

Sensitive Approaches to Addressing Social Justice in "Ordinary Foods" in France and Mexico

In this paper, we present approaches developed in collaboration with actors from the school environment in Mexico, implemented during Morgan Jenatton's Master's degree, and perspectives for their adaptation to the French context for the doctoral project currently underway. The Master's work was part of an action-research project of the host laboratory (LabVida) at the Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR), which coordinates monthly workshops with local teachers to accompany them in setting up action-research projects in their schools themselves (Ferguson, Morales, Hernández Meléndez, et al. 2019; Ferguson, Morales, Chung, et al. 2019; Morales, Hernández Meléndez, and Mendieta 2016). The overall objective of this project is to develop collective reflections on the link between health, culinary practices, agrobiodiversity, and agroecological traditions and innovations, particularly in rural and/or marginalized communities.

The aim of the work carried out in Mexico was to put into perspective, with young people from four colleges in the region, their own consumption of soft drinks and that of a "traditional" corn drink, call pozol, and to explore ways of increasing consumption of the latter (Jenatton and Morales 2019). To do this, we developed an evolving participatory methodology, designed with two partner teachers, to take into account student feedback on the approaches deployed and to integrate their analytical perspectives into the results. The project took the form of a cycle of classroom workshops, aimed at supporting a collective reflection by the pupils on their consumption of beverages, followed by several collective and individual interviews conducted by the researcher. This methodology therefore led the students not only to develop their own ways of encouraging the consumption of pozol, but also to assess the relevance of the issues addressed in the project. The collaboration with the teachers has established a strong partnership, which continues notably through the friendships created and the publication of a "general public" communication in a monthly Mexican newspaper on the sensitive approaches deployed and the pedagogical perspectives to act on food-related issues (Jenatton et al. 2020).

The current doctoral work takes up elements of this methodology in order to apply them to a similar approach in France and to develop a comparative study between the two countries. The thesis project examines the Mexican tortilla and French bread as "indicator" foods of the reconfiguration dynamics of agri-food systems in the Altos of Chiapas in Mexico and in the Southern Ardèche in France, with three main objectives: 1) to carry out a sociotechnical analysis of the processes of greening (or not) these chains, 2) to explore the processes of emancipation and renegotiation of power relations undertaken by various actors through tortilla and bread, based on "Latin American" currents of political ecology (Leff 2003); Escobar 2018; Durand, Figueroa, and Guzmán

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Chávez 2011; Giraldo 2018), and 3) to analyze learning processes that promote the democratization of access to agroecological products.

This paper will therefore present feedback on action-research experiences from our two projects (completed and ongoing) and will propose initial elements of analysis of the current project on how actors are doing to forge fairer and more sustainable relationships, based on certain currents of political ecology.

References

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