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THE COFFEE PRODUCING WOMEN

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Contents

Abstract

The purpose of this research paper is to analyze and understand the triple burden borne by women coffee producers in the department of Caldas in Colombia and how this burden increases or decreases according to the socio-economic settings where these women are situated. Coffee producing women struggle to handle multiple roles of being household heads, mothers, wives and union leaders. Following an anthropological methodology that comprehensively covers the different aspects of women's lives through four essays, this research paper intends to describe the reality of the reproductive, productive and community management roles of four coffee-growing women and their daughters. The purpose of this study is to find out how some of these roles are gendered and have a generational change that intersects with their class. Using qualitative data obtained through interviews, this paper argues that due to their economic conditions and the power dynamics between genders, some of these women face poverty and their work goes unrecognized. At the same time, it is argued that being involved in coffee production has contributed to their agency and empowerment within and outside the household.

Relevance to Development Studies

> "The universe is made of stories, not of atoms"
> (Rukeyser, 2015: 467)

Gender equality is a mainstream issue on the agenda of several countries, especially in the global south where women still face many barriers to equal opportunities. While it is true that a lot has been achieved thus far in term of women's rights, the struggle of rural women remains external to much of the discourse on development as it relates to gender. By examining the testimonies of different female coffee growers in the department of Caldas, it can be shown that the family dynamics in this region have changed as a result of these women undertaking a greater income earning role. Irrespective of this shift, women's relative position within one of the largest coffee-producing areas of Colombia continues to be complimentary to the role of men, but also still underestimated.

This research paper adopts an anthropological methodology that combines ethnographic methods and theoretical concepts such as the triple burden or triple role of women, which are crucial to the field of development to make sense of cultural worlds. Moreover, the writer's personal experiences of growing up in and around the industry and region under study allows for deeper understanding of the social and cultural context.

Keywords
Coffee producing women, Triple burden, Productive role, Reproductive role, Community role, Small producer, Medium producer, Large Producer, Class.

Acknowledgement

Part I

Chapter 1

Methodology and Methods

> "Research is a craft. I'm not talking analogy here. Research isn't like a craft. It is a craft. If you know what people have to go through to become skilled carpenters or makers of clothes, you have some idea of what it takes to learn the skills for doing research. It takes practice, practice, and more practice." (Bernard, 2011: 1)

The way in which I wanted to conduct this research ended up not being a typical one. Firstly, this was the first time in my life that I was acting as a social scientist, and although following some certain steps (quantitative approach) would have been the normal course for me to reach a conclusion, unexpectedly I ended up doing the opposite. I followed the qualitative tradition, which through the study of a few in-depth situations will help me understand diverse realities (O'Leary, 2017). My principle of inquiry was constructed through this particular lens and my epistemologies were rooted in the realities of those who have experienced it, including my own. (Bernard, 2011). For months I struggled to fill out a template with random quotes and concepts from different authors that were supposes to provide a framework for my research. In the end, I discovered that following this structure did nothing but add to my confusion. After all, being a researcher is about moving beyond consuming knowledge to become a knowledge producer and painter of a reality (O'Leary, 2017).

When looking for a research topic, the only thing I knew was that I wanted to tell a story where I could include some elements of my life as a woman growing up in up in a Colombian coffee-producing family, and to tell the stories of female coffee producers. My research was an attempt to document the lives of women whose stories deserve to be told, whose realities were hidden and no one ever dared to tell. (Behar, 1996). As Stuart mentions:

> "Women read the biographies of other women ¨because they want to know about their private worlds, about how other perceived themselves and their lives, about their sources of power, as well as about how they incorporated work into their domestic lives" (qtd. In Reed-Danahay, 1997: 242)

Observing through the Anthropological Lens

Having the opportunity to propose my own theme, I wanted to explain the way I have negotiated a place in the world through an understanding of my relationship to coffee production, rural women and power dynamics (Crawley, 2002). Moreover, empathizing with the multiple identities that intersect and shape the reality of women involved in **coffee production** would help me structure the path for my research. The anthropological lens under which I would then analyze and tell these stories would serve as the leitmotif to weave all the pieces together and make my own craft. Whatever the meaning of anthropology one selects, it should be clear that it is a holistic discipline that serves to understand the many facets of humanity in an integrated way. Anthropology encompasses the domains of the humanities

and science, and goes beyond the pre-established limits of both, while at the same time examining issues of the past and the present and their possible effects in the future (Peacock, 2001). My challenge was to understand a particular organization or a set of arrangements that were typical of a group of people, in my case female coffee producers. My intention was to acknowledge the power of these arrangements in the organization of the community where I was brought up (Peacock, 2001). Despite finding the methodology that better suited my work, the objective of my research was not yet clear.

I was embarking on a trip through a long tunnel that I was sure would take me somewhere. Acting as an anthropologist would not be an easy journey. I knew I was arriving into an unknown place, that, although familiar, I was uncertain about how to best observe, understand and describe. Not knowing how to enter this new world but wanting to do so anyway, the fear of being a cold and distant observer, the anxiety that the ideas would arrive late and the feeling of writing nonsense but still taking the risk to do it were my route stops along the road for this research (Behar, 1996).

Ethical Consideration

Before the Covid-19 pandemic started, the way in which I had planned to document and tell the stories of these women was to go to Colombia, conduct fieldwork and collect the data. Through the collection of data, I would be able to understand the reality of the members of this community, in this case women coffee producers. This would be possible through the well-known classical anthropological method of ethnography (O'Leary, 2017). However, due to the pandemic I was unable to travel, so I opted for a plan B as an alternative to the ethnographic method. I decided to use semi-structured interviews as the method to collect my data. Once I had collected the data, I would use the inductive analysis approach to find key themes in my raw data that would be later translated into my theoretical framework (Thomas, 2006).

Possessing what Hidalgo would describe as the *"overlapping insider/outsider status"* (qtd. In Jones, Torres et al., 2014: 104) could have played as a double-edge sword for my research. On the one hand, my insider experiences as a Colombian women raised in a coffee-producing family and my worldview regarding women involved in **coffee production could** have impacted the way that I would interpret the data as a researcher (Jones, Torres et al, 2014). However, acknowledging my power positionality among this social structure would help me deal with my own possible biases when it came to the data analysis (Jones, Torres et al., 2014). In the end, our goal as humans is not to become objective machines, but rather to transcend our own biases and acquire knowledge (Bernard, 2011). On the other hand, I also had the outsider status because my education and my work experiences have never been related to coffee production; moreover, my connection with the Colombian coffee producing culture was on my father's side, which gave me a different perspective on this culture. My own understanding and reflections as an insider/outsider researcher would contribute to an appreciation of both perspectives, and mediate between them (Jones, Torres et al., 2014).

Methods

Inductive analysis approach

At the beginning, my research was aimed at understanding the specific role of women in the coffee industry in Colombia, but women are engaged in all fronts of the coffee industry in the country. The role of these women can be very broad and can range from the harvesting of beans, picking coffee cherries or the ownership and administration of the farm. Moreover, women also participate in other stages of the value chain, such as trained baristas, expert cuppers and union leaders. Irrespective of these roles, which represent only a small part of their lives, each woman embodies a "complex intertwining of multiple identities/inequalities" (Bilge, 2010: 59). Whether it be at the household level, in their paid employment or their community work, the numerous identities of these women are "embedded in repertoires of practices, characters and discourses informed by specific power relationships" (Bilge, 2010: 61). Rural women make a significant contribution not only to food security but also to the social and economic development of their region. The daily tasks they perform for this purpose demands a lot of commitment and time, and yet their efforts are rarely recognized or receive any payment or economic reward (Suarez, Mosquera et al, 2018).

As a result of my interest in bringing the "multiple voices" of these women to the academic field (Bilge, 2010: 61), I decided that I wanted to narrow down my investigation and understand the triple burden that they bear. By triple burden, I refer to the reproductive, productive and community-managing roles performed by those women who have devoted their lives to the production of the beans for brewing the world's most consumed beverage. Each one of these roles has its own voice and stories to tell; oftentimes the different stories are voiced by the same individual. The intersection of these multiple voices will reveal the different experiences of discrimination and relegation, as well as the privileges experienced by different women who take part in the same issue (Carbado et al., 2013). My dialogue with different women sheds a light on the subject and provided me with topics that would later constitute a compilation of essays that reflect on their lives in the three different scenarios. Those insights served as my raw data, which I then analyzed using the inductive approach to find themes that were recurrent, prevailing or meaningful. Using the inductive approach helped me to avoid using the traditional methodologies for data analysis that an untrained researcher like me would not know how to use (Thomas, 2006).

