh, 2009, pp. 68-69).

The second and third examples are cases about food products that can be considered cash crops, olive oil and dates, given that these are the most exported Palestinian products. Note that cash crops are something which is criticized by FS. In this vein, a representative from UAWC was quite sceptic about FT as he uttered that we cannot speak of “real fair trade” when exporting to international markets since Palestine has to deal with unfair competition from Israel (Bsharat, July 16, 2020). However, we find that UAWC, with its trading arm (called Mount of Green Olives) also deems it important to sell olive oil through FT markets.

The five above mentioned observations of Al Reef underpin the hypothesis drawn from the Nyéléni Declaration (2007, p. 39), in that “access to markets” locally but also internationally are of great importance in Palestine. Even more so the hypothesis is confirmed as UAWC, the FS organization in Palestine, also aims at exporting Palestinian olive oil through FT markets. Hence we see a shift in FS’ discourse towards more international trade in Palestine compared to Nyéléni.

Gender

Both Al Reef and UAWC concord with what is written in the key documents. Their focus on women empowerment can be seen in different projects that are enabled through the cooperatives (Al Reef, 2016; UAWC, 2019). Also in most other PNGOs women empowerment is one of the central objectives. The director of PARC¹⁵ explained that this unanimity on the issue of gender equality is not some ideal that is recommended by Western NGOs. Instead, it is the context of occupation which forces men and women to see each other as equals in their struggle for liberation (Zeidan, personal communication, May 15, 2020).

¹⁵ The Agricultural Development Association (PARC) is a national developmental organization which works on developing and strengthening the resilience of the PAS. Together with UAWC, it is considered the biggest PNGO in the PAS. Al Reef is its trading arm.

Democracy

The observation drawn from the key documents, i.e. that cooperatives might form a good entry point for cooperation is confirmed by Al Reef and UAWC, given that both work very narrowly with cooperatives in different projects to enhance the democratic power of farmers. What both PNGOs add to FS and FT is that their democratic rights should be enhanced through national liberation (Al Reef, 2016; UAWC, 2019).

Earlier, on the discussion of a “fair price” we saw that both FT and FS had a different conception on the term and how this could form an obstacle. A hybrid example that somehow reconciles both conceptions in the discussion is the case of the Palestinian Farmers’ Union (PFU).¹⁶ Its director explained that for him a “fair price” is embodied in the PFU’s white cheese campaign. Through local FT, intermediaries are left out which allows the farmers to receive a higher price and the consumers to buy it for a lower price at the same time. So a fair price here means one that is fair for both producers and consumers (Milhem, personal communication, April 9, 2020). With this example of local FT (that might incline more to FS), the PFU shows that a middle way is possible between FT and FS which

In FS pillar 4 the need for interaction and cooperation between food providers from different regions in context of internal conflict was stressed. However, in the interviews I did with six different NGOs, none of them knew about any kind of Israeli organization that was in support of the PAS. This is striking as the last interview I conducted was with Sindyanna of Galilee (SOG), an Israeli-based FTO who puts Israeli-Palestinian cooperation and women empowerment at the heart of its policy (Lahav, personal communication, July 31, 2020). It might be of importance for the PNGOs to recognize these efforts of the SOG as these forms of joint resistance could be of value for the democratic enhancement of small farmers and in the light of resisting occupation.

Farming

Regarding the farming practices, both Al Reef and UAWC correspond to what is found in the key documents since the first primarily focuses on organic farming, whereas the latter promotes the idea of agroecology. Both farming methods are considered as ecologically sustainable. Further, the UAWC’s establishment of a seed bank in 2003 is the embodiment of agroecology as it assures that historic local seeds are preserved and protected from the threat of extinction by agribusiness (Al Reef, 2016; UAWC, 2019).

¹⁶ The PFU is a broadly recognized Palestinian farmers’ network, which represents farmers through advocacy and active district farmers’ associations in all agricultural sectors and communities.

Besides, there are two observations that can be drawn from the interviews which resonate with or contribute to the key documents. A first one is the need expressed by Nyéléni (2007, p. 43) for conceptual clarity around terms like agroecology, organic and ecologically farming. This critique is applicable to Palestine as I found that, especially FTOs like Al Reef and SOG were very well updated on the idea of organic farming, but not on agroecology. A second one is the notion of “farming as resistance”, an idea that reoccurred in different interviews. “To be a farmer means to be a fighter. Water and land are the main problem of occupation, their strategies are to confiscate them and build settlements on it. They want Palestinians to become cheap workers on Israeli land and factories” (Abu Ghazaleh, personal communication, April 28, 2020). Palestinian farmers have become separated from their lands and often are physically impeded access to what is theirs. Or as Milhem (personal communication, April 9, 2020) succinctly puts it: “Getting access to your farm on a daily basis is a fight by itself”. Farming in Palestine is not neutral, but rather a political act. The very act of cultivating the land becomes a way to resist the occupation. Yassin (personal communication, April 15, 2020) from the ESDC¹⁷ reflects this idea as he states that “It is not a matter of challenges here and there but a matter of being... Farming in Palestine is a tool of resistance to stay on the land because it is under the constant threat of Israeli annexation”. Note the strong antagonism that is present in this paragraph.

