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ALESSANDRA CORRADO

**Coloniality and Decoloniality in the Mediterranean:
Understanding Migrant Labour in the Global Colonial Agri-
Food System**

ABSTRACT *Global agri-food value chains rely heavily on the exploitation of migrant labour. This context involves mechanisms of racialisation, a hierarchical organisation of social relations, and the reproduction of colonial-capitalist relations of production, which most adequately can be explained by Aníbal Quijano's concept of coloniality. Drawing on this theoretical approach, the paper analyses recent transformations in the agri-food system in Southern Europe. In the face of dominant capitalist coloniality, anti-systemic movements for food sovereignty aim to build oppositional practices and models based on epistemic alternatives. One specific case of these, SOS Rosarno, in Southern Italy, which consists of an alliance of different subjects, is looked at closely.*

KEYWORDS *migrant labour, global coloniality, food sovereignty, racialisation, Southern Europe*

1. Introduction¹

This contribution aims to propose an analysis of the dynamics of transformation of agri-food and of the rural world in Southern Europe, pointing out the role of migrant labour. It will do this by making reference to both the political economy and coloniality perspectives. If the former can support the understanding of the specificity and difference of the Southern European agri-food configuration, the latter is useful as a means to focus on elements that relate to the new composition of the workforce and class struggles within the global capitalist system.

The perspective of political economy highlighted processes of development and common tendencies in Southern European countries, namely, Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain², in the process of integration into the world economy, starting from the XIX century, thus describing the specificity of centre-periphery relations and political processes that affect particular states. Dynamics of internal colonialism – based on economic exploitation, economic deconstruction and hierarchisation, and cultural domination – have produced the development and accumulation conditions not just within the singular Nation-State³ – see the Gramsci’s analysis referring to Italy (1977) – but also within the European Union and under the effects of international and global dynamics (see: Arrighi 1985; Halperin 1997; Pedaliu 2013). This has happened following the deployment of the Marshall Plan (European recovery programme) before, and then the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the process of European integration, until the structural adjustment policies of 2000s. In particular since the 1970s, the main region building processes of Southern Europe (Pedaliu 2013), together with the shaping of a “Southern agriculture” by specific structural intervention, were promoted.⁴

The processes of agrarian transformation developed into the restructuring dynamics of capital accumulation and international division of labour, according to the redefinition of the relationship between state, markets and populations (McMichael 2013). On the one hand the proletarianisation of peasants and the formation of wage labour, class transformations, migrations (internal to national states as well as internationally), and on the other the transformations of agriculture and territories, the restructuring of markets and production chains: along these lines of variable geographies, the combination of production factors and the redefinition of class relations were given. However, it is important to bring to light the resistances that are being redefined within these processes. These resistances are those that oppose the different actors to the processes of “peripheralization” within the capitalist system (Arrighi/Piselli 1987), each time activating struggles and conflicts, which are characterised by a socio-economic but also an epistemic dimension. In Southern European countries, different dynamics of agrarian transformation have taken place, within the process of the “peripheralization” of capitalist development in

the world economy, as a common trend. Peripheralization is understood as “a process whereby some actors or locales, that participate directly or indirectly in the world division of labor, are progressively deprived of the benefits of such participation, to the advantage of other actors or locales” (ibidem: 687). This redistribution of benefits can take different forms, each characterised by diverse roads to wage labour and of social conflict (as they unfolded in Calabria, a Southern Italian region): transfer of surplus, unequal exchange of goods and labour, and direct surplus appropriation by labour mobility.⁵

The notion of the colonality of power was introduced by Quijano (1993) to characterise a global domination model typical of the modern/capitalist world-system in place since the 16th century. In world capitalism, social relations have been produced on the basis of the idea of race, this being the first social category of modernity playing a major role in the definition of the new global geo-cultural identities deriving from European colonialism and then additionally articulated with class and gender/sexual ideas (Quijano 1992, 2007). Coloniality also refers to the “historical structural heterogeneity totality”, in which the social relations of production are articulated under capitalism as the global model of labour control. On this basis, coloniality results to be associated with a specific power matrix defined as a colonial power matrix (*patrón de poder colonial*) affecting all dimensions of social existence such as sexuality, authority, subjectivity, nature and labour within interactive relationships of domination, exploitation and conflict (2000, 2001a, 2001b). Quijano introduces the notion of coloniality, as distinct from that of colonialism, in order to highlight the historical continuity between the periods of colonialism and post-colonialism and to point out how the colonial relations of power are not limited only to economic-political and juridical-administrative domination of the centres over the peripheries, but are also characterised by an epistemic and cultural dimension (Castro-Gómez/Grosfoguel 2007). The concept of decoloniality underlines how the international division of labour between centre and periphery and the epistemic, ethnic/racial, gender/sexual hierarchisation among groups and populations, originating from colonial expansion, remain even after the end of colonialism and the formation of nation-states in the periphery, in what is described as a “transition from modern colonialism to global coloniality” (Grosfoguel 2007: 14-15). The decolonial

