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Chamorro-Caicedo, Luz-Stella
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Approaches to Associations of Rural Women in Colombia and the Ethical-Political Project of Social Work*

[English Version]

Acercamientos a asociaciones de mujeres campesinas en Colombia y proyecto ético-político del Trabajo Social

Abordagens às associações de mulheres rurais da Colômbia e ao projeto ético-político do Serviço Social

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Luz-Stella Chamorro-Caicedo**
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9052-020X
Colombia

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Abstract

Objective: this review article derives from research and intervention with rural women in support of associative groups in the department of Nariño. It analyzes various experiences of rural women in Colombia about resistance practices that involve principles of government of the commons and that these associations are presented as resistance strategies for the claim of identity of rural women and their political positioning in the deconstruction of economic inequality and structural violence. **Methodology**: a documentary review was conducted in the main databases such as Ebosh, Proquest and Redylac, in order to collect updated information on the object of study, with quality criteria. **Results**: it was possible to synthesize three sections based on the collected data: 1) challenges of the peasants in the framework of the

* Review article that researches peasant associations in Colombia in relation to productive projects and challenges they face for building equity in Colombia's rural contexts in new trends in peace-building. This review was part of the author's research experience with peasant communities in the department of Nariño.

** Master in Management and Practice of Development. Social worker. Professor at the Universidad de Caldas. Contact: luz.chamorroc@ucaldas.edu.co

Havana agreements, 2) associations of farmer women, 3) ethical and political project of social work. **Conclusions**: Although the stated proposals made sense with regards to economics or memory, it is always necessary to have a comprehensive approach from the economic and political perspective in a gender-based perspective related to culture. From there, the reflexive praxis of the social worker must influence the construction of these associations in order to position women, especially in rural contexts still affected by violence.

Keywords: Rural women; Peace building; Social work.

Resumen

Objetivo: este artículo es una Revisión de antecedentes que se deriva de una investigación e intervención con mujeres campesinas en acompañamiento a grupos asociativos en el departamento de Nariño. Se trata, entonces, de analizar diversas experiencias de las mujeres rurales en Colombia sobre las prácticas de resistencia que involucran principios de gobierno de los comunes y que estas asociaciones se presentan como estrategias de resistencias para la reivindicación de la identidad de la mujer campesina y su posicionamiento político en la deconstrucción de la desigualdad económica y de la violencia estructural. **Metodología**: se aplicó revisión documental en las principales bases de datos como Ebosh, Proquest y Redylac, con el fin de recopilar la información actualizada sobre el objeto de estudio, con criterios de calidad. **Resultados**: se logró sintetizar tres apartados a partir del material que se recopiló: 1) retos de los campesinos en el marco de los acuerdos de La Habana, 2) las asociaciones de mujeres campesinas, 3) el proyecto ético y político de Trabajo Social. **Conclusiones**: se concluye que, si bien las propuestas tuvieron sentidos económicos o de memoria, siempre hay que tener un enfoque integrador que ponga en perspectiva de género lo económico y lo político en conversación con lo cultural. Desde allí, la praxis reflexiva del trabajador social debe incidir en la construcción de estas asociaciones con el fin de posicionar a las mujeres, en especial en contextos rurales aún afectados por las violencias.

Palabras-clave: Mujeres rurales; Construcción de paz; Trabajo social

Resumo

Objetivo: este artigo é uma Revisão de Antecedentes que deriva de uma investigação e intervenção com mulheres rurais em apoio a grupos associativos no departamento de Nariño. Trata-se de analisar várias experiências de mulheres rurais na Colômbia sobre

práticas de resistência que envolvem princípios de governo dos bens comuns e que essas associações são apresentadas como estratégias de resistência para reivindicar a identidade das mulheres rurais e suas comunidades, posicionamento político na desconstrução da desigualdade econômica e da violência estrutural. **Metodologia**: a revisão documental foi aplicada nas principais bases de dados como Ebosh, Proquest e Redylac, a fim de coletar informações atualizadas sobre o objeto de estudo, com critérios de qualidade. **Resultados**: foi possível sintetizar três seções com base no material coletado: 1) desafios dos camponeses no âmbito dos acordos de Havana, 2) associações de mulheres agricultoras, 3) projeto ético e político do Serviço Social. **Conclusões**: conclui-se que, embora as propostas tenham sentidos econômicos ou de memória, é sempre necessário ter uma abordagem integrativa que coloque a perspectiva econômica e a política na perspectiva de gênero em conversas com o cultural. A partir daí, a práxis reflexiva da assistente social deve influenciar a construção dessas associações para posicionar as mulheres, principalmente em contextos rurais ainda afetados pela violência.