Climate change

In the key documents we saw that climate change was broadly seen as a huge antagonist for both FT and FS efforts as well as for farmers. In the context of Palestinian agriculture however, despite acknowledging climate change (Al Reef, 2016; UAWC, 2019), the biggest threat is occupation (LOA). The current COVID-19 crisis that hits the PAS is only exacerbating this threat as settler attacks increase and the PAS is becoming even more marginalized (Milhem, personal communication, April 9, 2020). Under COVID-19, around 200.000 Palestinian labourers who work in Palestine (often dispossessed ex-farmers) were forced to go back to their hometowns in Palestine. As a response, both UAWC and Al Reef started to distribute vegetable seedlings along with promoting home gardening so that this vulnerable group could improve its own food security. Especially UAWC made extra efforts to also distribute local seedlings to encounter the imported ones. This implies a certain opportunity for a significant group of Palestinians to go back to their land and cultivate it while also contributing to more FS. Accordingly, Milhem (personal communication, April 9, 2020) believes that FS is gaining importance in Palestine under COVID-19, as FS is a way of looking more critically to the occupying power.

¹⁷ The Economic and Social Development Center of Palestine (ESDC) is an independent Palestinian non-profit civil society organization. They work on integrated rural development.

Concluding thoughts

Throughout the above discussion we notice that the Al Reef (FT) and UAWC (FS) in Palestine are for a great part in line with respectively FT and FS of the key documents. However, it should be noted that FT and FS in Palestine, along with the PNGOs in the PAS also made some considerable contributions to the discussion of the key documents of FT and FS. Firstly, the “access to markets”, also international markets, seem to be of great value and this is something that is also taken up by UAWC. For FS and its Nyéléni declaration, “access to markets” is something that could be acknowledged more in its discourse. Secondly, we saw that gender equality is further advanced through the common struggle under occupation. Third, on the democratic level we saw that the PNGOs contributed on how FT and FS could conceive of a “fair price”, but on the other hand the PNGOs should be more aware of initiatives from the Israeli side that might strengthen them in their struggle. Fourth, the discussion on farming taught that there is indeed need for more conceptual clarity in the different ecological farming practices in Palestine, in line with Nyéléni’s suggestion. Besides, the depiction of “farming as resistance” that is so present in Palestine, is in line with how FS depicts farmers (a common LOA that leads to a strong LOE), but is something which could be taken up more explicitly in FT’s discourse (for example by establishing an antagonistic relation between “farmers” and “TNCs”). Fifth, in line with the previous comment, we saw how both Al Reef and UAWC (along with other PNGOs) framed occupation as the most dangerous threat, and not climate change. Lastly, COVID-19 might open up a certain opportunity for more (awareness on) FS.

Throughout these conclusions, there are a four more insights that come to the surface. 1) Regarding FS and FT, FS seems the most applicable to Palestine as its democratic demands are more in line with the liberation struggles of the Palestinians.¹⁸ 2) Nevertheless, we saw that FT plays an important role as well, especially in enhancing access to international markets and international solidarity. However, this might entail the danger of FT only contributing to the status quo of occupation, as its practices partly tend to *mitigate* and not *oppose*. 3) Yet, from the above observations we might conclude that FT and FS in Palestine seem to go more hand in hand with each other as compared to FT and FS in their key documents. 4) Building on these observations leads me to the following hypothesis: FT and FS in Palestine (along with the other PNGOs) might be more inclined toward each other as they face a strong common threat of occupation. This assumption is further confirmed by the questionnaires that some PNGOs filled in (see appendix), where they had to give their opinion on fifteen topics. In this questionnaire I investigated whether the PNGOs inclined more to the discourse of food security or to that of FS. It is noteworthy to see how all of them incline for the most of their answers to the side of FS (even Al Reef and the Israeli FTO). I acknowledge that this questionnaire has some flaws, but it might

¹⁸ One interviewee pointed out that not only FT, but also FS is in part not fully appropriate to the Palestinian context. Instead of FS he proposed the term “sovereignty over natural resources” in order to be sovereign over food (Milhem, personal communication, July 26, 2020).

still be a good indicator for the unanimity in orientation among the PNGOs.¹⁹ This in turn might indicate the presence of a common basis for stronger cooperation in the PAS towards more FS. This hypothesis could be further elaborated in further research.

¹⁹ These questionnaires can be found in the appendix. It should be noted that the questionnaire is not free from flaws and is exploratory in nature.

4. Conclusion

The central question in this dissertation was how FT and FS can build a strategic alliance in order to challenge the current CFR. This question was further elaborated by asking what the (dis)similarities were in the discourse of FT and FS based on their core values and key documents. By applying discourse theory, I was able to make a critical assessment on this issue that has thus far been underexplored in academic research. This research might have contributed by pointing out the potential entry points for stronger cooperation between FT and FS in the future. Besides, this research was able to make a small contribution to the upcoming field of discourse theory.