perspective therefore redefines the forms of exclusion and hierarchy developed by modernity (Quijano 2007).

Grounded upon this theory, the article raises two key questions. First, which mechanisms are enabling the restructuring of agri-food value chains and rurality in neoliberal development dynamics in Southern Europe to restructure? Second, which forms of resistance and struggle have been organised to oppose exploitation in agri-food chains?

I will demonstrate the specificity of the agrarian transformation processes in Southern Europe, noting their racialised and gendered class organisation and the current forms of struggle and resistance. I will do this by focusing on the role of migration processes across the “Mediterranean border” defined within the mobility regimes of the global colonial system. Balibar (1991) pointed out that the catch-all categories “immigration” and “immigrant” – “combining ethnic and class criteria, into which foreigners are dumped indiscriminately, though not all foreigners and not only foreigners” (p. 221) – act as the functional substitute for ‘race’ in the *modus operandi* of racist discourse following decolonisation processes and the migration flows to Europe in the post-Second World War period, and especially after the crisis of the 1970s. Discourse, representation and regulation have had the effect of producing ‘migrant labour’ as cheap and flexible, in accordance with an international division of labour and agri-food dynamics of accumulation at a global level.

The article is organised in three parts: the first one illustrates the neoliberal restructuring processes of agri-food, in which migrant labour plays a role through the organisation of racialised and gendered class hierarchies within the global coloniality; the second one makes reference to the movements for food sovereignty to illustrate the ‘anti-colonial’ or ‘de-colonial’ forms of struggle against oppression and exploitation within the global agri-food system, and specifically presents a case study in the exemplary context of Calabria, in Southern Italy, namely that of the association SOS Rosarno. It has promoted the alliance between producers, workers and consumers according to an alternative agri-food model, in response to exploitative development dynamics in the global coloniality of the capitalist value chains. Conclusions follow.

2. Value chains, global coloniality and migrant labour

Introducing the concept of coloniality of power, Quijano proposed to overcome the perspective of the nation-state and to understand the international division of labour deriving from the process of colonisation/decolonisation and modernisation within the world-economy system relations (Quijano 1991, 1993, 1994, 2000; Quijano/Wallerstein 1992). Coloniality “includes the trans-historical expansion of colonial domination and the perpetuation of its effects in the contemporary era”; it focuses on the “historical and renewed role of racialization in the construction of the working classes in a globalized economy and in the justification of their working conditions”, so to allow us to speak of a global coloniality (Grosfoguel 2002). Quijano employs the concept of “structural heterogeneity” to describe the construction of a global racial/ethnic hierarchy simultaneously in time and space, for the purpose of organising an international division of labour based on global centre-periphery relations.

Since the initial formation of the capitalist world system, the accumulation of capital has been linked to global racist, homophobic and sexist ideologies in order to produce cheap labour (Patel/Moore 2017). A deep understanding of the class and racialisation dynamics produced in the agri-food system of Southern Europe (and of Europe at large) can be supported with this perspective. The agri-food restructuring process and the mobility regimes work as vectors of coloniality: the organisation and exploitation of labour within the productive processes continue through racialised hierarchies of class and gender, in which race, ethnicity and immigrant status are exacerbated and mobilised by politico-institutional or socio-economic mechanisms. In the neoliberal regime, value relations in the agri-food system are based on inter-continental and inter-hemispherical agri-food exchanges, in which cereals and processed foods are exchanged for fresh and frozen foods from the South; foreign and private investments in the South extend control over crucial nodes of export-oriented chains of fruit and vegetables; and migration policy regimes work to control flexible labour supply. As a result, producers integrated into value chains become dependent on production chains in which input choices and the

use of crops are determined and controlled by corporations (Corrado 2016; McMichael 2013, 2018).