Semi-Structured Interviews

As I mentioned before, to initiate the collection of data I designed a questionnaire that was aimed at asking coffee-producing women about their roles in reproductive, productive and community management work. I wanted know what these women do and think about each of the three aspects of their lives, in order to give me a clearer picture of this particular group (O'Leary, 2017). I was looking for data to gain insights about the socio-cultural facts of each one of these aspects in the production of coffee. Besides, using the three different roles of women as the connecting thread to collect the information, I also wanted to know how these roles changed depending on the type of economy in which each of these women was located. Coffee producers are classified by the National Federation of Coffee Growers (FNC) into three economic categories—small, medium and large—and these categories vary according to the size and ownership of the land and the degree of dependence of the producer on coffee income (Caldas FNC, 2019).

Due to the conditions, I would only have one chance to interview each of these women. For this I decided to use semi-structured interviews, which is a freewheeling in style despite having a question guide. Semi-structured interviews are meant to get interviewees to open up and express themselves (Bernard, 2011). I created a questions guide that was divided into three categories of topics. Each category contained questions about:

- the reproductive work,
- the productive work, and
- the community managing work.

The questionnaire for the mothers was a bit different from the one I created for the daughters. Listening to the daughters would give a perspective on how the future of coffee-producing women in these three spheres will look like.

Sampling

Adopting the classification that the FNC uses for coffee producers, I chose to interview one coffee-producing woman from each of the three economic categories. Since I was working with qualitative data, my objective was not to focus on representativeness but rather to gain deep knowledge insight (O'Leary, 2017). I also decided that I would expand my sample to six women; however, these three new women would be the daughters of the main interviewees. Interviewing these young women would add additional information to my stories/essays about the generational changes in these roles and how gender issues are transmitted from generation to generation.

Working with a Key Informant

The first person I discussed my research ideas with was Angelica (aged 52). Angelica is a small coffee producer from the municipality of Palestina in Caldas, whom I knew as a community leader. Angelica served also as my key informant. According to Bernard (2011, p.196) "informants tell you what they think you need to know about their culture". Before interviewing Angelica, she agreed that the information she was sharing with me would be made public for the purpose of this research.

Snowball technique

To find another two interviewees who also had daughters and had the characteristics associated with the economic coffee producer type, I used my key informant Angelica to locate the large and medium producers (O'Leary, 2017 ; Bernard, 2011).

Chapter 2

Introduction: Nature of the problem

The perception of the coffee-producing women in Colombia

"The coffee-producing woman is key for the business generational renewal; she is at the core of the household. The coffee-producing women strengthen her sons and daughter's rootedness to land. She contributes to the concentration of the working force by improving the working conditions of other labourers during harvest season. Moreover, she participates in the certification processes that guarantee both the coffee sustainability and also greater income for the coffee-producing family. The coffee-producing woman monitors compliance with socially responsibility standards and verifies the environmental commitment of the products. Such meticulous care gives the woman in question, better market options and optimizes her performance as a female coffee entrepreneur."

The quote above is taken from the Office of the Presidential Advisor for Gender Equity (2008) to characterize the coffee-producing woman.

On the other side, the coffee-producing man is portrayed as a poised and diligent hard worker, who sets an example on how to protect and be the steward of the coffee farm - a god's creation full of trees and birds, surrounded by water springs and green coffee mountains. The coffee-producing man is described as the best master that god has found to take care of what has been put in his hands. His children grow up observing how their father works hard with love and caution to take care of every coffee bean on the farm, while the loving and tender mother looks after the house, the gardens and the family (El Colombiano, 2013).

The coffee-producing family which is deemed as a unit, has always been the centre of many interventions by the state and the FNC. This neoliberal model of the family as a unit assumes that the head of the household is an altruistic person who seeks to obtain a maximum yield of the household resources that he allocates to this unit. For this same reason, this benevolent household head is who represents the family's interests and preferences (Agarwal, 1997). However, when talking about the work of the men and women separately, the media has been largely responsible for relegating the role of the latter to the domestic work and has made their participation in the value chain almost invisible. Furthermore, coffee has always been regarded as a man's crop (Hivos, 2014) where the man is considered to be the household head of the coffee-growing family (Rodríguez, 2009). It is not surprising that the logo that represents the coffee producers in Colombia and the FNC (see Image 1), contains only the silhouette of a man, *"Juan Valdez",* who represents the quintessential coffee producer or *"cafetero"* and his mule *"Conchita".* This same organization has also been to some extent responsible for reproducing the gender roles within the members of the family, not only because those who are invited to receive technical advice are mostly men, but also because the hours in which agricultural outreach activities are conducted are incompatible with the domestic activities that women perform (Rodríguez, 2009). These cultural images, which have been constructed through these representations, underpin the exclusion and lack of recognition of otherness and have only contributed to placing women in a disadvantaged

position, inasmuch as they only reproduce an authoritarian and patriarchal culture (DNP, 2013).

Image 1. (FNC, 1981)

Although currently there are many programmes aimed at improving the participation of women in the Colombian coffee value chain, the National Agricultural Census (DANE, 2014) shows that only 26% of the agricultural production units in Colombia are controlled by women. In contrast, 61% is controlled by men, who at the same time have more access to production resources, namely credit and technical support. Decisions regarding production of the remaining 13% of the units are pool controlled by different crop owning family members (Solidaridad, 2017).

A report made by Solidaridad Network (2017) on gender equality in the coffee sector shows that there is positive link between gender equality and economic growth when women have equal access to production inputs and training. This translates into higher profits, thus bringing greater benefits for the whole family. The improved economic situation does not, however, take into consideration either the crucial role women play in the care work and education of the family (Procafecol, 2020), or their involvement in the political decisions regarding their own communities.

There is broad existing research literature that talks about the triple role/triple burden of women in the coffee value chain. The literatures covers three main aspects of their participation in the value chain, such as the social sphere (reproductive role) or the relationships within the coffee family and the domestic work, the economic sphere (productive role) and their participation in the production and commercialization of coffee and the political sphere (community role) which includes their participation in unions and public life within the community (Solidaridad, 2017). Moreover, all of this literature assumes that these women have similar social and economic contexts and that they all face similar issues regardless. But once it is analyzed under the socio-economic settings in which they operate the story is completely different.

Despite the relevance of women in the care economy and their broad participation in the coffee value chain, inequalities in contrast with men persist for them in terms of access to land, training, decision making processes and competitiveness, alongside the burden of housework. Likewise, women coffee growers continue to be relegated in decision-making at the family, economic, social and political levels. The existing literature revolves around the economic field and the production and commercialization of coffee, and leaves a void about how these three fields are intertwined and support activities that are part of the same value chain. This is despite the reproductive and community roles women perform that contribute to the expansion of the workforce who grow and produce coffee.

Research question and the gendered coffee context

After gathering enough testimonies from different women, and performing an inductive analysis of the information, the following questions arose:

- In what different ways is the triple burden reflected within the coffee growers Economic Classification?
- In what ways has women's triple burden changed within the coffee industry and why?

This question will guide the course of this research paper, and will serve my objective of adding a piece of my own understanding to the existing literature regarding the role of coffee-producing women in the three different areas of work (reproductive, productive and community managing work) and how it changes according to their socio-economic conditions. Since if it is true that the available information covers their different roles, there is not sufficient data that provides information about the changes of these roles in the different socio-economic settings where these women are located. Moreover, I also wanted to understand how these roles changed over generations and what are the possible implications for future generations.

Caldas's coffee context

I was born and raised in Colombia, the third largest coffee exporter in the world (OCDE, 2015). Although coffee production in past represented a significant portion of Colombia's GDP, today its share of national economic output has declined due to the fall of its price as a commodity on international markets according to the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia (2020). Nonetheless, coffee production still represents a great source of income for 32.459 coffee-producers and their families (SICA, 2020), including in Caldas. This region is the fifth largest coffee-producing department1 in Colombia and is also part of the so-called "Coffee Triangle". Located in the rural area of the Andes mountain range, the coffee triangle comprises three departments (Caldas, Quindio and Risaralda). Coffee production has been the driving force of the coffee triangle's economy and has shaped the culture of this area; such cultural traditions have been passed on from generation to generation. (UNESCO, 2017) . Due to the mountainous geographical conditions of the Andean region, coffee production is an artisanal process which gives a particular identity to the small and medium producing families. This identity helps build a deep awareness of the craft, which in turn forges a corporate identity that goes beyond the differences and inequalities in the economic and social situation of the producers (Rodríguez, 1998). Beyond the economic importance coffee has had in Caldas, coffee production has played a significant role in the construction of the social relations of the area's inhabitants (Rodríguez, 2009).