By analysing the discourse of FT and FS through a discourse-theoretical lens, I hope to have demonstrated the usefulness of this method as a valuable tool when measuring and pinpointing the stance of a movement related to another movement within the food movements framework. Through the use of *logics*, discourse theory allowed me to make some critical observations on the statements and declarations of each movement and brought to the fore some potential points of convergence and divergence, as well as some essential issues that remain silenced by one or the other movement. Furthermore, throughout the analysis, I introduced three new concepts that might contribute to the field of discourse theory: “intersectoral logics”, a “teleologic of equivalence” (TLOE), and a “double-edged antagonism” (see appendix).

Through a discourse-theoretical assessment of the core values of FT and FS, I was able to empirically distil five common variables that functioned as empty signifiers: trade, gender, democracy, farming, and climate change. These formed the building blocks to analyse the key documents of each movement. Accordingly, it was tested in the key documents how FT and FS would articulate their stance on each of these variables in order to have a clearer view on where the points of convergence and divergence lie. To further excavate these points of convergence and divergence, the (intersectoral) logics, LOEs, LODs and LOAs proved to be fruitful tools within DT.

In the analysis of the key documents through the variables we found different outcomes – with each of these variables opening up more or fewer opportunities for cooperation. In general, we can divide these five variables in three groups, ordered from greater to fewer probability for cooperation. In a first group we find rather strong resemblances and common goals. This group consists of the variables gender and climate change. This is indicated by the common intersectoral LOEs that were found on the interdiscursive level between FT and FS. This implies that starting from these two sectors, both movements might find a way to cooperate relatively easy. Both gender and climate change thus form the ideal entry points for an eventual future alliance. A second group contains the variables of democracy and farming among which we find moderate resemblances. Here the intersectoral equivalences (LOEs) between FT and FS were somewhat weaker as they were often accompanied by considerable differences (LODs). This implies that both movements value these variables, but the way

they bring it into practice might differ and bring along some obstacles. Lastly, the third group solely consists of trade. Regarding the variable of trade the resemblances are rather weak. Regarding both movements' stance on trade we found several differences (LODs) or even some antagonisms (LOAs) concerning their stance on trading practices, which implies that a cooperation in this regard might be complicated by several major obstacles. It must be noted however that FT and FS are connected through an equivalence in their discourse as they both antagonize the TNCs in international trade. This common struggle could thus form an entry point for cooperation in the diverged field of trade. Besides, I am convinced that FT and FS could supplement each other and even be complementary on the topic of trade. This was demonstrated by the case of Palestine to which I will turn below. Finally, the pragmatic role of the cooperatives was something that frequently recurred in both discourses, as well as in Palestine, and thus forms a valuable entry point for convergence. Especially the FT cooperatives might play a steering role given that they can be the pioneers to see how FT can contribute to more FS in the local context.

Regarding the unique case of agriculture in Palestine, we found that Al Reef (FT) and UAWC (FS) were to a certain extent in line with its counterparts of the key documents. However, the deviant case of Palestine and the PNGOs were also able to contribute to some of the discussions between FT and FS in the key documents. Furthermore, FT and FS seem both very important in the Palestinian agricultural sector, and thus might seem to go more hand in hand than the observations from the key documents would suggest. (Yet it should be noted that FSM's demands are more in line with the democratic needs of the Palestinians for national liberation, and FT should be aware not to perpetuate the status quo of occupation.) This led me to formulate the following hypothesis: FT and FS in Palestine (along with the other PNGOs) might be more inclined toward each other in their objectives because of the strong common threat of occupation. This in turn might indicate the presence of a common basis for stronger cooperation in the Palestinian agricultural sector towards more FS. Evidence further suggests that the COVID-19 pandemic in Palestine might be an opportunity for more FS in practice as well. However, this hypothesis might need to be further elaborated in future research.

In order to make strategic alliances between the progressive and radical trend, Holt Giménez and Shattuck (2011) argued that it is essential to set the same goals and objectives. This would mean that both have to ally their discourse more with that of the other. However, given that FT has a pivotal role in the food system and that FS' discourse is the most radical one in opposing the CFR, it is recommended that FT is the one that must undergo most concessions. This is further underpinned by FS' many formulations of differences (LODs) towards FT. This would mean that FT should "radicalize" its discourse (and its principles) more in the direction of FS and at the same time distancing itself from the reformist trend. Here I will formulate a few recommendations.