The unbalanced and partial liberalisation of the markets (by virtue of the protectionist measures that still operate in Europe) is closely linked to what has been called the “supermarket revolution”, which, over the last 30 years, caused numerous agri-food chains to fall under the control of large-scale retailers. Supermarket chains not only control the distribution, but also shape the production, processing and consumption of food (Burch/Lawrence 2007; Ploeg 2009). European supermarkets have managed to influence international policies by catalysing investments, as well as through the liberalisation of markets in developing countries under the negotiations of the World Trade Organization’s General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and have gradually accumulated purchasing power through alliances between retailers and the buying groups’ organisations (Vorley 2007; Fritz 2011). European supermarket chains can buy agri-food products in various parts of the world, to satisfy the demand for fresh and seasonal or counter-seasonal products, thus exacerbating the competition between producers in different countries (Gertel/Sippel 2014). In addition, some of the retail corporations are among the most important financial actors in contemporary capitalism (Arrighi, 2007: 171-2; Vorley 2007; Burch/Lawrence, 2013; Burch et al. 2013).

In the European fruit and vegetable produce market, migrant cheap and flexible labour is one of the factors that have allowed the survival as well as the transformation of numerous small and medium-sized producers in “entrepreneurs” – as a kind of semi-proletarians dependent on capitalist companies or holdings (Ploeg 2009) – in front of the process of defamilisation of agriculture, the liberalisation of international markets and the transformation of supply chains under the control of corporations, large retailers or international buying groups (Corrado et al. 2016, 2018b). The presence of foreign workers in Southern European countries becomes significant and visible starting from the 1990s, to then progressively grow in number. Foreigners represent 24% of wage workers in agriculture in Spain, 37% in Italy, and 90% in Greece, not counting those who are hired irregularly (Moreno-Perez et al. 2015; Corrado, 2015; Papadopoulos 2015, see also: Arnalte-Alegre/Ortiz-Miranda 2013). Non-market mechanisms, such as feminisation and illegalisation, by means of recruitment strategies and migration policies, play into the regulation of labour in agriculture

(Bonanno/Cavalcanti 2014). Agriculture, and especially that of intensive production enclaves (Moraes et al. 2012; Pedreño et al. 2015), represents the sector in which the categories of “multiplication of labor” and “differential inclusion” find the best application, describing the different forms of subordination, command, discrimination and segmentation defined by both the border and contemporary migration regimes, which rather than exclude, aim to “filter, select and channel migratory movements”, through a “huge amount of violence” (Mezzadra/Neilson 2013: 165). Migrant labour in agriculture in southern European countries results in being ethno-fragmented (Pedreño 2005), that is, segmented by virtue of nationality or ethnicity, but also of legal status, gender, employment contract and form of recruitment. Labourers are largely North African, East European, sub-Saharan, Asian and Latin American. They are both regular and irregular migrants, recruited through programmes for seasonal workers, temporary employment agencies, informal networks or gangmasters, possess different types of residence permits, and sometimes have also been able to access citizenship in the country of arrival. In some extreme cases, they are victims of illegal trafficking and almost enslavement conditions (Corrado et al. 2016, 2018b). Newly arrived workers have been replaced to previous groups in productive segments or in specific operations, i.e. those from Eastern European countries (Poles or Romanians) have been preferred to the Moroccans in France (Sippel/Gertel 2014) and Spain (Hellio 2016), and to the Tunisians, Moroccans or Sub-Saharan in Italy (Corrado et al. 2018b; Palumbo 2016). Some national groups are placed in specific segments – as is the case of Indians in dairy production in Italy. A process of feminization of work has been identified in some agri-food productions, such as those of strawberries, berries and tomatoes, in greenhouses and in packaging operations, as is the case in Spain, also as a result of a selection procedure by official recruitment programmes (Gadea et al. 2016; Mannon et al. 2012; Reigada 2011), and in Italy (Piro/Sanò 2016; Palumbo/Sciurba 2015, 2018). This division of labour tends to reproduce and naturalise traditional gender roles and representations (“delicacy” or “docility”), and to profit from reproductive responsibility in the country of origin in order to intensify forms of exploitation (Hellio 2014).