For the purpose of this research, I will refer to coffee production as the different socio-labor, productive and cultural practices embedded amongst the agents involved in the process, such as producers, workers, officials, technicians and others (Rámirez, 2015). The characteristics of the Andean region combined with the arduous efforts of thousands of

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[1] The Colombian territory is politically divided into 32 departments, which in turn are divided into municipalities. Further to this division a group of departments that share similar geographic and cultural characteristics conform the 6 regions of the national territory.

producers who carry out this work have allowed them to produce Arabica coffee of excellent quality. To obtain the first harvest, the coffee plants are sowed and nurtured for two years. Once the fruit reaches maturity, the laborers manually collect the beans, wash them, remove the pulp and carry out the drying process inside the farm (UNESCO, 2017). Behind the green landscapes, the colorful houses and the yellow and red coffee beans, there has always been the strength, discipline and early work of many Colombian coffee-producing families, that for many generations have given the world's consumers cups of Arabica coffee that contains thousands of stories.

The coffee-producing family

Coffee has always been a family business in Colombia. By family business I refer to a "company" owned and controlled by the members of a family, which at the same time holds the managerial power. In family businesses, the values of the holding family have a strong influence on the commercial enterprise, and such values are passed on to workers and become a collective roadmap to reaching the company's goals (Efferin and Hartono, 2015). The complementary roles by mutual agreement between men and women have traditionally structured the division of work in coffee-producing families (I will alternate between the terms coffee-producing family / coffee-producing household)[2], covering up the complexities of gender dynamics that contribute to the reinforcement of the family and agricultural development structures in producing regions (Pineda, et el. 2019; Rodríguez, 2009). The coffee-producing family is and has been the basis for the social development of the region, and it does not come as a surprise that in some existing literature the nuclear family is idealistically depicted as a pooled source of work where the family members intervene in order to maintain the survival of the farm and ensure the individual and collective wellbeing of the members (Rodríguez, 2009; Wallerestein, Smith, 1991).

In Caldas there are around 30,031 coffee producing families, which represent 6% of the total in Colombia. In the department, each household unit is composed by an average of three members. Caldas is the department with the lowest representation of women heads of households, only 18% of these units are headed by a female member of the family, compared to the rest of rural households of which 32% are headed by a woman (SICA, 2020).

Identification system of the coffee producers

Many Colombian coffee growers are identified with the "Cédula Cafetera", which works as a bank card and identification card. It is granted by the FNC to the federated coffee growers who have a minimum of 0.5 hectares and 1500 coffee trees planted in that area. Those who possess a "Cédula Cafetera" cannot only participate in the FNC elections for municipal or departmental committees, but can also receive the coffee sales payment, incentives payments, and receive the subsidies and credits from the programs developed and executed by the FNC. Non-holders of a "Cédula Cafetera" have access to public benefits to which all federated coffee growers are entitled for contributing to the FNC, namely purchasing guarantees, scientific research and technological development, rural extension service and promotion and advertising (FNC, n.a:, Pineda, et al., 2019).

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[2] According to the definitions, a household is made up of one person or a group of people that may or may not be relatives, who totally or partially occupy a dwelling; they meet the basic needs from a common budget and generally share meals together (DANE, 2018)

The following chart provides information regarding the possession of a Coffee ID in Caldas department.

Caldas Department	Number	% of the total of Coffe Producers	
Total coffee-producers (Men and Women)	32.459	100%	
Total Women Coffee-producers	8.992	28%	**% of the total of Women Coffe Producers**
Women coffee-producers with "Cédula Cafetera"	6.701	25,53%	91%
Women coffee-producers non-holders of a "Cédula cafeteria"	821	2,53%	9%

Chart 1, (SICA, 2020).

A change in the FNC statutes in 2017 made it possible for the wives of the coffee plantation owners to access the "Cédula Cafetera"; previously this benefit was only granted to the producer's children. This has enabled a greater participation of women in the coffee elections. According to the president of the coffee growers committee of Caldas: "The new federated model must adapt to the realities of a post-conflict country, this requires the continuity of coffee as one of the protagonists within the agricultural sector" (Morales, 2017). This change will allow greater participation of women in the decision-making processes of the coffee sector, through their participation in municipal, departmental and directive committees. Additionally, this change makes visible the reproductive role of women in the industry and eases the resources control for them.

The Stratification of Coffee Producers

The social structure of Colombian coffee producers contains all the classes and social groups existing in the country. A closer examination of this social structure reveals that there is broad social stratification based on socio-economic factors (Rodríguez, 1998). Coffee producers are mainly classified by the FNC into three economic categories–small, medium and large– and these categories vary according the size and ownership of the land and the degree of dependence of the producer on coffee income (FNC, 2020:).

The historical reasons for this division are rooted in the post-colonial period, where most of the wastelands were adjudicated to landowners who could exploit them (Palacios, 2009). Due to the large investment needed to grow coffee, especially the time it takes to produce the first harvest, only the wealthiest families had the capacity to do so (Rodríguez, 1998). Coffee was later grown clandestinely by poor peasants on the large farms (Rodríguez, 1998). Other factors could explain this division, such as the division of land amongst the heirs, the failed land reform policies of the state and the violence in the countryside that has produced displacement (Rodríguez, 1998). However, the current rationale behind this division is not only the provision of tailor-made credits for farmers in need of capital (Rámirez, 2015), but also the design of rural and agricultural development policies that serve as

gateways to alternative forms of production for large, medium and small producers (Rural Development Agency, 2019).

According to this classification, coffee-producers from Caldas are divided as follows:

Coffee Grower Type	Coffee plantation range (ha)3	# of Coffee Growers	%	Coffee plantation areas (ha)	%	Average area of coffee plantation per producer (ha)
Small	<5 ha	30.771	94,8%	39.482	62,6%	1,28
Medium	5 – 10 ha	1.083	3,3%	7.269	11,5%	6,71
Large	> 10.0 ha	605	1,9%	16.300	25,9%	26,94
Total Caldas		32.459	100%	63.051	100%	1,94

Chart 2, Economic Classification of Coffee Growers (FNC, 2020: 7).

It can be seen that most of the country's producers are small in size. The question arises as to whether or not the idea behind keeping this division is only to design policies that fit the needs of the most vulnerable families, which in this case are the small ones or if "leaving the class structure intact ensures that those with wealth will continue as before to privilege their own political interests within the confines of any democratic system that does not expropriate them" (Brass, 2014: 387). Furthermore, the current rural model in Colombia has tended to benefit the elites and the largest landowners, who in this case are mostly men, because even when they are small farmers formally they are the land owners. This has allowed them to decide on the future of the sector, since they are overrepresented both in popular elections and in the executive branch of government (UNDP, 2011).

Women play an important role in the production and harvesting of coffee and also in the domestic work that reproduces the coffee-producing family. Moreover, some of these women take up leadership roles within the associations that represent the interest of coffee growers in Colombia. Although women's contribution to food nutrition and security and the social and economic development of Colombia and its rural areas demands a lot of time and dedication, their work is unpaid and their efforts are underestimated (Suarez, Del Castillo et al., 2018). As long as women are considered to be responsible for childcare and domestic work, while at the same time spend long hours working outside their homes, they will never have economic empowerment. Moreover, men have to start giving up their power and assume their responsibilities in household tasks (Van der Gaag, 2014).

The leadership of women and their empowerment within the industry is measured through their participation in agricultural activities and in producers' organizations (Lyon, et al., 2019). The coffee-producing woman is pictured by the Colombian state as a caring and altruistic individual whose only interest is to ensure the family's welfare. This describing of women as lacking in personal interests and being highly concerned for the welfare of the family, not only contributes to sustaining conventional inequalities (Sen, 1987) but also

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3 The hectare (ha) is mainly used to measure an area of land. Equal to a square with 100-metre sides (1 hm2), or 10,000 m2.

implies that women are the bearers of the triple burden. It is important to analyze this concept and to understand how coffee-producing women are seen according to the Colombian state in order to then figure out where they are placed in society. It is also helpful for this research to see her current role, and link it with other concepts that can help me define the nature of women's exclusion in work.

In addition, for decades women have been considered to be responsible for the reproduction of the coffee-producing family. This reveals that in rural societies the work that the household requires is distributed among individuals of different ages and gender. This leaves women accountable for the production of food, the care and feeding of farm animals and the management of small amounts of cash for the household basics. Besides this, many coffee-producing women in Colombia, and also in other countries, bear the responsibility for big families (Van Der Gaag, 2014). In this sense, women have to bear a triple burden, which involves the domestic household chores, the paid work activities outside the household and the volunteer work they perform for the community well-being. On the contrary, men principally assume the productive work and are involved in community political activities (ILO, 1998).