Palavras-chave: Mulheres rurais; Construção da paz; Trabalho social.

Introduction

This review article proposes an approach to peasant rural associations[1], their mobilizations and strategies to position their territory, territoriality and identity. To think about rural women is to address historical and political context in which they are currently immersed since, historically, women have been violated, deprived and have not had equal opportunities for access to land, capital and labor.

To approach to the associations of rural women means to understand their historical relations in the countryside, the consequences caused by the armed conflict, and the resistance that had pushed the transition to a post-conflict scenario. Thus, social work as a profession related to social interactions, processes and structures must understand the subjectivity of women, their experiences, their struggles for recognition and collective mobilizations for justice and reparation; all these dynamics included under gender inequality, which is also a political and economic fact.

According to data from the National Planning Department (cited by Gonzales, 2015), it is also estimated that "in rural and dispersed rural municipalities, half of the population is poor by income, whether they live in the villages or in scattered areas" (p. 5). Such conditions of poverty and inequality are exacerbated when women are victims of acts of constant violence and, consequently, the State must fight against and constantly monitor these acts.

According to the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW (2019). "The Rural Development Agency reports that in 2012 and 2015, 1,420 projects for financial and administrative closure with a total participation of 8,550 women were received. However, the percentage of projects awarded to rural women is not clear" (p.12).

In the implementation of the peace agreement signed in Havana, the participation of rural women is an explicit fact in the chapter on comprehensive rural reform, because historically women have faced economic and political inequalities. The agreement places provisions that allow them to guarantee their rights such as: a) housing, b) security for the exercise of the policy, c) participation in clarifying the truth, coexistence and non-repetition, among other issues (Baptist, 2016, p.123).

1. It focuses on peasant women and highlights them in this social issue not because all peasants do not go through conditions of inequality, but because women in rural contexts face various violence that are structural, such as patriarchy and, consequently, economic and political inequalities.

However, so far, this process has presented two drawbacks: "the call for participation of rural women in the development of PDETS[2] was done at a personal level. Women were not cited as representatives of organizations" (CEDAW, 2019, p.16), and, the implementation of the agreement demands a gender approach in its complexity, but the main role is the women as actors in construction of peace, blurring their participation in mobilization of local economic strategies.

The National Agricultural Census (National Department of Statistics [DANE], 2014), shows that 31.9% of households in countryside have female family heads, and 36.6% of the country's agricultural production is in women's hands. Inequality for women in income is related to control over property, access to capital and administration of their agricultural production units (UPAS). In relation to this factor, DANE reports that

> 78.4% of the total UPA have less than 5 ha, and take 9.5% of the area. While UPAs are smaller where men are producers, they have greater participation (66.8%) and area (4.9%). A relevant fact is that the total of UPA with women who make production decisions, more than half (52.7%) are in the departments of Boyacá, Nariño, Cundinamarca and Cauca (DANE, 2014, p.1).

Thus, as women do not own capital, land or labor, it makes their administrative impact much less than men. Of course, it has to do with patriarchal constructions On the other hand, the economics of care has complex dynamics when talking about rural women. This economy refers to unpaid work carried out at home such as home maintenance, people caring at home or in the community, and support and maintain the paid work force (Ministry of Health and Social Protection, 2016).

Data from national time-use survey show that men spend "3 hours 6 minutes on average in unpaid work, while women 8 hours and 12 minutes, it means, women spend more than 5 hours 6 minutes on average a day than men in these kind of activities" (Ministry of Health and Social Protection, 2016, p. 3). Similarly, "girls, boys and older adults depend on the leadership of women" (Peasant Woman. Nariño, 2015, personal communication).

In Colombia, rural women "earn only three quarters of what men do (…), they are overrepresented in informal sector and in economic activities with low added value. This implies lower labor income and a lower capacity to increase their total income to get out of poverty" (Botello and Guerrero, 2017, p.42). In fact, when talking about rural women, their economic inequalities cannot be ig-

2. Program of development with territorial approach.

nored, apart from the victimizing events caused by the armed conflict to which they have been exposed.