FT should more explicitly use the term "farmer" and "peasant" in its key documents and especially in the FT principles. FT could include target groups and categories in its discourse that also refer to the Palestinian people and other peoples under occupation, with references such as: "hungry", "people in

conflict” and “people under occupation”. FS succeeds in doing so. Outside of the Palestinian case as well, we notice that the discourse of FT is less inclusive than that of FS on two aspects. First it manages to include other sectors than farming alone (such as the livestock, fishery and forestry sectors) in its discourse. Secondly, FS succeeds to address to a broader group, such as “the people”, and “the food providers and consumers”, but also has more radical democratic demands than FT has. This discourse of FS has some populist tendencies that Mouffe would deem useful in order to build a strong left populism that could challenge the extant neoliberal discourse. She states that: “the democratic demands that a left populist strategy seeks to articulate are heterogeneous and this is why they need to be articulated in a chain of equivalence” (Mouffe, 2018, pp. 62-63). This would imply that it is up to FT to link its demands more in the direction to those of FS, among others by being more inclusive. FT should put the focus of its principles not only on the FT organizations but shift it also towards the broader issue of farming, and more specifically agroecology. As the FS’ discourse indicated, the discourse of FT remains too silent on issues like monoculture and cash crops. FT organizations should thus play a major steering role in supporting the cooperatives and small farmers towards more agroecological farming practices. Regarding trade, arguably the topic where FT and FS differ the most, there are some concessions that could be made by either sides. FT should consider efforts to re-scale and reduce international trade given that the latter is the major factor that makes trade “unfair” (as alleged by FS advocates). Besides, FT could make more efforts to distantiate itself from the market in order to avoid corporate takeover and take a clearer stance towards greenwashing. As such, FT might be able to move away further from the reformist trend. In this regard it could draw on experiences of the FSM. FS on the other hand should not a priori be reluctant to the achievements of FT (despite FT operating in international trade networks). Instead, the FSM should consider how FT can potentially contribute to more FS. It is also FT’s responsibility to think of how it can be complementary to FS. Lastly, in this light I recommend both FT and FS to take up the concept of the other movement in its discourse and articulate how FT can contribute the FS. Because in the end, it is clear that FS and agroecology seem the most appropriate answer to the CFR, but to achieve it, both must acknowledge that it presumes a long-term process and that strong cooperation between the two is all the more necessary.²⁰

Lastly, I want to make a strong plea for further comparative research on FT and FS in order to investigate how FT could contribute to FS. I am convinced that, in cases where FS or the local markets fall short, FT could be a viable (temporary) alternative and even contribute to more FS in the long term. Future research could focus on other regions or and see which opportunities for cooperation between FT and FS that the COVID-19 crisis might bring along. Also the hypothesis that I proposed regarding Palestine could be investigated in further academic research: whether the common threat of occupation might cause FT and FS to go more hand in hand, and whether this is because FT organizations in Palestine are more inclined to the side of FS. This research could eventually point out some lessons for the broader FTM and FSM in the light of cooperation. Further academic inquiry could

²⁰ Minor recommendations can be found in the concluding thoughts of each section.

start from the key texts of hegemonic institutions, such as the UN, WFP and the FAO - as they fell outside of the scope of this master's dissertation. Subsequently, these can be juxtaposed with the key documents of countermovements and scrutinize how their discourses relate to and collide with each other. In this regard it might be especially interesting to see how FT as a pivotal player is (un)related to their discourse. Besides focusing on how FT and FS could form a strong countermovement to challenge the CFR, future research could investigate how food movements make cross-sector alliances with the multitude of groups in the environmental and social justice movements. In doing so, it could highlight the potential to build a broader countermovement that challenges not only the CFR, but also the neoliberal hegemonic system. Research of this kind could contribute to new insights on how the current regime can be transformed.

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6. Appendix

6.1 List of interviews

Date interview	Respondent (Belgium)	Identity/Function
14/04/2020	Marion Meyvis	Productmanager - Oxfam Fair Trade
23/04/2020	Tom Ysewijn	Policy advisor - Oxfam Wereldwinkels
08/05/2020	Thierry Kesteloot	Policy officer - Oxfam Solidariteit
14/05/2020 05/06/2020	Jonathan Matthysen	Polidy advisor - Oxfam Wereldwinkels

Date interview	Respondent (Palestine)	Identity/Function
09/04/2020 26/07/2020	Abbas Milhem	Executive Director - PFU
12/04/2020 18/04/2020	Mohammed Mutawea	Agronomist and project manager - UAWC
15/04/2020 16/04/2020	Abed Yassin	Director of programs - ESDC
28/04/2020 06/05/2020 21/07/2020	Saleem Abu Ghazaleh	General director - Al Reef Fair trade
04/05/2020	Mari,e M. Shawahina	General manager - PLDC
13/05/2020 16/07/2020	Moayyad Bsharat	Projects and program manager of the west bank - UAWC
14/05/2020	Izzat Zeidan	Director of programs and projects - PARC
31/07/2020 02/08/2020	Hadas Lahav	General Manager - Sindyanna of Galilee (FT Israel)

6.2 Table 1: The discourse of FT and FS based on their core values

Table 1: Overview of the empty signifiers (variables) and their nodal points in the discourse of the FT principles and FS pillars.