Triple burden

The triple burden, also known as the "triple role", describes the work conducted by women in many global south societies. It involves reproductive or care work, as well as productive and community-management work. Conversely, men perform the productive or paid work and the community political activities (March, et al., 1999). The triple burden women face is a consequence of their triple role in society, and it places an obstacle for them to gain economic empowerment (Zibani, 2016). According to Moser (1993) in the gender division of labor, women are subordinated to men. The power relationships between men and women in terms of work are unequal, being the second ones the most affected by this uneven distribution of employment (Barrett and Mackintosh in Moser).

The triple role women face is described as follows:

Reproductive work:

Reproductive work encompasses all the domestic chores women perform in the household; it not only secures the maintenance and reproduction of the workforce but is also vital for sustaining the future workforce (toddlers and school-attending children) (Moser 1993). on the contrary, men's work within the household is often to assist women perform the domestic chores, as their role within the family is usually perceived as that of "breadwinner" regardless of whether this coincides with their reality (Kabeer, 1992). Women's economic empowerment will never be possible if they keep performing a greater amount of the reproductive work. This would be different if the home tasks were redistributed between the household members (Van der Gaag, 2014).

Productive work

Productive work involves the waged work performed by men and women. For rural women productive work comprises activities as autonomous growers, farmers' partners and paid laborers. (Moser, 1993). In terms of productive work, coffee-producing women are wrongly seen as a competent labor force whose role is to harvest premium coffee and devote her earnings to the household's welfare. Accordingly, the coffee-producing woman becomes the perfect focus for smart economics–inspired coffee programs (Lyon, et al., 2019).

Community work

This role encompasses the activities performed mainly by women within a community additional to the care work or previously described reproductive role. The community role of women guarantees the delivery and preservation of collective consumption resources that oftentimes are limited. These resources could be healthcare or aged-care, water provisioning in places where drinking-water is not accessible, education and other care activities. Women are considered to be volunteers for community work; hence, the hours spent on these roles are usually unpaid and are also considered to be part of their "free time". Men on the other hand, are involved in community politics, which involves activities that are performed at the political and the decision-making level. Generally, these activities are paid work, which not only improves men's incomes but also increases their power within the community (Moser, 1993).

The next part of this research paper applies this framework to various cases that are summarized in the following table.

Size of the Farm	Name	Age	Daughter	Age	Municipality
Small Producers	Angélica Phonoaudiologist	52	Salomé Physiotherapist	25	Palestina
	Rosa Finished seccondary school	60	Manuela Seccondary student	15	Aguadas
Medium Producer	Ángela Business Administrator	30	N.A	N.A	Pácora
Large Producer	Lina Agronomist/ Accountant	62	Maria Camila Business Administrator	30	Manizales

Chart 3, Interviewees information.

Part II
The Coffee Producing Women

Chapter 3

The struggles of the small producers

I introduce this chapter providing a detailed description of the small women coffee producer and their families. Through the stories of Angélica (52) and Rosa (60) and the testimonies of their daughters Salomé (25) and Manuela (15). I argue that the perceived gender role of women as disinterested and voluntary worker in rural societies places small coffee producing women in a vulnerable position.

"My husband's job forces him to be out of the house. Some days he travels, then off course he is not here. So my daughters and I have an additional burden, because when he is around he either helps us with the housekeeping or the farm labor, like the coffee processing. When he is not around I get overloaded with the coffee processing, and my daughters have to carry out additional household chores" (Angélica, 2020).

"I rise between 4 or 4:30 to prepare the food for my son who lives with me and works with his brother at "Vivoral", a nearby village. My eldest son has a little batch at his father-in-law's farm, so he lives there, and they work together there. They both are here at my house during the weekends. If have some spare time I pick coffee to contribute, because one spends a lot of time doing the coffee separation. Our coffee is high quality. When the coffee is good I'm more efficient than during summer times or when the coffee is affected by the berry borer. Currently it is a very good and clean coffee, hence I perform better. My tasks consist primarily in washing and paying attention to the drying. Now we have virtual meetings, but before the pandemic I used to attend the meetings" (Rosa Elena Lopez, 2020).

Angélica and Rosa are part of the 28.8% of women coffee growers in Caldas (SICA, 2020). They represent the largest socioeconomic group in the industry, which are the small producers. They own three and two hectares of land respectively; however, for Rosa only 1.5 hectares of that land is planted with coffee. In our conversation, Rosa mentioned that the remainder of the land is protected areas with "guaduales" a clumping bamboo that grows in the coffee zones and are havens for biodiversity. If she has any free time in the morning she enjoys spotting the various species of colorful birds that are plentiful in the area. Nevertheless, due to her insufficient discretionary time as a consequence of her paid work, household activities, and caregiving responsibilities, she has almost no time to pursue her bird-watching hobby (Zilanawala, 2016).

If Rosa reduces her hours of paid work in coffee growing, or pays someone else to do household chores to pursue her hobby, her income will probably be reduced and there won't be enough money to meet the family's basic needs (Burchardt, 2010). The little free time she can afford herself is because Manuela, her daughter, contributes with the rest of the domestic work. Meanwhile, Angélica acknowledges that for her it is important to demand some free time for herself to grab a coffee with her sister or go to the cinema, otherwise she will get absorbed by the domestic and paid work. She doesn't face the risk Rosa does of not meeting the basic livelihood, since her family's subsistence does not depend on the coffee production but rather on her husband's income as an alternative medicine practitioner. She has the benefit of sharing the burden of the paid work and sometimes unpaid work with her husband

and daughters (Salomé whom I interviewed and Sara) (Zilanawala, 2016). Moreover, with the little profits she gets after selling the coffee during harvest season, she is able to hire a temporary domestic worker who is usually a woman from another rural household, to help with the housework and reduce the burden her and her daughters bear in the absence of her husband. Rosa in turn cannot do the same, thus facing the trade-off between time poverty and income poverty (Burchardt, 2010).

Small producers make up around 95% percent of the coffee-producing population in Caldas (FNC, 2019). According to this, it could be argued that this large group constitutes a rural society because they represent the majority of the population. A rural society can be defined as the permanent gathering of settlers who live and interact under common laws (UNDP, 2011). It is complex to define their reality because on one side, the women who are formally included in this classification represent a minority within this broad male-dominated group. On the other side, there are many women whose status as mother and carers remains invisible in the eyes of many. Although they are involved in coffee production, they are still not formally recognized as such, thus lacking the social status that being a coffee producer grants (Rodríguez, 2009; Pineda et al., 2019). Rosa's land belongs to her husband, but she is formally recognized as the coffee producer since she is the holder of the "cédula cafetera", enabling her more control over the production resources. However, this is not the case for many women, who do not have direct access to productive assets or control of resources, and their physical well-being depends on their partners or other male family members.

The great majority of the small producers live in the countryside with their families like in the case of my interviewees. This implies that under the rural society premise the coffee-producing family unit is unbreakable, even when their survival depends on having jobs outside of rural areas (UNDP, 2011). In the context of Caldas, seven out of ten coffee producers live with a partner (SICA, 2020), suggesting that the work carried out by many women within the household and with the community is invisible as they appear to be economically inactive (Rodríguez, 2009). Typically, in coffee farms it is assumed that women perform the reproductive work or the community work and that men are the ones who in turn undertake the reproductive role (Rodríguez, 2009). Given their specific conditions as a minority, women deserve special attention as gender inequalities may become more apparent if specific contexts are examined (DNP, 2013). The case of small producers is such an example, where it could be said that coffee-producing women who formally and informally fall within this category experience double discrimination, not only because they of the fact that they are women but also because they are rural (Suarez E, et al., 2018).

Domestic work is not a gender-neutral activity. Women who perform it have no comparative advantage to do it, they simply take on unpaid domestic work within the household because of unequal power relations (Zilanawala, 2016). The tradition around men as "breadwinners" and women in the household is profoundly rooted in the societal norms (Van der Gaag, 2014). The role of women as carers is frequently labeled as 'disinterested' and carried out in the name of conjugal and family love. (Rodríguez, 2009). When speaking with Salomé and Manuela, I realized that both of them contribute during the harvest season in the processes of washing, weighing and drying the coffee, and that they also share with their mothers the housekeeping work, however none of this work has an economic remuneration for them. Both acknowledge that when their male relatives were at home, they sometimes contributed to the household chores. However, I became aware that men were usually excused from cooking or cleaning as they were not always present in the house. In Colombia, women

contribute three-quarters of the unpaid work within the household which includes food supply, wardrobe maintenance, cleaning and home maintenance, grocery shopping and home administration or volunteering (DANE, UN Women, 2020). Even when it is distributed among the family members on an equal basis men do less of the undesirable tasks, such as cleaning toilets and scrubbing the bathroom (Hochschild, 1989).