Out of 8,493,100 victims registered in the Unit for Comprehensive Care of Victims (2019), 51% are women from rural areas. On the other hand, for women who are victims who are in administrative processes for land restitution, a "50/50 in administrative processes for restitution is currently being enforced when at the beginning of the program it was only men who reached out to claim them" (District Secretariat for Women, 2017, p.3). The Land Restitution Unit (2019) reports 34,245 women who claimed their land against 49,178 men. Thus, there is a great gendered difference in to access to land. These inequalities exacerbate the dehumanization of the armed conflict over rural populations:

> Dehumanization and political invisibility of peasant population have been important aspects of mass shootings committed within the armed conflict, which in many cases led to abandonment and dispossession of land, but were invisible in national politics for a long time. To include the concepts of dignity and life plans in the analysis, allows to combine material and moral, objective living conditions and subjectivities affected in the past, and at the same time projecting them to the future. However, this is not enough, it is necessary to connect these concepts to a gender analysis (Meertens, 2016, p.35).

In this sense, this article seeks to take up a view of organizations of rural women in Colombia and how they are expressed in the construction of peace initiatives, through productive projects and struggles for recognition from their collective actions to put the economy at the service and welfare of their communities. It is said that women's life projects must have a comprehensive approach among political, social and economic issues and, for rural women, also gender issues (Meertens, 2016).

If the intention is to economically reactivate the rural areas where women are conceived as ethical and political subjects. Firstly, we must understand the senses in which they have mobilized from their peasant identity. In this context, to think about the economy of these women according to social work goes beyond a cooperative or productive strategy, but points to their claim as political subjects in the territory, where associations and cooperatives put themselves at the service of their political actions.

Methodology

Documents related to rural women's associations in Colombia that have been able to influence associative and productive processes were analyzed. For this purpose, DANE documents were taken, especially from the National Agricultural Census, reports from the Ministry of Agriculture, reports from the National Planning Department of 2017, articles from the magazine *Rural Week*, Master's thesis carried out at the Universidad de los Andes, and research articles or reports of the Political Analysis magazine of the National University. In addition, articles from the Journal of Rural Development Notebooks, where the main focus was rural women, were reviewed. These articles were consulted in databases such as Ebosh, Proquest and Redylac.

Results

The results are presented in three parts: 1) challenges of the peasants in the framework of Havana agreements 2) Associations of peasant women, and 3) the ethical and political project of Social Work.

1. Challenges for Peasants in the Framework of Havana Agreements

The comprehensive rural reform for the reactivation of the countryside considers the following principles: a) structural transformation, b) comprehensive development of the Colombian countryside, c) a focus on gender equality, d) well-being and quality of life, e) prioritization, f) integrality, g) restoration, f) property regulation, among others (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). For these principles to be implemented it is important to consider:

> Stimuli for solidarity and a cooperative economy: in order to stimulate different associative forms of work or between small and medium producers, based on solidarity and cooperation, and that promote economic autonomy and organizational capacity, especially rural women and strengthen the capacity of small male and female producers to access goods and services, market their products and in general, to improve their living, working and production conditions, the National Government will create and implement the National Plan for the promotion of solidarity economy and rural cooperative (Mesa de Conversaciones, 2016, p. 28).

The Havana agreement seeks to strengthen strategies for the family, community, cooperative and solidarity economy in the countryside. This strategy

is divided into 4 axes: i) agricultural technical assistance, ii) strengthening of productive capacities iii) channeling the cooperative economy and iv) supporting differential measures to community organizations (Santos and Jiménez, 2016). It was also established that these axes will achieve the reactivation of countryside (Vargas, 2018). The first axis focuses on strengthening technical assistance that elaborates production costs and strengthens agricultural and agroindustrial practices of peasants.

According to the last agricultural census, only 10% of rural people receive technical assistance (Revista Semana, 2015). The second strategy focuses on income generation according to land use and credit support to have access to sustainable value[3]. However, this strategy is subject to the association of farmers, because if they are associated, they obtain a legal status that allows them to increase credit and access small loans for agro-industrial production through FINAGRO[4]. Now, to implement this point will depend on local governance to build partnerships and common senses for the countryside.

The latest strategies refer to trade facilities in goods and transactions that are intended to strengthen community social organizations to implement services and resources for income generation. However, the process of developing a cooperative or an association demands defining common goals and common interests in relation to democratic participation, training and education of members, support between cooperative associations or groups, autonomy and independence, and community commitment. All these elements go beyond a simple economic participation without saying that the economics are not relevant (Confederation of Cooperatives of Colombia [CONFECOOP], 2018).