Following the 2008 economic recession and ‘refugee crisis’ – also due to EU and state members’ restrictive immigration and asylum policies – and the restructuring of rurality, together with an agrarianisation of

migrant labour and a ruralisation of foreign migrations, a “refugeezation of agricultural work” (Corrado/D’Agostino 2018; Dines/Rigo 2015) has been noted in Italy and to some extent in Greece. It means that many refugees or asylum seekers have found their way into agricultural operations and rural living, in very precarious working and living conditions. However, it is important to emphasise that foreign work is now a fundamental structural element of the agri-food sector restructuring, due to its increasing involvement in all phases and segments of agri-food production processes and in different activities, not only in seasonal and less structured ones: for instance, in pastoralism, in multifunctional agriculture (for example in tourist activities), in processing and packaging sectors, and in livestock and cattle care activities (Nori 2017).

This structural heterogeneity, concerning both labour forces and production and distribution organisations, makes the reality of agri-food and rurality in Southern Europe extremely complex. Its understanding as a set of forms of production coexisting and organised around capitalist development as a transnational and, ultimately, global phenomenon, let to decisively reject the tradition/modernity dichotomy at the centre of Eurocentrism (Quijano 2000), a dichotomy so long rooted in the analysis and discourses shaping rural reality, especially at the political-institutional level, according to the modernisation paradigm (Ploeg 2009).

3. Antisystemic movements for food sovereignty

In order to overcome the rigid economic determinism of inequalities implied in the political economy analysis, critical scholars suggest paying attention to the “dis/articulations” in the analysis of value chains, that is towards “the settled histories and unequal geographies of expansion, divestment and devaluation of capitalism” in particular places, and the creation of the places and subjects that make their production possible (Bair/Werner 2011; Bair et al. 2013), and in addition to the many forms of difference that have supported the systems of labour control, but which can also produce the possibilities for collective action and resistance (Besky/Brown 2015).

Agrarian transformation processes and migration can have differing impacts on the formation of wage labour, depending on different forms of

social conflict (Arrighi/Piselli 1987). Arrighi (1966) had already observed in Africa how the involvement of migrants in class struggles in the places of insertion had depended on by their new awareness of their own proletarian condition as permanent, and the perception of wage labour as the sole source of their own existence. For Arrighi and Piselli (1987), the transformation of emigrants from southern Italy into the ‘avant-garde’ of class conflict between the 1960s and the 1970s took place exactly at the moment in which the same loose ties with the communities of origin and assumed their own reproduction as linked to wage labour, permanently, and no longer temporarily.

Nowadays, for migrant labourers, the administrative status, the limitations deriving from the residence permits, or even the “deportability” – not the deportation itself, but the blackmail and the threat of a possible interception and expulsion – (De Genova 2002), the precarious work and housing conditions, and the socio-economic marginalization and vulnerability, are frequently elements that strongly affect the chance for mobilisation. Since the beginning of the 2000s, in the south of France, in Spain, in Greece, and in Italy, migrant workers have been the protagonists of numerous revolts and protests, of strikes, blockages of production processes, in order to claim unpaid or fair wages, regular employment contracts, residence permits, better housing conditions and basic services, and to rebel against daily violence, xenophobic attacks, exploitation of producers, intermediaries and gangmasters. Their collective organisation, as well as media attention and the influence of public opinion, activists and social movements, have often been helpful in obtaining some results: in some cases, regularisation, basic services, judicial inquiries and convictions against exploiters, compensation, and new legal resources against exploitation and illegal intermediation. Nevertheless, the reorganisation of capital and the search for new strategies of accumulation rely on continuous political, productive and social innovations in order to neutralise resistances.

According to McMichael (2013), it is necessary to overcome “the orthodoxy of value theory” and look at the “value of socio-ecological relationships incorporated in the differentiated systems of agriculture (...)”. The movement for food sovereignty promotes “an epistemological alternative to the relations of capital value, to the metabolic fracture produced by the subordination of agriculture for the purposes of capital valorization,

affirming the importance of ecological relations and seeking their affirmation in the experimentation of a multitude of global alternatives” (ibidem).