> "When I hear my male peers being asked the question, what does your partner do? it is very painful for me to hear them replying: "She stays at home, doing nothing" and I say to myself, "My God, doing nothing? and so much they do". (Rosa Elena Lopez, 2020)

Small farms share the highest proportion of women employed in coffee harvesting (16%). The Arabica coffee that grows in the mountains of the country has a characteristic feature and it requires around 60% more human labor during harvest seasons than other types of coffee bean. Due to the lack of profitability in such small areas of land, the workforce employed by this group comes from the family as they are not able to afford external workers during off-harvest seasons (FNC, 2020; CAIC, 2002). Coffee has a determining characteristic that distinguishes it from the rest of the economy: although its relative contribution to the total added value is low, its contribution to the generation of employment for small producers is high, and many small producers derive the majority of their family income through off-farm work. (CAIC, 2002). Few agricultural censuses in Latin American countries report the farmer's gender divisions of work (Deere and León de Leal, 2001). Though men are associated with the coffee production processes, women are present in some of the stages (harvesting, drying, selection). It would not be possible for the coffee business to be sustainable without women's unpaid work both at the family and the crop level. The unwaged work has secured the reproduction of the labor force which in the small producers' case is the family itself.

Both Angélica and Rosa are the heads of their households, since they are recognized by the rest of the household members as the "heads" (DANE, 2017). They live in their farms with their spouses and families in Palestina and Aguadas respectively, which are considered to be part of the rural area of Caldas (ARD, 2019). Their households are located inside the coffee-producing farms where they also work, it is a characteristic feature of family farming (Ministry of Health, 2015). As Hochschild would illustrate it, "home became work and work became home. Somehow, the two worlds have been reversed" (1997: 44). I interviewed Angélica and Rosa in August during the second harvest of the year that extends to December. Angélica was peeling with a manual coffee pulper the cherry beans that had been picked that morning while talking to me, I could see her house in the background. When I asked to describe her everyday role in the coffee production, she hesitated a few seconds before replying:

"My household chores and the work tasks are mixed", it was similar to Rosa's response who mentioned that she combines the domestic tasks with the coffee tasks. Many women within this group have entered the labor market. However, the fact that they live in the same place where they work represents a double shift for them, as they continue to carry the responsibilities of caring for the family. In essence, they must do 'one shift' in the coffee plantation and a 'second shift' at home at the same time (Hochschild and Machung, 1989). Being at home supposes an opportunity to share moments of relaxation after work, nonetheless it represents for this woman a deficit in their leisure time

Angélica is a trained phonoaudiologist, who devoted herself to the production of coffee. She mentions that she is a "fourth-generation coffee producer", and that her family has traditionally been involved in the coffee business. Angélica obtained the land from her father, who is still a coffee producer, and since then she has been involved in the coffee industry. On the other hand, Rosa completed her secondary schooling, but has been involved in the coffee production process since she was a kid. At a young age she learned about the cropping activities by watching her grandparents and parents who were also producers. One would assume that this family tradition will continue with the children as in the case of Rosa, whose eldest sons are already involved in the business. However, Manuela, the Rosa's daughter is finishing her secondary school and has indicated that she would like to study business administration and maybe take over the role of her father who is in charge of the farm's administration. Her opinion is closely matched with Salomé's, who works as a physiotherapist. She mentions that she would like to be involved in the business in the future only in the management of the farm. In Caldas 71.1% of the producers have achieved only primary education, in contrast with 62.3% of young people living in a coffee household who have reached secondary education, with women representing a higher level of educational attainment overall (SICA, 2020). As the youth become more educated, they are no longer motivated to take over the business from their parents. The lack of financing and the low profitability of small crops motivates them to seek opportunities outside of rural areas. Moreover, if young women continue to be considered as an infinite cost-free resource for the production and reproduction of the coffee family, their involvement and motivation will decline. Therefore, the transfer between generations of coffee production is in jeopardy and poses a great risk to the coffee sector as a whole (HIVOS, 2014; Van der Gaag, 2014).

I met Rosa through Angélica. They are both part of a group named "Coffee Growing Women Participatory Councils" or CPMC in Spanish. These grassroots groups bring together Coffe producing women in order to boost their organizational capacity and contribute to the socialization of their specific needs, present joint projects, and strengthen their community work. Since women are not so representative at the institutional level, they have decided to create new forms of organizations (Lyon, et al., 2017). The aim is to consolidate a network of Coffe producing women, as a way of promoting greater inclusion within the Colombian coffee institution, and foster the communication and interaction between them to support economic, political and social alternatives around common interests that go far beyond the family unit (CPEM, 2008). Kabeer (1999) regards this as an empowerment process that allows women to improve their agency and make better individual and collective decisions in patriarchal contexts where they had no voice before. In addition to being active members of the CPMC, Angélica and Rosa are representatives of the departmental and municipal committees of coffee growers respectively, hence attending this meeting represents a heavy burden on their time. It could be said, therefore, that the community work represents a third burden for small producers, as they become responsible for providing the care to their communities.

Over the last years, the increasing subdivision of properties has led to a reduction in the size of coffee farms. In addition, coffee prices have continuously dropped while production costs have increased, placing serious limitations on efforts to achieve an adequate standard of living for a large number of small producing families (Rodríguez, 2009). In this regard the time consuming, yet unwaged contribution, women and other family members provide to

the production and reproduction process has reduced the labor costs required for the mainte-
nance of the business (Rodríguez, 2009). All these factors are interrelated and, as a conse-
quence, most small coffee-producing families can no longer manage to survive on coffee
alone, thus living under conditions of poverty (FNC, 2020). As a result of these multiple
intersecting factors, many rural woman find themselves poor as a consequence, while still
needing to bear the burden of caring for their communities and families.

Chapter 4

From a widow farm to entrepreneur

This chapter tells the story of Ángela, a middle size coffee-producing woman, mother of two, social leader and at the same time a daughter. While if it is true that a greater economic independence for women contributes to a reduced burden, the old-fashioned ideas linking women to the domestic sphere carry much weight in terms of the gender division of labor and place many responsibilities on women.

Finding a medium producer who had a daughter was not an easy task. As observed in the previous chapter, small producers make up the biggest proportion and only 3.3% of the total coffee producers are medium size (FNC, 2020), with woman representing only 24% of this total (SICA, 2020). In the process, I spoke to many women whom I thought were part of this group, but nonetheless, they ended up not meeting the requirements to fit this category. Given that in in Caldas the coffee-producing families have a low proportion of young people and a high proportion of adults, I was expecting to find a woman around the age of 59, which is the average age for female coffee-producers (SICA, 2020).

Angela, is the same age as me, 30. She lives in 'Pácora' a municipality located in the northern part of Caldas. Talking to her made me reflect on my own life. As I mentioned before, growing up in a coffee-producing family supposedly provides an incentive to the next generations to learn about the business and take over the tradition. However, while I identify myself with many aspects of the lives of coffee-producing families, I do not see myself taking over the role of my father. Angela had a similar view a few years ago. Despite lacking any training to manage a coffee-producing farm, a family tragedy forced Angela to take over her father's role at the age of 22.

> "My grandfather was a muleteer coffee producer all his life. My father inherited the farm from him and was also a coffee producer. Ten years ago, my parents died and my husband and I, two young professionals, arrived in the countryside without any training to take control of the farm and take care of my youngest sister who was 10 back then." (Ángela Gutiérrez, 2020).

When Angela's parents passed away, she had just married. She and her three sisters inherited a 40-hectare coffee farm, of which she keeps 10 and manages along with her husband another 10 that belong to her younger sister, who in turn she considers as another daughter. She told me that at the beginning she faced resistance from the patriarchal community, but with her husband's support she had been able overcome the deeply entrenched ideas about gender relations (Kabeer, 1992). "I had inherited what they would call a Widow farm" Ángela giggled, then she explained to me that the popular belief considers a farm inherited by a widow as an abandoned and unproductive stubble, where workers don't follow any instructions.