<u>Empty signifier</u> →	Trade	Gender	Democracy	Farming	Climate change/en vironment
Fair trade					
FT Principle	1, 3, 8	4, 6	2, 4, 6	3, 10	10
Intersectoral logics*	(weak LOE with democracy +/-)	LOE with democracy	LOE with gender	weak LOE with environment	weak LOE w. farming
Nodal points	1)Poverty reduction; income security; economic self-sufficiency; ownership; 3)Economic well-being; no profit on behalf of small producers; pre-payment; compensation; solidarity; growth of FT; increase volume of trade; growth of FTM; increased income; 8)Production capabilities; access to markets (all markets);	4)Equal pay; equal work; equal (= <u>women</u> and men) 6)No discrimination; gender equality; access to resources; active (female) members; (women in) leadership positions;	2)Transparency; accountability; confidentiality; participatory (producers participate in DM); <u>decision-making</u> (DM); open communication; 4)fair payment, mutually negotiated; dialogue; participation; equal pay; 6)no discrimination; gender equality; active members; right to trade unions; bargain collectively;	3)Protects cultural identity; <u>traditional skills</u> ; 10)organic; <u>low</u> pesticides use; - small <i>producers</i> -	10)Sustainable sources; buy local ; technologies to reduce energy; renewable energy; minimize waste; organic farming; low pesticide use; recycled/biodegradable packing;
Food sovereignty					

FS Pillar	3	2	1, 3, 4	3, 5, 6	6
Intersectoral logics*	weak LOA with democracy	/	weak LOA with international trade; weak LOE with farming	weak LOE with democracy; strong LOE w. environment	strong LOE w. farming
Nodal points	3) No unsustainable and unequitable international trade, no unaccountable corporations 4) (<i>share</i>)	2) Rights of <u>women</u> and men;	1) People at centre of food; food for all; peoples and communities; 3) providers and consumers at centre of <u>decision-making</u> ; 4) Local control over resources; share; interaction;	3) No GMOs; 5) <u>local skills / knowledge</u> ; local food systems; 6) agroecology; <u>low external input</u> ; ecosystems; resilience (climate change); no monocultures; no intensive farming; no industrial food production; - <i>peasants; ssf</i> -	6) Agroecology; resilience; adaptation; no monocultures; no intensive farming; no industrial food production
FT and FS compared**					
FT and FS: Common nodal points	/	Women	Decision-making	Traditional / local skill or knowledge (indigenous); low external input	/
Similarity in orientation	-	++	- +	- +	++
Similarity in discourse ***	--	+?	+?	-	+

Legend.

* A “weak logic” is here used to refer to an implicit connection, a “strong logic” to an explicit one.

** These variables and the (dis)similarities that exist among FT and FS regarding discourse and orientation will need to be reconsidered after studying the main documents of each movement to have a clearer view on their actual stance. The question marks refer to the fact that it is rather premature to give a definitive answer on this issue, as the discursive material of the principles and pillars is rather limited.

*** The grades regarding (dis)similarity in discourse and orientation are interpretative and involve an unavoidable level of subjectivity of myself, the interpreter. The different grades that are distinguished are: - - (weak similarity); - (rather weak); - + (moderate); + (rather strong); + + (strong).

6.3 Table 2: The discourse of FT and FS based on the key documents

Table 2: Overview of the (discourse-theoretical) analysis of FT and FS based on the key documents.

Empty signifier →	Trade	Gender	Democracy	Farming	Climate change/enviroment
Fair trade					
FT Principle	1, 3, 8	4, 6	2, 4, 6	3, 10	10
Intersectoral logics*	weak LOE with democracy	strong LOE democracy	LOE w. trade	LOE w. environment	LOE farming; LOE trade
Nodal points	Partnerships, small farmers, busineses, governments, sustainable economic growth; connects producers, consumers; access to markets; reform trade; no restriction, no protectionism , better management; correct power imbalances; no domination by firms (TNCs); transform trade, not just growth, social justice, sustainability;	Women empowerment (impact) income, health, education, social development; leaders, entrepreneurial role models; gender leadership schools, seed funding, FT premium; decision making, cooperatives; better wages, diversify, no stereotypes;	Inclusive , democratic organizations, education, health, social facilities, spreading gains of trade, from the ground up, ethical, accountability, <u>cooperatives</u> , transparent , negotiate , access to credit, board, GA, elected by all, participation ; fair price , FT minimum price, FT premium, <u>cooperative</u> , invest democratically;	Protection, biodiversity; sustainable production patterns, FT environmental standards, organic, no GMOs; <u>ssf</u> ; standards on pesticides and fertilisers (e.g. organic fertilisers); FT-organic certification;	Ssf most vulnerable, adaptation, mitigation; climate change, climate emergency; organic farming, recycling; climate resilient agriculture, renewable, organic fertilisers, agroforestry; carbon market; FT premium, resilient; internalizing environmental externalities