In the chapter on comprehensive rural reform, although rural women are enunciated as relevant political actors, they are also overlooked because it is assumed that men and women are on an equal footing. It is necessary to mention that, although the agreement for the end of the armed conflict is necessary and an international sample, it is expected that local governments do not fall into decisions that increase the vulnerability of peasants and women, like what happened with *Agro Ingreso Seguro*. The Comptroller Office in its report on implementation of social interest housing policy for rural populations comments:

3. A value chain is the set of resources and actors participating in a transaction. Value chain analysis is useful for understanding: (a) whether there are differences in configuration (actors, resources, etc.) of the value chain between basic and differentiated goods. However, these analyses do not reveal the distribution of value over time for each of actor (Rueda, 2016, p. 51).

4. The Agricultural Finance Fund is an entity that promotes the development of Colombia's rural sector with financing and rural development instruments that foster investment. It is a mixed-economy society of national order, organized as a credit facility, with special regime, linked to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and monitored by the Financial Superintendency of Colombia (FINAGRO, 2018).

> The allocation of resources for subsidy of housing of rural social interest is below legal minimum limit established, lack of guidelines by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for the distribution of resources of rural housing subsidy granted by Savings Banks Family Compensation, and the absence of demand from the Finagro credit line for the access restrictions it offers to the low-income rural population, among other aspects, it has compromised during the last decade the right to decent housing for those who live in rural areas of the country (Comptroller General of the Republic, 2016, p. 28).

The conditions of the local client at the peripheries of the country have limited the effectiveness by which rural population gain access to goods and services that could improve their production, their housing conditions, or their sources of income with payment for environmental services. Under these conditions, the main people affected are also rural women (Delgado, 2014). Therefore, Uribe (2012) concludes that the new redistributive agenda must dignify the peasant: "the main feature of development style has been the persistence of extreme inequalities not only in the distribution of wealth and income, but also in allocation of respect and social recognition (Uribe, 2012, p. 507)). In this scenario, redistribution only is not enough, but we also have to consider peasant women as a collective identity that deserves recognition under conditions of social justice.

Peace, as an imperfect process, also demands strengthened institutions. In this regard, Robinson (2016) argues that the failure of nations points to the weakness of their economic institutions, and absence of ethics regarding governance (p. 57). Thus, "the regions with 'extractive' economic institutions, which do not create incentives, will generate poverty. Inclusive economic institutions, which do create incentives and opportunities, will generate prosperity". (Acosta, 2012, p.2).

On the other hand, Vargas (2017) has considered political challenges such as: a) territorial deployment of the State that is affected by institutional fragility where some elites could block the implementation of the agreement; b) diseconomies of scale, because there is a project of urbanization of countryside and, therefore, the authors propose as a recommendation c) to strengthen municipal councils for rural development (Vargas and Hurtado, 2017). This last proposal is that each municipality must guarantee participatory budgets, so that citizens located in rural and dispersed rural areas can have a better distribution for investment in the countryside (Vargas and Hurtado, 2017).

Although, the analyses of Vargas and Hurtado (2017) are clear and relevant, a focus on rural women is not evident, the analyses are generalized to all

peasants, but it must be recognized the dynamics of inequality are always present. In addition, the rural people's knowledge about the represented spaces for decision making should be considered. Therefore, it seems that the mobilization and participation of peasants do not only underpin the construction of local institutions, but also how the State institutions are articulated with the governance of associations which, with their mobilizations, position their demands in public spaces of incidence.

2. Women Peasant Association

The associations cited here fulfill a characteristic in which the land is the context where multiple women's interests converge. The land, according to Meertens (2000), is understood as "a metaphor to indicate all the elements that at different times of the twentieth century have constituted the agrarian issue: forms of exploitation, political debates, struggles for rights to land, and forms of peasant resistance organization". (p. 32). It has been the organizations of rural women who have mobilized to build a culture of peace that dignifies them and positions them in their territory. Peasant mobilizations are understood as networks with senses of organization and cultural diversity, with a political and cultural character and with multiple actors, cultural and institutional spaces. Peasant women have built various ways of being resilient to violence from their daily lives. Meertens (1994) states that

> In women's lives they are more sensitive to the destruction of social fabric, women are the ones who bear economic, social and emotional survival of the family... in short, they are the ones who carry the pain of facing consequences that are generated, without being prepared for it, and without having caused it. It is in this area where the roles of victims and new social subjects are sometimes confused, although we cannot forget that these new roles are assumed in circumstances of extreme adversity (p.3).

