



**Transnationalization of the Peasants Movement:  
Study of La Via Campesina's Struggle for the United Nations Declaration  
on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas  
(Undrop)**

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**Abstract**

Global neoliberal hegemony carried out by trade (WTO), finance (IMF) and development (WB) agencies through free trade, financial liberalization, and international development as part of structural adjustment programs in fact makes the condition of farmers and rural communities experience human rights violations and are in the worst situation. La Via Campesina is a transnational peasant movement organized in which there are 182 farmer organizations from 81 countries in the world with more than 200,000,000 members. La Via Campesina succeeded in pushing the United Nations namely the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly to adopt the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other Persons Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP) on 18 December 2018 after struggling for 17 years against the hegemony of neoliberalism in the world. The struggle of La Via Campesina is analyzed as a political process with a Coxian perspective in International Relations and it can be described that La Via Campesina succeeded in transnationalizing social movements and institutionalizing peasant human rights as part of a form of counter-hegemony or an instrument against neoliberalism after being able to manage the potential of material capabilities, ideas and institutions within the scope of socially strong production activities in the complexity of relations between society and the state that affect the world order. Although the struggle is not over yet because UNDROP is just a set of non-binding norms for Member States of the United Nations, so to implement it requires greater political pressure in the next political process by building an alternative global historical bloc led by La Via Campesina. This global historical bloc is needed to continue the war of positions at the national level, namely in the member countries of La Via Campesina and at the international level in their interactions with various countries, international organizations and transnational corporations through broad alliances and well-institutionalized movement organizing.

Keywords: La Via Campesina, counter-hegemony of neoliberalism, transnationalization of social movements, institutionalization of social movements, United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Others People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP)

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## **Introduction**

In The phenomenon of La Via Campesina fighting for the 2017 Peasants' Declaration of Peasant Rights at the United Nations, and that the manuscript came from Indonesia which was submitted by the Indonesian Farmers' Union as a member of La Via Campesina, is interesting to analyze about La Via Campesina's struggle for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP).

The world order or structure and international system of hegemonic global neoliberalism have made farmers and rural communities the victims. The powerlessness due to global oppression felt by farmers has finally raised resistance through the movement of farmers and rural communities. La Via Campesina as one of the transnational peasant movements, said social injustice due to capitalism and free trade, agribusiness and transnational corporations, and patriarchy must be resisted. They fight for, among other things, food sovereignty; agroecology and farmer seeds; land, water and territory; climate and environmental justice; farmers' rights; dignity for migrants and wage workers; and international solidarity. Their struggle was phenomenal when they demanded a declaration of peasant rights through transnationalization and institutionalization to become UNDROP. How is the political process carried out by the transnational peasant movement La Via Campesina in demanding the United Nations to declare the rights of farmers and other people working in the countryside?

This article aims to describe the political processes carried out by the transnational peasant movement La Via Campesina in demanding the United Nations to declare the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas with a Coxian perspective in International Relations Studies. The political processes referred to in the article are (1) transnationalization, to describe local, national and international political processes; and (2) institutionalization, to describe the political process from issues within social movements as civil society organizations to demands as part of the policies of state political institutions at the national level and intergovernmental organizations at the international level.

Almeida, P. & Chase-Dunn, C. (2018) focuses on the role of globalization processes in shaping collective action and social movements. Three areas of change and global movement: first, long-term global trends and collective action; second, national and local challenges to economic globalization, including reaction movements and the types of economic liberalization measures most associated with encouraging opposition movements; and third, the emergence of contemporary transnational social movements; by discussing diffusion, intervention mechanisms, and the results of collective mobilization in response to global pressures. They argue that social movements and collective behavior are important drivers of social change on a global scale due to global processes and contribute to the evolution of global institutions and global culture. Responding to the globalization process is influenced by the infrastructure of resources, the political context, and the ability to translate patterns of world society into traditional institutions. Djuyandi, Solihah, & Witianti (2020) have take a point regarding the effect of glibalization which give effect to national economic policy, such as to do privatization to state owned enterprises. Transnational movements are likely to

continue to grow in strength as the century progresses, given the increasingly dense interconnections of organizations and communications, playing an increasingly vital role by using the tools of the digital age to attract the attention and pressure of national and international policy makers in planetary mobilization campaigns. This development offers fertile ground for movement researchers to develop and use new data collection techniques from the large amount of new social media data generated by activists.

In the study of institutionalization, there is the problem of elite capture which continues to be a challenge for sustainable and just governance around the world. Understanding of elite capture is limited by a conceptual approach that pays little attention to power in its various dimensions. Based on critical institutionalism and political ecology, García-López (2019) analyzes hidden power in political-economic structures or 'fields of power' embedded in local institutions and conflict relations and negotiations, helping to (re)generate elite strength and persistence. He pays particular attention to the important but understudied role of elite actors in society in a comparative case study over time of elite capture processes in four regional intercommunity associations in the state of Durango, Mexico. His contention is that multilayered power inequalities and democratic deficits are constantly reproduced by technobureaucracy and authoritarian corporatist logic which he posits that they are not certain, but must be continually transformed by social struggles and grassroots institutional innovation.

Soper (2020) illustrates that in response to neoliberal food and agriculture policies, the peasant movement struggled to increase state support for the small farming sector. La Via Campesina proposes agroecology and local trade as environmental solutions to the climate crisis by advocating the 'farmer's way'. But farmers do not inherently support sustainable local food. His ethnographic field research with indigenous farming communities in the rural highlands of Ecuador proves that the existing farmers practice chemical-intensive, single-crop, and export-oriented production. Even in using the farmer as an ideal type rather than an ethnohistorical class, post-developmental studies attach great importance to peasant agriculture.