Food sovereignty					
FS Pillar	3	2	1, 3, 4	3, 5, 6	6
Intersectoral logics*	strong LOE with democracy	strong LOE democracy; LOE farming;	strong LOE w. farming; LOE gender; LOE trade	LOE gender, democracy, environment	LOE farming;
Nodal points	Trade policies, rights of peoples, ecologically sustainable; re-scaled, reduced, localized, no TNCs; interchange; exchange; alternative market exchange; bartering; seed fairs; non-market food; informal market, CSA; food no tradeable commodity	Women; access to land, women's knowledge, autonomy; custodians of biodiversity; no monoculture, chemicals, GMOs; Equality between sexes, respect, equality, justice, solidarity, peace, freedom; equal pay; access to land (resources), decent working, training, information, autonomy, decision making	People's power, participatory democracy, (co-opted); democratic control land and resources, peoples, marginalized, women; No privatization, exploitation, accumulation, no WTO, TNCs; social justice equality, solidarity; fair price , consumer forums, local, solidarity markets, (women) <u>cooperatives</u> , <u>transparent</u> ; UNDROP ; power to the people, agrarian reform, customary rights, community-based	<u>Farmers</u> as custodians, traditional agriculture, agroecology, cooperation, nature, knowledge of women and indigenous, control community (local); ecological production, agroecology, no TNCs; no intensive farming, no monoculture, <u>no</u> <u>GMOs</u> , no chemicals, <u>no</u> <u>pesticides</u> , danger of cash crops;	No TNCs; (no greenwashing); FS as response (agroecology), resilience, adaptation; solidarity; cooperation;

FT and FS compared**					
FT and FS: Common nodal points	No TNCs; change trade policies, failed neoliberal system	Equal pay; decent work; access to training; information; decision making; equal	cooperatives; transparent; fair price;	Role small farmers; no GMOs, no pesticides (regulation)	/
Similarity in orientation (discourse) **	+	+	- +	+	++
Similarity in practice ***	-	+	- +	- +	+

Legend.

The words in bold are the main nodal points which could on its turn also be considered as empty signifiers when placed in a certain discourse. The words that are underlined are to refer to the nodal points that FT and FS have in common in their discourse regarding a certain variable/empty signifier.

* A “weak logic” is here used to refer to an implicit connection, a “strong logic” to an explicit one.

** The grades regarding (dis)similarity in orientation and practice are interpretative and involve an unavoidable level of subjectivity of myself, the interpreter. The different grades that are distinguished are: - - (weak similarity); - (rather weak); - + (moderate); + (rather strong); + + (strong).

*** The similarities in practice might ultimately be decisive to point out how likely it is that FT and FS cooperate on this variable. For instance, in the case of “trade” where FT and FS have a rather strong similarity in orientation (and discourse), whereas the similarity in practice is rather weak. This might mean that FT should try to live up more to its practices as compared to what is says in its discourse.

6.4 Contributions to discourse theory

Abbreviations

LOE: Logic of equivalence

LOD: Logic of difference

LOD: Logic of antagonism

Intersectoral logics: intersectoral LOE (less frequent were intersectoral LODs and intersectoral LOAs)

TLOE: Teleologic of equivalence

Intersectoral LOE

Intersectoral logics or the intersectoral logic of equivalence is the most frequently useful one in comparing discourse between two actors regarding several variables or sectors. In this dissertation these intersectoral LOEs were useful to make links and compare the stance of FT and FS towards certain variables (trade, gender, democracy, farming, and climate change).

Using this newly introduced intersectoral logic, when applied *interdiscursively*, proved to be a utile instrument that facilitates to make reflections on the (dis)similarities between the movements (for instance by looking at the intersectoral LOEs they have in common). This in turn allows to look at the probability of building strong alliances between the two movements.

Teleologic of equivalence (TLOE)

This logic was proposed in section 3.2 when discussing the stance of FT on trade. The example from the text will be given below as well as a definition.

The FT Charter states that a FT system provides “*citizens with information on supply chains and trading terms so they can make purchasing choices according to their principles*” (LOE) (WFTO & FI, 2018, p. 15). This sentence encloses a certain responsibility of the consumers who, when informed, will buy according to their principles. However, the LOE that is established here is somewhat taken for granted. Practice shows that even though consumers are ethical and aware, they will not necessarily buy the FT product. This reasoning leads to what I would call a *teleologic of equivalence* (TLOE). It implies the presence of a too short-sighted taken-for-grantedness in the speech of a speaker and a lack of scientific proof that one thing will lead to another and could thus be seen as a shortcoming in the reasoning. When a TLOE is detected in a discourse, the speaker could be held accountable for lack of articulation, scientific proof and clarification of how one thing would lead to another (e.g. “how” awareness would “automatically” lead to consumers buying FT). Note that the detection of a TLOE is partly subject to the interpretation of the analyst.

This TLOE could be situated in what Howarth and Torfing (2005) call the social logics within their logics framework. This social logic also relates to what these authors call a political logic, as is explained below.