The association as a strategy to return to the social fabric in the territory is a space for listening, for resilience and for thinking about a life project for future. Thus, when each woman decides to be part of association, governance of commons and participation become axes of transformation in their immediate context.

Besides, Ostrom (2002) problematizes the administration of common goods or common use resources, from which people build cooperation, teamwork and solidarity. For the administration of commons to have impacts, it must then be

designed under "clearly defined limits, coherence of appropriation and provision of local conditions, negotiated collective actions, supervision, graduated sanctions, conflict resolution mechanisms, a minimum recognition of rights of the organization, and nested entities". (Ostrom, 2002, p.92).

The associations of peasant women emerge as a way out of structural political, economic and cultural violence and, therefore, their mobilizations are for rights of women which also involve men, as Puigvert and Muñoz (2012) state: "Men, just as women do, needed to be educated about women's rights and see more clearly that violence was never an acceptable response to a problem inside home or anywhere else" (p. 8).

Therefore, women's associations have three dimensions: a) economic benefits that guarantee their financial autonomy, b) policies that justify their rights and decision making and c) a subjective dimension, because it represents valuing oneself as someone who deserves a dignified and fair life (Stromquist, 2015). In this way, the woman as a political subject has meant transcendence and participation beyond a right that is stated in the Political Constitution of Colombia, and associations have become spaces in which the rural populations are capable of exercising a political activity.

Studies such as Ostrom's (2002) state that local organizations can build solidarity relationships that are economical and that involve three central axes: 1) responsible administration and benefits for all those involved in it, and 2) management of obvious local practices for a) responsibility and honesty, b) respect for resolving their own conflicts, c) solidarity and d) sense of belonging to agribusiness, and 3) a political position of communities for the appropriation of territory, and change of relational dynamics of the context.

In the review analysis and search for organizations of rural women who comply with these principles, various associations were found. In addition, they comply with principles unveiled by Ostrom (2002), since they have positioned from their collective actions practical, political, economic and social resistance to remain in the territory.

2.1. Resistance Practices to Remain in the Territory.

Isabela Marín author of the research project "Mobilization of rural women in the Colombian Southwest"[5] cites three important groups of rural women, two of whom have consolidated a cultural mobilization approach through pro-

5 Thesis project elaborated to aim for the title of Master in Political Sciences in the University of Los Andes. The research project was based on three women's organizations: a) ASMUCAM (Sandoná, Nariño), b) Mujeres de Inzá Cauca and c) Mariposas de alas nuevas (Buenaventura) (Marín, 2013).

ductive projects and, the third, focuses on the accompaniment of women who have been victims of patriarchal violence.

ASMUCAM, an association that was born in 2005 when some women from various municipalities of Nariño contacted those who are now leaders of the association, trying to invite them to train in Women's Human Rights (Marín, 2013, p. 32). One of its great associative results was the consolidation of productive projects. The women relate that they had the idea of collectively developing projects that generate income for themselves and their families. Although the association was formed with the purpose of allowing peasant women to claim their place as political actors, along the way, they build an identity that dignifies the peasant from its historical construction and from the responsibilities inherited for the protection of the land being an example for future generations.

Marín (2013) also mentions that the organization of farmer women of Inzá Cauca has led processes of resistance and reconciliation in the territory. What this organization did was to question themselves about how women lived and how to solve the problems they have, to begin to capitalize on them and teach them how to solve their problems (p. 46). Their greatest achievement is the demand for participation and the construction of a credit fund for women, which is granted to those women who design their project and implement it in the territory.

This organization claimed the place of women in private spheres, even revealing that the dynamics of domestic violence cannot be addressed exclusively by women, the emergence of new femininities requires resignification with the participation of masculinities.

Finally, Marín (2013) quotes New Wings Butterflies, a women's organization based in Buenaventura, whose primary purpose is to reflect with other women on violence and create a follow-up route to link them to active projects. Given the conditions of violence in Buenaventura, women are constantly violated because the woman's body is associated as part of the territory; and consequently, her body belongs to the armed groups and the intimidations that they execute, since they are in control (Marín, 2013).

This proposal has been a constant accompaniment to the victims of various forms of violence, to the listening and caring of women in Buenaventura. One of his great strategies has been anonymity, because this has allowed the voices of women to be raised and to detect those who are victims or prone to domestic violence.