In the middle of our detailed discussion, I started giving some thought about the common narrative of women being linked to the domestic sphere and men to the productive role, and how these longstanding ideas contribute to social conceptions of masculinity and femininity and give way to the establishment of gender relations in the rural context (Little,

1987). I reflected that the economic ties and the productive contribution of women on the property rights are not recognized (ILC, 2016). This illustrates one of the many sides of the problems related to land in my country, where the profound inequalities between men and women in land ownership are the result, among others, of the fact that sex/gender biases have influenced the participation of women in the land market, where women are less likely to engage as buyers (ILC, 2016).

I was trying to make some sense of this and thought that the "rural idyll", in which the countryside is romanticized. The associated images of harmony, splendor, hospitality and politeness, however, have a strong impact on socio-economic policy and are partly to blame for the somewhat low-profile attributed to rural inequality. In the same way, the depiction of the green coffee landscapes and 'coffee producers', embeds a powerful element of the rural ideas and the relative roles of men and women (Little, 1987).

Ángela stressed that she and her husband worked as a team, and that without his support she and her sisters would have considered selling the farm at any price. At the time that her parents had passed away, her father had been enduring a severe coffee crisis, which left the farm bankrupt. They were in debt and willing to clear her late parents' loans. The fact of not having direct control over the productive assets, such as the land, places many women like Angela at a high risk of falling into poverty. This phenomenon is also known as "feminization of poverty", and is directly linked to the power relations between men and women in the communities and the household. It is a typical phenomenon of the patriarchal culture that I explain previously and which prevents women from accessing an income (Mintisty of Agriculutre, 2019). Luckily in her case, she didn't have to rely on a male family member to have control over those resources, which is not often the case for the women coffee-producers. (Agarwal, 1994).

> "To recover the farm, we had to make a huge sacrifice and be very organized. We were living all together in the same household, one of my sisters was working and she was in charge of paying the utilities, my husband was in charge of the grocery shopping. All proceeds from the farm were used to repay the debts, we had to live a very tough life."

After four difficult years, all debts were finally repaid and Angela was able to prove the community wrong. Indeed, she started to gain their trust and, most importantly, she acquired a higher bargaining power that extended beyond the household level (Deere., León de Leal, 2001). For many coffee-producing women being able to rely upon an income from coffee production or access to land not only reduces the risk of being victims of domestic violence but also improves their fall-back position to renegotiate the burdens within the household (Ministry of Agriculture, 2019; Agarwal, 1997). As Angela claimed:

> "They saw that I was able to achieve many things"

Even without her mentioning it, I was sure of that. It was somewhat captivating to hear her talking with such simplicity of her life, after knowing all that she had gone through. However, gaining the community trust and being economically independent did not exempt her from shouldering the ideological baggage that comes with being a woman in a rural context. Socially those who control and distribute the goods have a higher status and that gives them more power and prestige. Women, however, are still expected to comply with their

pre-established roles as wives, daughters, carers and mothers within the family realm (Blumberg, 1991; Thieme, 2009).

During our conversation Ángela always made strong emphasis on the support that she received from her husband in both the farm management and with the household chores. As we continued our conversation, Angela's daughter (3) approached her and sat on her lap. She was explaining to me that she had moved with her family from the city to live in the country-side and that she was deeply engaged in her work with the community.

Watching her daughter, and thinking about my inability at this age to juggle multiple roles at the same time, I asked shyly, yet impressed, how did she deal with so many things at the same time?

She replied with conviction:
"A family tragedy brought us to coffee, and we fell in love with it."

The economic situation for many medium-size female coffee producers is somehow different to that of small ones. Medium-size coffee producers hire piecework for agricultural jobs and employ their own labor in the administration. While the reproductive strategy consists in employing neighbors as paid labor to provide support in some domestic tasks (Akram-Lodhi, 1996; FNC 2020). For instance, Angela explained to me that the butler's wife helps her with some of the domestic chores, and that although she along with her husband don't perform any manual work, they oversee the workers and keep the accounting records.

"Coffee labor is a heavy work for women. There are many courageous women who help their husbands cleaning the farm, fertilizing the plants or even harvesting the coffee. But we don't perform any physical labor", she added with her typical 'paisa'[4] accent. "My husband and I could write a book called: 'HOW NOT TO CULTIVATE COFFE'".

We laughed, and then she highlighted that she has learned many new things from the experts and also from the workers and also that she had complemented her bachelors in business administration with courses on how manage the coffee farm.

Angela pointed out that they have other income earning activities such as a plantain, cows and a corn threshing machine.

"It is very difficult to survive merely with coffee and pay the workers".

She also told me that she spends most of her time working in their own roasted coffee brand named "Café Santa Anita", which they now sell on Amazon and export to the United States. She is in charge of the brand, the orders and the logistic aspects of the business.

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[4] Paisa is heard throughout much of the Coffee Triangle including Caldas, it is one of the best-known Colombian typical accents.

"Even after putting children to bed, I reply the costumers' emails and manage the social networks."

"We decided not to put all the eggs in one basket, and found other sources of income. We decided to take a step further from just simply selling raw coffee." She added, "Middlemen and companies grab all the money from coffee production".

Having said that, I understood that many middlemen take advantage of women's labor and rely upon gender gaps in this value chain to sell "Women-produced" specialty coffee and generate additional revenues. But these profits are not returned to women coffee producers (Lyon, et al., 2019). Despite this, seeing her relentless efforts to learn and innovate was proof for me that the new generation has a greater inclination and ability to embrace new ideas, concepts and technologies to challenge the status quo (Hivos, 2014)

We continued our conversation, and I asked her to describe a normal day in her life, she told me that she spends around six hours doing the household chores; cooking and cleaning are part of her daily work. Sometimes when she is too busy her husband or her sister will look after the children and help them with their homework. I understood that while she "mothered the house" by spending more time doing the housework, the husband in turn "mothered the children" (Hochschild and Machung, 1989).

What she did not mention and was not clear to me, was whether her husband had the same disposition towards managing the household as he did with managing the farm, or on the contrary did she take all the important decisions concerning the household. Many men wait for their partners to tell them what to do, and they just do it when asked for something. Men tend to believe that the division of household chores is fair when it is not. This is sometimes referred to as ""Mental burden", and it can become the invisible and undervalued work of running a home, as women are assumed to be the managers of the house (Clit, 2017).

Although it is true that her husband shares some of the work at home and that she has support from a worker, his job is limited to receiving the instructions she gives, in this case he is the "order taker". Meanwhile, she never stops working because her "manager" tasks are physically and mentally demanding. She is always thinking about every detail and everything that remains to be done. Consistently, her "domestic class position" overlaps with her class position within the society, since in the household realm she is the "order giver" who commands the production of goods for the benefit of the household (Clit, 2017; Collins, 1991).

Not content with all of the work she had just described, she concluded her response by adding,

"The little free time that I have left, I try to invest it by spending time with my family and on coffee leadership issues".

Given her condition as a member of a middle-income coffee-producing family and being a full-time working mother with young children, she has the highest time-poverty rates. (Zilanawala, 2016).

Ángela is a member of the municipal committee of coffee growers, which she obtained by winning the greatest number of votes during the coffee elections. This is proof that the

"organizational capacity of working women, whether they are self-employed or wage workers, may be the missing ingredient that can help to transform women's access to paid work into an economic pathway to empowerment and citizenship." (Van der Gaag, 2014).

> "We are running out of young people in the countryside and we need a generational replacement from the old leaders. It is important to find new ideas and achieve progress, and many women have the capacity to assume those roles."

One of her first achievements for the community was to gather funds to pave the roads and provide the people in need of medical assistance with travel expenses to the city and medicines. While positive, this demonstrates the inability of the state to provide basic services. The inability of the state to provide such services rests on perpetuating the idea of the 'natural' role of women to serve the communities and the family (Little, 1987; Kabeer, 1994).

We finished our online interview because Ángela had to attend a meeting at her children's school. But that night she sent me a promotional she had created for "Santa Anita". While I was watching the video I reflected upon women's capacity to transform a society when they are given equal opportunities. When women start to depart from their prescribed gender roles they acknowledge their improved agency. Furthermore, I thought that when men start to assume their domestic role and share the burdens, women will have more economically empowered, and they will also benefit from it. Otherwise women will always have to carry the weight of their 'natural' role as carers.

Chapter 5

The Privileged few

> "We come to understand who we are by understanding who we are not. Many of us are unskilled at reflecting on our own group." (Di Angelo, 2018: 30)

The story narrated through this chapter has a significant importance for me as it is somehow the one that I can link the most to with my own experiences. This is not to say that the previous two were not related to my life, but instead I used them in order to challenge and transcend my own biases.