The political logics describe the contestation and counter-contestation of social norms and principles: they capture the struggle over what is considered normal and common sense. Secondly, the social logics are the patterns that are experienced by all their subjects as normal. Of course, normal patterns entailed by social logics can become controversial and vice versa. Social logics transforming into political logics lead to ‘politicization’, while political logics that transform into social logics lead to ‘depoliticization’ (Jacobs, 2020, p. 244). In the light of the food movements framework, we could state for instance that the hegemonic discourse around food security is one that is becoming politicized as it is increasingly becoming contested by the discourse of FT and FS.

Double-edged antagonism

An example of this concept was given in section 3.2 when discussing the stance of FS regarding climate change. A potential definition of this newly introduced concept is the following. A double-edged antagonism is an antagonism wherein one side of the antagonist equation articulates the threat of the other side. This relation which is considered as critical or problematic can be (partly) dissolved or mitigated (at least that is what the one side will contend) when the one side will achieve more power in the (political) field of contestation. The one side thus portrays itself as a new counter-hegemonic force. I acknowledge that this kind of reasoning is very often implicitly present in any antagonistic relation. The difference with the double-edged LOA here is that it establishes the LOA explicitly two times: one time the speaker is at one side of the antagonistic equation, the second time at the other side. This effect of a double-edged LOA might be that the antagonism between the two is exacerbated. But it also contains a weakness as it entails a kind of circular reasoning. On the other hand, it has a metaphorical character, which underlines and highlights the antagonistic relation at hand.

6.5 Questionnaires

Instructions:

- Under each topic you can choose either from the side of Column A, or the side of B.
- Mark with a cross: "X"
- Note: 5 = strongly agree (and disagree with the 5 on the other side); 0 = neutral
- Under the questionnaire, you can add comments if you want to clarify your answer (for example if you answered "neutral") (You can answer in the language you like)
- Answer according to your own opinion, on how you think the agriculture in Palestine should look like regarding the following topics.

Al Reef (Fair Trade)

Questionnaire: What is your opinion on the following statements regarding agriculture and trade in Palestine?												
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →					
Topic	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Trade	Believes in free trade						No free trade in agriculture and food system					
											x	
2. Access to market	Entrance to foreign markets						concentrates on local markets					
											x	
3. Price of crops	Market should dictate prices (often low prices)						Price of crops should be fair (to cover costs of production)					
											x	

4. Main production aim	For exports						For local market				
						x					
5. Subsidies	Paid to mainly large-scale farmers in US and Europe						Should be paid to small-scale farmers				
											x
6. Food	As a commodity						Should be a human right				
											x
7. Land accessibility	Through the market						Through agrarian reform				
										x	
8. Cause of hunger	Because of low productivity						Due to poverty and inequality in the access and distribution of resources				
											x
9. Ability to produce	Should be for economically efficient people						Should be a right for the rural people				
											x
10. Route to food security	Through importation of food from the cheapest sources						Through local production				
											x
11. Control of productive resources	By private individuals and companies						Community based and local control				

													x
12. Food dumping	Is allowed						Should be banned						
													x
13. Farming technologies	Monoculture, industrialized (use of chemicals, GMOs)						Use of sustainable farming methods, agroecology						
													x
14. Seeds	Are exclusive patented commodities						Should be available to rural communities						
													x
15. Over- production	Does not exist						Leads to low prices, which suppress small farmers						
									x				
	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5		
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →						

UAWC (Food Sovereignty)

Questionnaire: What is your opinion on the following statements regarding agriculture and trade?												
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →					
Topic	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Trade	Believes in free trade						No free trade in agriculture and food system					
									x			
2. Access to market	Entrance to foreign markets						concentrates on local markets					
										x		
3. Price of crops	Market should dictate prices (often low prices)						Price of crops should be fair (to cover costs of production)					
											x	
4. Main production aim	For exports						For local market					
											x	
5. Subsidies	Paid to mainly large-scale farmers in US and Europe						Should be paid to small-scale farmers					
											x	
6. Food	As a commodity						Should be a human right					

14. Seeds	Are exclusive patented commodities						Should be available to rural communities				
											x
15. Over- production	Does not exist						Leads to low prices, which suppress small farmers				
*							x				
	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →				

PFU

Note:

- "x" refers to how the interviewee perceived of this topic personally and in an ideal context
- "x(r)" refers to how the interviewee considers how the situation is now in reality in Palestine

Questionnaire: What is your opinion on the following statements regarding agriculture and trade?											
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →				
Topic	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5
1. Trade	Believes in free trade						No free trade in agriculture and food system				
*		x							x (T)	x (r)	
2. Access to market	Entrance to foreign markets						concentrates on local markets				
*		(x)						(x)		x(r)	
3. Price of crops	Market should dictate prices (often low prices)						Price of crops should be fair (to cover costs of production)				
*		x (r)									x
4. Main production aim	For exports						For local market				
*						x (r)					x
5. Subsidies	Paid to mainly large-scale farmers in US and Europe						Should be paid to small-scale farmers				