The movement for food sovereignty can be conceived as an anti-systemic movement to build global alternatives to capital value. The anti-systemic movements have from the beginning found their purposes on a global scale, while the organisational responses have manifested themselves mainly at the national level (Arrighi et al. 1992). Food sovereignty was born in the early 1990s as a platform to fight against neoliberal policies, and was promoted by the transnational movement Via Campesina (founded in 1993). On a global scale, organisational structures have been gradually created to pursue the objectives of the practices of struggle and the formulation of political proposals – which is an evolution envisaged by Arrighi et al. (1992) for anti-systemic movements. Food sovereignty appears as “the continuation of anti-colonial struggles in apparent post-colonial contexts” (Gray/Patel 2015), by considering the global coloniality decipherable in the exploitation of labour, and in the inequalities and forms of expropriation produced within the neoliberal regime. Decoloniality therefore means first and foremost deconstructing all we have been domesticated to believe: food, health, economy, politics, subsistence, the community (Bradley/Herrera 2015; Graddy-Lovelace 2017), as well as the models of agriculture, labour and migration.

Some experiences of mobilisation and resistance in southern Europe, born or developed within the movement for food sovereignty, have counted on the involvement of ‘reflexive’ or ‘critical consumers of organic products or on food justice networks. This is, for example, the case of the mobilisation of the union Sindicato Obrero de Campo (SOC), a member of the European coordination of Via Campesina, based in Andalusia (Spain), which represents a model of “social movement unionism” adapted to the characteristics of the very ethno-fragmented and scattered labour force employed in the so-called “orchard of Europe” or “green factories” (*factorias vegetales*, cf. Pedreño 1999) in Andalusia and especially in Almeria province. The SOC, in collaboration with anti-racist movements, non-governmental organisations, foreign trade unions and journalists, organised a series of demonstrations in Switzerland, leading to the intervention of some organic sales platforms that committed themselves to ensure that the Spanish company – Bio Sol Portocarrero, a company based in Almeria

(Spain), certified as organic yet guilty of serious violations of workers' rights – rehired dismissed workers, paid salaries, stabilised seasonal workers, and allowed the opening of a branch of the SOC within the same company (Caruso 2016).

An interesting and innovative case of alliance between those resisting for the cause of workers' rights and those arguing for ethical and sustainable food is that of SOS Rosarno, an association created after the revolts of African labourers following recurrent racist attacks in Rosarno, an agricultural town located in the Plain of Gioia Tauro in 2010. The Plain of Gioia Tauro is the exact "hostile environment" of peripheral agrarian transition where Arrighi and Piselli (1987) set one of the three ideal typical roads to capitalist development: the "American road", where the peasants became farmers producing for the market in a highly stratified social structure, with small capitalists employing wage labour, semi-proletarian family farmers both selling their own production and hiring out their family's labour, or fully proletarianised labourers. In the Plain of Gioia Tauro, the pervasive influence of market competition was embedded in a context of struggle/domination among mafia-like rival patronage groups holding a territorial quasi-monopoly over the use of violence and exercising informal government functions. Conditions in the export markets of the main commodity productions (olives and citrus fruit, and today kiwis) were the major determinant of conditions in the labour market of the Plain and in the expansion of agricultural output, and in the development of forward and backward linkages between agricultural and other activities. The world market-induced fluctuations affected in and out migratory movements during the time (*ibidem*). Particularly since the neoliberal transition of the 1990s, the intensification of competitive pressures has made a foreign labour force necessary for the reproduction or restructuring of local agriculture. In the last 30 years, the dimension, composition and condition of this foreign labour force have progressively and dramatically transformed, due to the restrictive turn in migration regulation, the European enlargement process, the refugee crisis (Corrado/D'Agostino 2018; Corrado et al. 2018b), as well as changes in global value chains and their associated pressures on local producers (Corrado et al. 2018a; Garrapa 2016). Quijano's definition of historical-structural heterogeneity applies in describing these specific dynamics of the division of labour within the global value chain relations.