The reason why this chapter is the one I can connect the most to my life, is because I am a family member of one of the 1.9% that are classified as large coffee producers in Caldas (FNC, 2020). However, I won't use my story because I am not one of the 145 women who are officially part of this group (SICA, 2020). For this purpose, I will talk about Lina's story and her daughter Maria Camila, whom are formally coffee producers.

I opened the conversation asking Lina about her farm. She told me that she owns a 70 hectare farm in the outskirts of Manizales the capital city of Caldas, of which 48 hectares were planted with coffee. Her father was also a coffee producer, from whom she inherited the land and learned about coffee production. During the 1960s, the coffee economic boom allowed the modernization of the industry. The arrival of high technologies in the coffee producing departments like mine, gave rise to a new type of elite farmer (Palacios, 2009; Rodríguez 1998).

I continued the conversation by asking who was in charge of the coffee production. To which she replied:

> "It is the butler who lives in the farm. I go once or twice a week to the farm to supervise the work, to see what works are going to be carried out and how they are being performed."

Her response led me to think that there is an interdependence between the small and the large coffee producer, since small producers derive most of their family income through work outside their own farms (CAIC, 2002).

From my own experience, I imagined that if I asked who was responsible for the housework, she would reply that it was the butler's wife who was in charge of the domestic work. Rural women's representation in monocultures is often associated with the domestic sphere, making their participation in the market invisible, conversely men have been visible as the protagonists of coffee production and market dynamics (Rodríguez, 2009).

Lina's respond caught my attention,

> "I personally consider the rural women's work is very hard, and I think for you it is also very important to consider that. Because rural women not only do work for a wage in other houses, but also, once they get to their own houses they continue working and moreover have to feed the workers".

Although Lina's answered confirmed my suspicious, she made me realize the fact that while invisible their work is vital to reproduce the labor force of the coffee farms.

During my conversation with Lina and Maria Camila, I noticed that they were brought up in the city and not the countryside. As it is generally known, the coffee-producing emerging elites, which I referred to before, settled in the city due the lack of educational opportunities and access to basic services in rural areas (HRNS, et al., 2018). The small producers did not face the same fate, and as a consequence the average age of coffee producers in Caldas has risen to 78 (SICA, 2020). In the first chapter I provided evidence with Manuela and Salomé that the younger generations are not motivated to stay in the business, thus jeopardizing the future of the sector to find alternative opportunities outside the value chain (HIVOS, 2014).

Lina mentioned with great disappointment,

"I usually hear many coffee producers tell their sons… 'I work very hard so you can study and don't have to work yourself to death in the countryside like I do", to which she added in reference to her two daughters, "this is a beautiful business, I have been a coffee producer all my life and I have tried to encourage my daughters to get involved in it."

Lina is an accountant and an agronomist, while Maria Camila is a business administrator and manages an eco-hotel that is located on the farm. With the changes in the coffee prices, large coffee producers were mainly able to diversify their coffee crops (CAIC, 2002). Although Maria Camila's involvement in coffee production is not directly linked to the realm of coffee itself, she would like to take her mother's role in the future.

"I don't see myself doing a technical job and getting around the farm like my mother does. I'm a bit scared. You know, I'm a young woman, there is a strong culture of male chauvinism in the countryside, and that is what really scares me."

During our conversation Maria Camila mentioned that she was not sure about being directly involved in the coffee business. However, she feels more confident now because her partner whom she lives with, is taking control of some parts of the production. Lina has given him the confidence to manage a portion of the farm. Arguably then, regardless of the resources she controls, her bargaining position is influenced not by material goods but rather by the dominant ideologies around gender roles and also her age. Women with strong bargaining power, such as Maria Camila, prefer to focus on running a non-agricultural enterprise and choose not to be involved in agricultural decisions (Bernard, et al., 2020).

When I asked Maria Camila if her career decision was influenced by what she saw of her mother all her life, her response was,

"when you see your mother succeeding and having a fulfilling life in this male dominated world, to me that's a role model."

Her fear of managing the farm and having control over her own assets is thus interfered with by the attitudes of rural men towards women who do not fit the social order or the expected behaviors that, according to the pre-established norms, women should display in a rural setting (Cloke and Little, 1997). However, I interpreted her response as a clear contestation of the idea that women belong in the home.

By the time I interviewed Lina and Maria Camila, I was convinced that they were in a privileged position when compared to my other participants. The fact that they were able to pay for the reproductive work, meant to me that they could "buy time" and were less time-poor than other coffee-producing women. However, and as Zilanawala (2016) puts it, "higher socioeconomic individuals privilege work over leisure more so than lower socioeconomic individuals". It then became clear to me that allowing themselves more leisure time will not make them poor as in the case of some women in other economic categories. In this case, the excitement of participating in a system that once was exclusively controlled by man represented the main reason for some women to devote more time to income-earning activities (Hochschild, and Machung, 1989).

It seemed to me that the burden that the large coffee-producing women had to bear was more related to cultural ideas. The fact that their families were raised in the city, posits some individuals like Maria Camila or even Lina, from the beginning as outsiders.

Lina highlighted that

"it takes time, but you have to show them what you are capable of",

when I asked her about the chauvinistic behavior of the men working for her. Like in the case of Ángela, the outsider has to create mechanisms to "earn the respect" of the local men who have longstanding patriarchal ideas. From all my interviewees, I heard the same thing about women "earning" the respect of men and not the other way around. This common phrase confirmed my thoughts that women's agency was still subject to men's approval. However, I argue that the greatest social revolution of our time is the movement of women into the economy (Hochschild and Machung, 1989), and that this revolution is underplaying men's dominance over the industry.

I also wanted to understand Lina's opinion about women's agency, so I asked her if she considered that women have greater freedom when they have their own incomes. To which Lina replied that she wouldn't say more freedom, but rather more autonomy and equal treatment.

Nowadays the basis of power and identity are being established by women. In the past women's power was grounded on their influence over their families. Now, however, it is based on their incomes or authority in the workplace (Hochschild and Machung, 1989). The inclusion of women in coffee production is of paramount importance as it has set new parameters to enhance their agency and made them participants in the transformation of the coffee industry.

I found insightful the fact that large coffee-producing women leverage their social capital to overcome the cultural burden of the industry, while at the same time supporting other women. Social networks offer the small producers the possibility to access material resources, however time could be a limitation to joining these associations (Thieme and Siegmann, 2010). Meanwhile, large coffee-producing women invest their time in social networks to increase their bargaining power within the community and to challenge the gender hierarchies of the industry.

When I asked Lina if time was a limitation for her to join women's coffee growers' groups, she responded with conviction,

"To me it is very important to support women and carve out time to take part in these groups; you get to give and to learn a lot from each other".

Another key aspect of investing in their social capital for the large coffee producers is that it enables the younger women to become active participants in their communities and become future influencers (HRNS, et al., 2018). When I asked Maria Camila if she was interested in joining any network of coffee producers in the future, her response was,

"I believe the coffee production industry is evolving and becoming more open for women. When I attend the meetings with my mother I see many women. The relationships you build in any industry are to learn about the latest developments and to form partnerships."

However, she told me that her mother devoted a lot of time in these groups and not in the farm. But Maria Camila acknowledges that her mother would never miss spending time with the family.

After this reflection I continued challenging my own assumptions about their privileges, and I gave some thought about the idea that if rural women were given more opportunities, such as education, recognition of their care work, access to jobs, etc., the generational renewal of coffee production would possibly be in the hands of women. By talking to them I realized that women have a strong sense of belonging to the countryside and also that women support each other in times of hardship. It is an undeniable fact that land, beyond being a factor of production, is related to traditions that help identify community roots and create a sense of belonging. Even though most large coffee-producing women are not of rural areas, they still preserve the values of the rural world while living in the city (Hochschild, and Machung, 1989).

To avoid biased conclusions from my side, I decided to understand why María Camila decided to move back to the countryside. She responded by saying,

"I like that feeling of being calmed and surrounded by nature. I had a very tranquil childhood, where I used to come to the farm every weekend. I got used to the slow pace of life that the countryside offers. I lived in Bogotá (Colombia's capital city) for many years and I made the decision to return because this is a very flexible environment where you can build a family and have different businesses at the same time".

Although Maria Camila does not consider herself as a rural women, it is common for the younger generations to believe that rural life is a space where they can live. Given the community and family life conditions, the countryside offers the possibility to improve the production coffee while enjoying the tranquility and quality of the environment (Jurado and Tobasura, 2012).

In her response, Maria Camila also added the multiple possibilities she had found in the farm.

"You can have a hotel within the coffee farm while at the same time you can grow avocados and be a beekeeper".