To analyze the associations of peasant women is for them to constantly question themselves about their identity and the rural context in which they developed. These three examples are born by deconstructing the place of women who have been subjected to patriarchal dynamics and the multiple forms of

violence that exist in territories with armed actors, therefore, repositioning the role of women has been a constant feature within in these three organizations:

> The transgression of limiting roles and spaces means a rupture with the habitual perception of impotence facing problems, and it can generate emancipatory effects. For this reason, from a gender perspective, processes of spatial empowerment - in a material sense as the property of the land and in a symbolic sense as a visibility in discursive spaces - are of particular interest and relevance (Hoinle, Rothfuss and Gotto, 2013).

In the background review we found organizations of rural women who were not motivated by thinking of their feminine identity but were consolidated by an interest in the construction of agro-industry projects to build economic equity in their contexts. And although agroecological practices have been key to their mobilization, it could be inferred as a hypothesis that these practices also obey an identity of peasant women.

Zuluaga and Arango (2013) highlight in Antioquia the Association of Organized Women of Yolombó (AMOY). This is an organization of peasant women who live in family farming contexts, where the production of cane and coffee crops predominates in small farms. The farmer women through their organization, have built a resistance from agroecology as a strategy of resilience and of overcoming the dynamics of the armed conflict (Zuluaga and Arango, 2013, p. 2). The organization of rural women, like those already mentioned, has not been free from structural violence, which is understood as the force against the poor and the most disadvantaged populations in economic and political processes.

> These processes and forces form the basis of 'structural violence', the violence of constant intensity that can take various forms: racism, sexism, political violence, poverty, and other social inequalities. Through routine, ritual or difficult life courses, this structural violence influences people's ability to make decisions about their lives (Zuluaga and Arango, 2013, p. 3).

In these territories, violence against the common goods associated with the environment is also evident. From this organization the agroecology becomes a substantive practice of feeding and the responsible and sustained use of the ecological capital; therefore, the familiar agriculture stands out for a conception of life: According to Zuluaga and Arango (2013, p.7), the production is made in the properties of each one of the families, without agrochemicals, with native seeds, in systems of polycultures and with some appropriate technologies that look for an optimal and rational use and management of the resources.

Another peasant women's movement called the Anoriseña Women's Association, which began its mobilization in 1999 and has accompanied the strengthening of Women's Rights: Since 2009 the organization has been part of the Collective Network of Women of the Northeast, and since 2009 the organization has entered into a process of organizational, productive and social consolidation, impacting on the formation of rural settlement groups (Martínez., 2018, p. 8). In Colombia, analyses have focused more on industrial or agro-industrial value chain processes, but the analysis has not focused on revealing the economic inequality that might exist in the links of value chains where women participate, and how their organizations develop according to the interest groups that pursue their objectives[6].

Giraldo's research (2010) recognizes organizations of peasant women that stand out in the agro-industry that allows building value chains in conditions of social justice and equity. The successful experiences that have been mentioned have a central point, were all born by collective community action and not by the action of local and regional governments in the territory. The impact of the agro-industries of peasant women is evident in the management capacity of social projects that mobilize leaders and opportunities for their human and social development, understood as well-being in the here and now (Giraldo, 2010).

Now, some of the rural women's organizations that meet the conditions to resist through agro-industry were: "Asocañabraval, Asomcalá, Amurabi, Asomural, Malavar, Rosalita, Asmucicot, Natalí, and Artesguavio, which are located in the municipalities of Caparrapí, Guaduas, Bituima, La Mesa, Pandi, El Rosal, Cota, Ubaté and Gachetá" (Giraldo, 2010, p. 45). All of these organizations have been characterized because the consciousness that mobilizes collective action end up being superior to individual interest and although these organizations have been fragmented by the armed conflict, they have also been strengthened because they have positioned women as leaders in their contexts, where the struggles for recognition are forged (Fraser and Honneth l, 2006). It could be inferred, then, that although these organizations focused on productive issues, they are characterized by positioning rural women at the center: "the rural being" plays a fundamental role in self-representation and especially concerning how they want to be identified by their external interlocutors (Viera, 2012).

6. Any public policy for women in rural contexts must include positive actions. As commented by Parada (2018), this action chooses to recognize the social differences that exist between men and women, and to design mechanisms that eliminate barriers or guarantee minimum conditions for women to have access to the distribution of resources in the areas of education, employment, credit, and participation, among others (p. 125).