The 2010 event was a sort of turning point. A process of cooperation between consumers, workers and small producers was activated and gave rise to the association SOS Rosarno, composed of small producers, anti-racist and environmentalist activists, and Sub-Saharan and local labourers. The SOS Rosarno project revolved around an alternative organisation of a citrus fruit value chain aimed at enabling farmers to receive a fairer income from the sale of their products, workers to enjoy regular employment, a fairer wage and working conditions, and consumers to enjoy organic and fair food. An alternative agri-food network – independent from mainstream retailer-driven chains – based on a direct connection between the producers and the Solidarity Purchase Groups (*Gruppi di Acquisto Solidale*, GASs) and “critical consumers”, in Italian Centre-North urban centres as well as abroad, was set up to achieve these objectives. In 2016, a group of core members of the association set up the social cooperative *Mani e Terra* (Hands and Land). It has gradually taken over the management of the agricultural operations and also rented out a plot of land to undertake its own project of collective agro-ecological farming with the stated twin objectives of generating employment outside the season of citrus fruit production and promoting a sustainable diversification of local agriculture. In addition, the cooperative engaged in setting up a biodiversity park for educational purposes on a plot of land confiscated from the local mafia. In 2019, after almost 10 years of activity, the project involved around 15 small and medium-scale land owners or producers and generates work for six to seven workers per year. In the meantime, SOS Rosarno has joined the Italian Rural Association (ARI), which is a member of the European Coordination of Via Campesina (Corrado et al. 2020; Iocco et al. 2019).

During those years, especially in Southern Italian regions, following the example of SOS Rosarno, several other projects that combine the fight against labour exploitation in the area of intensive fruit and vegetable production and the support for the mobilisation of migrant workers, by ethical and ecological short agri-food chains, have been promoted, namely SfruttaZero, Funky Tomato, Contadinazioni. These practices contributed to raising awareness about the rights of both workers and producers. The respect for workers’ rights became a condition for the construction of fair consumption/production relations and for a new definition of ‘sustainable’ and ‘quality food’, from the perspective of food sovereignty. However, it is

worth mentioning that the experience of migrant workers often continues to be affected by the precarious conditions produced by their administrative status, their family ties and expectations, the employment conditions, the difficulties in gaining control of the means of production, and of organising autonomously.

Therefore, the new alliance between peasant organisations and the trade union *Unione Sindacale di Base* (USB) has also been aimed at supporting the joint struggle of peasants, labourers and workers within the agri-food system, by means of the unionisation of workers, the promotion of rights all along the food chain, and the claim for the right to food and decent living conditions of the agri-food workers. This is an important step towards a reformulation of social struggles and the construction of a collective movement capable of affecting the agri-food system, starting from the questioning of class relations and social conditions of reproduction. “The innovative position brought forward by USB and *La Via Campesina* (...) is not to side with either peasants or workers but to bring together both groups and to unite in the struggle against a production model that, squeezing the peasants and not allowing for a decent income, leads to the exploitation of migrant seasonal workers” (*Unione Sindacale di Base* 2018).

The alliance between peasants, small producers and workers can be used to re-socialise the question of food in a broad and transversal way, taking into account labour rights (in field operations, processing, distribution), migrants’ rights (a structural component of the agri-food and logistics system), and the possibilities of the reproduction of social forces. The construction of a coordination of peasants and workers for food sovereignty at a national level accentuates a convergence of class interests that seek to promote a legal framework for peasant agriculture in Italy (*Giunta* 2016), to claim the rights of workers and migrants, and to join the fight to change the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) at European level (*ECVC* 2018). Therefore, in addition to introducing practical innovations in support of the fairness and sustainability of the agri-food system, these actors seek to change the structural conditions in which these innovations try to operate against the effects of the corporations’ food regime (*McMichael* 2013). The second *Nyéléni Europe Forum for Food Sovereignty*, held in Cluj-Napoca (Romania) in 2016, put forward strategies to ensure fair rights for agricultural workers (migrants in particular), along with public policies that

ensure control of natural resources by local populations, food distribution systems that guarantee access, especially to local and sustainable food, and agroecology as the fundamental approach in agriculture (Nyeleni Europe 2016). Since then, the European Coordination of Via Campesina, in alliance with other organisations, has put migrant workers' rights as one of the goals to address through the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) (Nyeleni Europe and Central Asia Platform for Food Sovereignty 2019), for example by making CAP funding and subsidies conditional on the respect for labour rights and standards, and by ensuring appropriate monitoring and reporting mechanisms are then in place.

4. Conclusions

Agri-food value chains and rurality in Southern Europe have been deeply restructured within neoliberal development dynamics, according to the articulation of production social relations corresponding to what Quijano named coloniality, that is the reproduction of colonial dynamics of exploitation and labour control engendered by capitalism on a global scale. Politico-institutional or socio-economic mechanisms have produced a structural heterogeneity, from which descend the dynamics of marginalisation and farmers' dependency, upstream and downstream, on agri-food value, together with the organisation and exploitation of migrant labour through racialised hierarchies of class and gender chains. Basically, the agri-food restructuring process and the mobility regimes work as vectors of coloniality under the market regulation of the neoliberal regime.