Although the possibilities she mentioned were not directly linked to coffee production, it has been shown that coffee farms headed by women make better choices, produce better products, and retain several key business benefits compared to homogeneous farms managed by men (HIVOS, 2014). These factors, coupled with the potential for productive transformation that the younger generations offer, contribute to the reassertion that the coffee sector demands to be detached from traditional ideas.

Through my conversation with Lina and Maria Camila, I concluded that it is true that large coffee-producing women have greater potential to generate income, since they have less time constrains. They use their power to challenge the common assumptions that prevent them from exerting their agency and supporting other women to do the same. Moreover, I also found that the new generation of coffee-producing women have the capacity to adapt and transform society, regardless of the barriers they find along the way. And last and most important is that regardless of the size of their lands, if women and the younger generations living in the rural areas were given more opportunities there would not exist the significant gap that divides the countryside and the cities.

Chapter 6

Intersectional perspectives of the coffee producing woman

"Self-interrogation is a good place to start. If you see inequality as a "them" problem or "unfortunate other" problem, that is a problem."(Crenshaw, 2020: n.a).

After talking to all my participants and documenting their realities, there was still a missing point that was critical to finishing this research, and that I came to understand only through the research process. It was self-interrogation, without which I would not have been able to be a critical observer and explore the dynamic and paradoxical mechanisms of power and inequalities that affect female coffee producers (Rice, 2019). By self-reflection I don't mean that I wanted to put myself at the core to raise the issue of the discrimination/privileges of coffee-producing women, but rather I sought to employ self-reflection to see beyond my own privileges and disadvantages and explain how the system of which I am part contributes to the perpetuation of inequalities and preservation of privileges (Crenshaw, 2020).

Even though I identified myself in the beginning as an anthropological researcher who was telling the stories of other women, in the end I found out that this approach was not enough. The more research I conducted, the more I saw that the issue I was researching required a serious engagement with intersectionality (Rice, 2019).

After all, if I was committed to acknowledging the deep need for social transformation, I needed to stand on the same level as my participants and ask myself what I recognized in this research from the position I occupied (Rice, 2019). For this purpose, I decided to create this last chapter and mix together the elements of the daily life of coffee-producing women, which I have described in my anthropological research, and the meaningful examination of the inequalities and differentiation that I perceived while describing those situations (Degnen and Tyler, 2017).

Nonetheless, as Crenshaw has stated, "All inequality is not created equal" (Crenshaw, 2020: n.a). Accordingly, I found two particular issues that exposed experiences of subordination and exclusion that were cross-cutting in the same identity group (Davis, 2008).

- Age
- Class

The first issue concerning differentiation that I found was related to class. In some cases class intersects with gender, reproducing other forms of inequalities that places some coffee-producing women at a disadvantage when compared to others.

If it is true that all the coffee-producing women are involved in productive activities, it cannot be denied that both the small and medium producers tend to work more than the large ones (Haroon Akram-Lodhi, 1996). On one hand, there is a vertical division between

the three different households given the size of their farms, but on the other there is also a horizontal division between the individuals within the same households (Kabeer, 2015). I observed that individuals like Angélica and Rosa (small producers) have to perform the productive and reproductive work. While Ángela (medium producer), however, had the help of a domestic worker for some domestic tasks, she also had to perform many of the households activities.

As evidenced, the small and medium coffee-producing women cannot afford to pay for the reproductive work. At the beginning it seemed that it could be explained by economic causes (Kabeer, 2015), but I contend that the intersection between gender and class is a determining factor in the division of labor. Instead, Lina and Maria Camila (the large producer and her daughter) hold a higher social status, as they are able to pay for the reproductive work, which represents a symbol of upper-class privilege in Colombia (Enloe, 2000).

Another example of the intersection of class is related to the availability of public and private services. This can vary for each coffee producing women according to their social class (Little, 1987). For instance, in the case of Rosa (small producer and mother of Manuela) whose family income depends solely on raw coffee production, she uses the *"chiva"* [5] as a means of transport to move around the village. Similarly, Manuela her daughter uses the Jeep Willis, otherwise known as a *"Yipao",* [6] to attend school. In contrast, the other families that do not depend on coffee production have their own private cars, which facilitates their mobility. Something similar occurs to Manuela with regards to access to educational facilities. Manuela attends a public school in the rural area, while Salomé (Ángelica's daugter) and Maria Camila have had the privilege of attending secondary school at a private institution. In Colombia the public education system is of poor quality, and not all parents can afford to pay for a private education, such as Rosa. Hence, the education of Manuela will possibly put her at a disadvantage in the future.

Secondly another differentiating issue that I found in the course of my research was age. In this case, age produced inequalities for the older generations while creating more opportunities for the younger ones.

'Old age will continue to be a gendered experience''(Walker, et al., 2006: 43).

As noted at the beginning of this research, access to the 'cédula cafetera' was extended to all coffee-producing women in 2017. Through access to this document, they have more control over the resource of production and conferring the possibility for them to become political actors in their communities. Given that all of my interviewees are the land-title holders, they were beneficiaries of this system even before 2017. Nonetheless, many coffee-

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5 The *"chiva"* is an artisan rustic bus used in rural Colombia.

6 During the 1940´s many Jeep Willis were imported to the coffee triangle to replace the work of the mules who carried the coffee sacks. The *"Yipao"* has become an iconic symbol of this region.

producing women still rely on their partners to have control of those resources, and due to their age, it harder for them to find employment opportunities outside their households. As such, their age represents a factor of vulnerability and exclusion since they don't have any bargaining power that allows them to negotiate with their partners (Agarwal, 1997). On the contrary, for young women it is easier to find alternative opportunities outside the coffee-producing farms, though it is still undeniably harder for young women than for young men to find a job.

I found that women such as Angélica, Rosa (small producers) and Lina (Large producer), who belong to a different generation, identify themselves with the carer role. When I asked about the distribution of the domestic chores within their households, all three agreed that it must be equal even though it was clear from their responses it is not. This resonates with the gender stereotypes that are linked to femininity (Little, 1987), which has evolved over the generations. The new generations do not identify themselves with the carer role, including Angela who is a mother but in fact shares many responsibilities with her husband.

In sum, I found through my research that all the coffee-producing families have different settings where women carry different burdens. Whether productive, reproductive or even ideological, it is not new that all of the coffee-producing women, regardless of their status, have different loads in comparison to men. What I found is that there are some intersections that make those burdens heavier. It would not be appropriate to generalize the rule and think that all women in the same group hold the same privileges or suffer the same kinds of inequalities.

Conclusion

I have arrived at the end of this long journey. At this point, I can say that this has been a transformative process where I was able to look at the other faces of coffee production, which I always took for granted.

I started this research with the purpose of exploring the realities of coffee-producing women in Colombia. Using an anthropological methodology through a series of interviews, my aim was to understand their reality and how these women interacted with their communities and families. Talking to all of them was a fascinating process. It showed me the commitment and passion of the families and especially of the women, who are striving to get the best out of their farms, their families and their communities. But I also got to see the downsides of being a women in a male dominated industry such as coffee production, where all the invisible work women perform is justified in the name of love. This kind of manipulation has allowed the coffee sector to save costs at the expense of women. But this exclusion of women also hinders their efforts to find alternative ways of living in the future.

After the interviews, I realized that the roles of these women as mothers, daughters, and sisters, in addition to their positions as workers and leaders, were mostly going unnoticed because of their non-economic nature. However, as these roles are vital to ensuring the maintenance of the population, it is the men in these societies who have determined that these "biologically" assigned tasks should be shouldered by the women.

Awareness of these multiple roles assumed by women, which I discovered was called 'the triple burden', allowed me to contemplate their reality from a different perspective. On the academic side, I could say that naming the burden as 'triple' in nature is ambiguous and risks victimizing the women in question. While if it is true that women have to take on two burdens in coffee production, the third burden of community work is oftentimes confused with the first which is the domestic role. In my view these two particular issues are commonly conflated with each other. This happens because there is a sense that the community work implies care for others and this is problematic, because community work is not limited to care for others but is also a tool for empowerment and agency.

I realized that women perform community work not because they feel obligated to do so, but because they feel their voices are louder when they join other people, especially other women. There is a strong sense of belonging to their communities and it is that cohesion which has allowed them to gain more power. In this sense further research is needed to analyze the agency of women through their community work. There is a gap in the literature which is predominantly occupied by western academics who tend to portray women coffee producers as economic victims of their circumstances and where I see opportunities for future investigation.

Lastly, through this anthropologic research I ended up finding a side of me that made me aware of my privileges and disadvantages. I close this chapter of my life with discoveries that have connected me to my roots and my past with the hope that in the future the burdens of coffee-producing women will be shared with men.

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