3. Ethical and Political Project of Social Work in the Context of Rural Communities

The social interactions of peasant women and the historical inequalities to which they have been subjected are, on the one hand, the conjugation of contexts and violence in rural areas of Colombia. On the other hand, they represent an opportunity to understand their relations with the land, meanings that go beyond the economic, without letting it be less important.

In this scenario, Social Work, based on the construction of intervention processes, builds an ethical and political project understood as a bet oriented under the principles of dignity, social justice, equity, and human rights. A project that involves decision making, political actions, and mobilizations with interest groups to dignify the countryside and; therefore, rural women. Taking as the main reference their knowledge in context and their historical configuration as political subjects and being aware of them as historical subjects with decision-making capacity and remaining in constant dialogue, to make them aware of their collective identity and territory.

Following Badiou (2015), "To not resist is to not think. Not to think is not to take risks. It is necessary to take the risk of stating the situation for what it is in each case, and then to accept the risk that there will be threats" (p. 30). To take the risk of enunciating the identity of the peasant woman who weaves herself in multiple scenarios resisting dialogically and constructively in peace initiatives.

According to Aquin (2005) If professional interventions imply a moment of justification of our choices based on what we consider just and good, then the ethical-political dimension will continue to constitute an inescapable component of our discussions and our actions (p. 75). Therefore, understanding the associations of rural women represents two fundamental points from social work: 1) to interpret the country's historical context from a reflective point of view of with regards to its commitments to the rural populations affected by the armed conflict and other type of violence, especially when the governance has made implementation of the agreements difficult and, consequently, the initiatives of peace of the local communities are key; and 2) the ethics and the conception of social justice that guide the social work in recognizing the configuration of the identity of the peasant woman (Leal and Malagon, 2015).

Concerning the first point, overcoming inequality does not imply a technical solution by the social worker, but rather an understanding of farmer women in their historical, political, economic and family context. Following Shön (1992): when a problematic situation is uncertain, the technical solution of the

problem depends on the prior construction of a well-defined problem, which in itself is not a technical task (p. 4).

On the second point, social justice as recognition of collective identities states that rural women's associations are an effort to vindicate their political, social and economic place for the construction of peace from their collective memories. Whereby, the work for memory is also to resignify the patriarchal practices that have become routine and that guide the life projects of many women, without forgetting the impact of the armed conflict in rural contexts.

In this regard, Cifuentes (2008) states that the incidence of women goes beyond family spaces. Since, it implies democratization of institutional social relations and how this democratization influences citizen parity and, in particular, the recognition of rural women as citizens where their association surpasses productive interests (Cifuentes, 2008). Productive interests are a strategy for building an identity.

The ethical and political project of Social Work is placed in a conversation about the ethical, what is fair and good for the communities; it also expresses the political place that the social worker assumes in peace-building in rural contexts. In other words, ethical decisions, policies that materialize in a process of intervention. Such an ethical and political project is based for this dilemma on three fundamental aspects: a) the understanding of the dynamics of inequality as an object of intervention, b) the resistance and organization as a dialogic practice to strengthen and c) the hermeneutic and critical understanding of the territory and territoriality.

In the first component, it is important to consider that inequality is not only the product of structural macroeconomic conditions but also the cultural constructions of the communities themselves. That is to say, how patriarchy has caused many women to have less land to administer in the UPAS, but also of deconstructing the discourses that have naturalized women themselves through their socialization processes, where the power of men is ratified.

The social worker, along with rural women, must promote new conscious forms of social mobilization, especially in territories where organizations and mobilizations are scarce; thus, the political exercise of women is to link the interests of others and renounce the fulfillment of individual aspirations that serve the ends of instrumental satisfaction (Díaz, Carmona and Montañez, 2019). These common purposes are a clear example that the political condition is a discursive action that seeks the economic, social and political transformation of women, where they broaden a critical view of their realities and the constructions of their context.

In this context, Social Work must look at microenterprises and cooperative strategies because they show how economic autonomy translates into the ability

to make decisions. However, the negotiation of their gender identities is a slow cultural process that points to family transformations and also to changes in the community (Soto and Fawaz, 2016, p.150).

In relation to resistance, it is understood as a political action that is built to recover civic spaces, for example, their participation in organizations. Resistance is all collective and civil action that reclaims the position of as women in a territory to give it new meanings. In this context, it interpellates, perhaps, constructed knowledge, which implies questioning the geopolitical place where women have built civil capacities. As García (2013) comments: the resistance that is articulated in the 'frontier moment' and that does so concern the reconfiguration of the spaces of representation and local political participation on one hand, and the construction of the new political subject (García, 2013, p.15).