Food sovereignty movement works towards the ends of decoloniality, that is, the deconstruction and unveiling of the global colonial forms of exploitation and inequalities and the construction of anti-colonial struggles based on the value of new socio-ecological relationships as an epistemological alternative to the relations of capital value. The example of SOS Rosarno shows how workers' rights can find recognition and promotion through the construction of new agri-food relationships and meanings. However, further efforts and analysis are necessary to understand migrations, also within the food sovereignty movement and agri-food alternative networks, in order to understand the specific needs, expectations and conditions of migrant workers and to build the possibilities for their eman-

cipation, for example by the control of the means of production or by the creation of an autonomous organisation.

The classes and status groups which offered the coordinates for the justification and the organisational definition of anti-systemic movements in the past (Arrighi et al. 1989) have undergone profound transformations. The understanding and strengthening of the food sovereignty movement as an anti-systemic movement would make progress by reflecting on these transformations, deconstructing global coloniality, and building an epistemic diversity.

- 1 An earlier Italian version of this article was published in the *Theomai Journal - Society and Development Critical Studies*, special issue “Trabajo y migraciones postcoloniales en la agricultura capitalista global”, 38, 2018.
- 2 Some analyses include Turkey too, because of its geography, historical dynamics and socio-economic relationships (Arrighi 1985; Corrado 2016).
- 3 The category of internal colonialism was applied – by authors such as Pablo González Casanova and Rodolfo Stavenhagen – to the racist/ethnicist power within the Nation-State, emphasising an “indigenous question” together with a “peasant question”, as the process of social and economic deconstruction within the colonised society in Latin America. However, Quijano criticised the Eurocentrism implicit in this analysis.
- 4 Structural interventions concerned Italy, Southern France, and Greece, and then Portugal and Spain, annexed to the European Union in 1986, after the end of authoritarian regimes in the mid-1970s. However, the modernisation of agriculture in Spain was strongly promoted during Franco’s regime.
- 5 Analysing the differences between the three roads of transformation experienced by a region of Southern Italy, Calabria, across the 19th and 20th centuries, Arrighi and Piselli constructed a model of three ideal-typical patterns towards capitalist development: the Prussian or Junker road (in the Crotona area) shaped a landlord class holding the means of production (large capitalist enterprises or *latifondi capitalistici*), producing for the market and shaped and aimed at maximum profits, and a landless proletariat as wage labour; the American road of farmers (in the Plain of Gioia Tauro) produced a semi-proletarianised stratified social structure of small capitalists employing wage labour or semi-proletarians supplementing the incomes derived from the sale of production by hiring out the family’s labour; and, finally, the migrant-peasant or Swiss road (in the Cosenza area), with peasant holdings producing for family direct consumption, and selling in the market both their surplus produce and surplus labour (in distant labour markets too). The three paths model dawn on Lenin’s analysis, that confronting Marx’s “English path” of transition distinguished what he called the “Prussian” and “American” paths. For further analysis of differentiated patterns to agrarian capitalism, see also: Byres 1991; Bernstein 2010.

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ABSTRACT Globale Wertschöpfungsketten in der Agrar- und Ernährungswirtschaft beruhen in hohem Maße auf der Ausbeutung von Wanderarbeitern. Quijanos Theorie hilft, die Mechanismen der Rassifizierung und der hierarchischen Organisation der sozialen Beziehungen zu verstehen, die diesen Dynamiken in Südeuropa innerhalb der Reproduktion der kolonialen kapitalistischen sozialen Produktionsverhältnisse zugrunde liegen. Die zeitgenössische antisystemische Bewegung für Ernährungssouveränität arbeitet daran, Praktiken und Modelle der Agrar- und Ernährungswirtschaft aufzubauen, die auf einer epistemischen Alternative zur kapitalistischen Kolonialität basieren. Der Fall von SOS Rosarno in Süditalien ist ein Projekt, das auf der Allianz zwischen verschiedenen Subjekten basiert und in dieser Perspektive arbeitet.

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