*					x (r)					x	
6. Food	As a commodity						Should be a human right				
			x (r)							x	
7. Land accessibility	Through the market						Through agrarian reform				
*						x (r)				x	
8. Cause of hunger	Because of low productivity						Due to poverty and inequality in the access and distribution of resources				
										x x(r)	
9. Ability to produce	Should be for economically efficient people						Should be a right for the rural people				
			x (r)							x	
10. Route to food security	Through importation of food from the cheapest sources						Through local production				
*			x (r)							x	
11. Control of productive resources	By private individuals and companies						Community based and local control				
		x (r)								x	
12. Food dumping	Is allowed						Should be banned				
		x (r)								x	

13. Farming technologies	Monoculture, industrialized (use of chemicals, GMOs)						Use of sustainable farming methods, agroecology				
*		x(r)									x
14. Seeds	Are exclusive patented commodities						Should be available to rural communities				
*		x(r)									x
15. Over-production	Does not exist						Leads to low prices, which suppress small farmers				
*								x(r)			x
	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →				

Sindyanna of Galilee (SOG) (Fair Trade Israel)

Questionnaire: What is your opinion on the following statements regarding agriculture and trade?											
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →				
Topic	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5
1. Trade	Believes in free trade						No free trade in agriculture and food system				
					X(r)					X	
2. Access to market	Entrance to foreign markets						concentrates on local markets				
*			X(r)*					X			
3. Price of crops	Market should dictate prices (often low prices)						Price of crops should be fair (to cover costs of production)				
*				X(r)							X
4. Main production aim	For exports						For local market				
(*)			X(r)								X
5. Subsidies	Paid to mainly large-scale farmers in US and Europe						Should be paid to small-scale farmers				
				X(r)							X

6. Food	As a commodity				combine both	Should be a human right			
(*) (10:20)			X(r)						X
7. Land accessibility	Through the market					Through agrarian reform			
** (11:30)								X, X(r)	
8. Cause of hunger	Because of low productivity					Due to poverty and inequality in the access and distribution of resources			
*		X(r)							X
9. Ability to produce	Should be for economically efficient people					Should be a right for the rural people			
*		X(r)						X	
10. Route to food security	Through importation of food from the cheapest sources					Through local production			
*			X(r)					X	
11. Control of productive resources	By private individuals and companies					Community based and local control			
			X(r)						X
12. Food dumping	Is allowed					Should be banned			
*				X(r)					X
13. Farming technologies	Monoculture, industrialized (use of chemicals, GMOs)					Use of sustainable farming methods, agroecology			

*			X(r)							X	
14. Seeds	Are exclusive patented commodities						Should be available to rural communities				
						?(r)					X
15. Over-production	Does not exist						Leads to low prices, which suppress small farmers				
*						?(r)				X	
	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →				

NOTE FOR ANALYSIS:

- **X** (= Personal final answer given on how farming should ideally look like)
- X(1) = (First answer given, before the interview)
- **X**(2) = (Second and final answer, after clarification in the interview, cf. **X** above)
- X(r) = (Personal answer on how the interviewee perceives reality today in PAS (more often column A is chosen here))
- (*) = important comment made by the interviewee before the interview.
- * or ** = important comment made by the interviewee on the topic

Personal score of Hadas (in an ideal vision of agriculture)

- Food security score: (A) **0/75**
- Food sovereignty score: (B) **67/75**
- Neutrality score: (N) **0/15**

Reality scores of the Israeli government regarding agriculture (according to Hadas)

- Food security score: (A) **31(+ ...?)/75**
- Food sovereignty score: (B) **4/75** (cf. 7, land accessibility through agrarian reform)
- Neutrality score: (N) **1?/15**

Questionnaire: What is your opinion on the following statements regarding agriculture and trade?												
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →					
Topic	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Trade	Believes in free trade						No free trade in agriculture and food system					
										x		
2. Access to market	Entrance to foreign markets						concentrates on local markets					
										x		
3. Price of crops	Market should dictate prices (often low prices)						Price of crops should be fair (to cover costs of production)					
										x		
4. Main production aim	For exports						For local market					
										x		
5. Subsidies	Paid to mainly large-scale farmers in US and Europe						Should be paid to small-scale farmers					
											x	
6. Food	As a commodity						Should be a human right					
											x	

7. Land accessibility	Through the market		Through agrarian reform
			x
8. Cause of hunger	Because of low productivity		Due to poverty and inequality in the access and distribution of resources
			x
9. Ability to produce	Should be for economically efficient people		Should be a right for the rural people
			x
10. Route to food security	Through importation of food from the cheapest sources		Through local production
			x
11. Control of productive resources	By private individuals and companies		Community based and local control
			x
12. Food dumping	Is allowed		Should be banned
			x
13. Farming technologies	Monoculture, industrialized (use of chemicals, GMOs)		Use of sustainable farming methods, agroecology
			x
14. Seeds	Are exclusive patented commodities		Should be available to rural communities

												x
15. Over- production	Does not exist						Leads to low prices, which suppress small farmers					
						x						
	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	
	← Column A					Neutral	Column B →					