In terms of territory and territoriality, rural women's organizations consolidate a social fabric in their social interactions that endows the region with purpose and meaning. It could be that these purposes, although they are economic because they seek to increase equity, are not exhausted in this sense. There are some purposes that mobilize them and that surpass peasant production as the senses constructed from the orchard as a possibility to meet, mobilize and take political actions (Marín, 2013); the opportunity of constructing agroecological practices of agro-industries and the alternative of positioning these solidary views of economy as an alternative of territorial peace building. In this scenario, Social Work can contribute to resignifying the social structure and solidarity relations:

> We understand the territory as a historical and social construction, located temporally and spatially. This territorial construction is dynamic and is immersed in processes of continuous dispute by subjects with differentiated agendas, actions and strategies that exert unequal levels of control over the use of resources, social flows, symbolic constructions and territorial projections (Flórez and Rodríguez, 2016, p. 2).

The professional praxis oriented to the Colombian countryside, especially to the construction of gender equity in the rural area, implies raising awareness and transforming it, starting by situating itself in context because "daily social life is woven between an I and a you, it is an intersubjective matter, it advocates for the person who is engaged in that specific situation (Aguayo, 2007, p. 50). Social Work should investigate the importance of rural women in directing its intervention towards agricultural cooperatives: although women have played an important role in the management of cooperatives in certain regions of Colombia, there is little research on this topic.

The face of rural Colombia is female and the perspective of self-sustainable agricultural cooperatives can also be this way (Gutiérrez, 2014). In addition, resistance is not only economic or political but also configures various dimensions from where they are enunciated. Social Work assumes, then, a critical position in the understanding of the social and political violence that rural women have faced; in this way, and returning to Aquin (2003), social work has in its hands the full recovery of the concept of social rights, knowing that its concretion is a collective commitment and that it is feasible only through public and collective action (Aquin, 2003, p. 21).

Thus, all collective action is framed within the mobilization of dialogical, interactive processes that involve the democratization of relations, that enter the voice of the institutional, that build leadership capacities, mobilization of networks and resources that favor the reconstruction of peasant women as identity, in which: the actors, when defining identity, define themselves and their relations with other actors in accordance with the available resources and with the opportunities and restrictions of the environment (Revilla, 2010, p. 67). Recognizing peasant women as political actors from their identity does not invalidate the inequalities to which they have been subjected; on the contrary, it recognizes them to make decisions in favor of their identity and their economic opportunities as we have seen in the organizations analyzed in this study.

In order to think about the social justice of peasant women it is necessary to assume that as a professional one cannot be neutral. The value-neutrality as proposed by Aparicio (2018) is: an ideological contraption because it always masks a political decision. However, what enters and what does not enter into a rational calculation will always leave things out -externalities, as certain schools of economic thought, would say. And that is politics (p. 1). In this sense, Social Work must make a political decision to understand the dynamics that occur in rural contexts to build equity for rural women; a process that mobilizes their life projects in conditions of dignity and that, constantly, dignifies peasants.

Conclusions

The conclusions are oriented in two directions: 1) the collective meanings and 2) the praxis of social work:

1. Collective Meanings

It could be said that integral rural reform requires the construction of peasant associations, where peasant cooperatives can be a key point for the agricultural sector. However, to be a cooperative it may require collaborative work that even surpasses the associations themselves and legally become another figure, and this could imply risks for the formed associations. It is worth clarifying that these social organizations can be a political space to deconstruct violence and to base new territorialities that overcome a single view that can fall into the economic, or only the social as acts of memory, taking as a reference that the two categories can be articulated, but this decision falls specifically on the objectives that each of the women pursue to be part of an organization.

2. Praxis of Social Work

The post-conflict transition process requires that Social Work, as a profession that interpellates micro-realities, could turn its gaze back to agriculture, in particular, to reveal the meanings assumed by rural women in social organizations and the values they attribute to their processes in order to have a political participation that goes beyond simple contribution in the market. Similarly, it is important not to romanticize social processes, since within organizations there can also be hidden fragilities in terms of relational leadership, knowledge that must be deconstructed and put into dialogue as a collective memory.

The very fact of association involves not only the meanings that people give to why and for what to associate, but also the stereotypes that each person has about the construction of these processes.

The State should materialize the necessary institutions to build conditions of equity. And if social work directs its reflections to peasant women, it would be worthwhile to venture into agricultural cooperatives and position oneself as collective actions.

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