In Shivji (2019) it is mentioned that the 'new democracy national project', is based on three pillars: people's livelihood, people's participation and people's power which is (a) anti-imperialist and (b) based on blocs of popular or mass classes formed by the 'land-based producer class and the urban poor together with the lower middle class' (Shivji, 2000 in Shivji, 2019). Popular participation to interrogate the boundaries of parliamentary and party politics and rethink state institutions. The idea is to reverse the ideas of liberal ideology and put in place a new political mode. 'Politics is not just power politics (state), but mass power politics' (Shivji, 2000 in Shivji, 2019). The power of the people to criticize constructs of liberal, state-based ideas such as the separation of politics and the economy, the separation between the state and civil society, and the separation of powers among the three branches of the state. State restructuring is rooted in villages and neighborhoods, suggesting a shift from the concept of state sovereignty to popular sovereignty (Shivji, 2019).

In analyzing agroecology and restoration initiatives originating from governmental and non-governmental organizations with direct government support, and from farmer protagonism, Luna, Ferguson, Giraldo, Schmook, & Maya (2019) write that the long-term impact of agroecological initiatives in Mexico will depend on how these initiatives blend with farmers' territoriality; the relationship between land and humans in the socio-economic, political-institutional and symbolic-cultural dimensions. It is important to reflect on their statement in the context of the social movement initiatives of peasants and rural communities in fighting as counter-hegemony against neoliberalism. Territoriality considerations, the relationship between farmers and rural communities with their sources and means of production in the socio-economic, political-institutional and symbolic-cultural dimensions of the movement.

Meanwhile, Monjane (2023) with a case study of the struggle towards a progressive rural future in Mozambique, when deagrarianization took place, stated that the National Farmers' Union (UNAC) played a key role in mobilizing the rural poor—small commodity producers, farm labourers, fishermen, small agrarian capitalists, and agrarian civil society in general—using left-wing populism to oppose agrarian neoliberalism, which took an authoritarian form.

In addition to the possible strategic choices that can be chosen and practiced by the social movement of farmers and transnational rural communities mentioned above to continue the struggle in the political process for global social transformation, there are other possibilities that must also be watched out for so that they are not counter-productive in carrying out counter-hegemony against the neoliberal world order. For example, Kerksen (2017) in an article suggested that the food sovereignty movement should place more emphasis on examining the specific cultural and historical challenges faced by re-peasantization in certain places.

Then Martiniello & Nyamsenda (2018) explores the emergence and growing significance of the National Network of Small Scale Farmers Groups in Tanzania (Mtandao wa Vikundi vya Wakulima Tanzania, MVIWATA), a national farmer organization founded in Tanzania in 1993; seeks to understand political agency in the neoliberal restructuring phase and state authoritarianism. Analyzing the features, dynamics, internal (class) social discourses and practices, as well as their relationship with non-governmental organizations and the state in the study of changing agrarian political economy, that MVIWATA is traversed by several contradictions and tensions that divide the organization into two competing streams, one 'politically oriented' and the other more 'project focused'.

### **Global Neoliberal Hegemony and the Condition of the World Peasants**

Global neoliberal hegemony carried out by trade (World Trade Organization), finance (International Monetary Fund) and development (World Bank) institutions through free trade, financial liberalization, and international development as part of a structural adjustment program conditioned farmers and rural communities to experience human rights violations and to be in the worst situation.

Harvey (2007 in Copeland, 2019a) defines neoliberalism as a theory that proposes that maximizing individual freedom and property rights within a market framework is an ideal route to economic and social prosperity. The neoliberal economic framework of free trade, financial liberalization, and international development is characterized by accelerated accumulation by dispossession. The global spread of free markets (neoliberalization) and shifts (structures) in the global political economy exacerbated the tension between capitalist expansion, environmental sustainability, and indigenous-peasant livelihoods. Neoliberalism and neoliberalization are detrimental to rural farmers and their indigenous territories and their livelihoods. For farmers, neoliberalism means reduction of state subsidies, credit, closure of extension services, competition for new subsidized products from elsewhere, depeasantization, and others (Copeland, 2019a).

Land grabbing by corporations in the neoliberal food regime has become a popular concept of agrarian studies, even the integral role of the state and the relation of racial political power which continues to increase. In Guatemala, power relations with racism led to land grabbing that coincided with the rise of the palm oil industry. The effect largely benefits international markets and a wealthy ruling class of creole and ladino descent. The booming industry results in human rights violations and a lack of access to or control over resources, such as food and water. Based on fieldwork, Pietilainen & Otero (2019) shows that dispossessed people, especially indigenous people, experience increased poverty, food shortages, and an influx of foreign foodstuffs because low-paid jobs in the palm oil sector are available to only a select few.

In order to understand the structural and historical relations in capitalist hegemony (in its current form as neoliberalism), according to Shivji (2019), it is necessary to understand the "trajectory of accumulation" in global capitalism by understanding the "agrarian problem" and "national problem" by explaining "production relations" which become "exploitation relations" for 'accumulation through expansion' and 'accumulation through encroachment' by the 'private bourgeoisie' and 'bureaucratic bourgeoisie'. So that in politics, it is necessary to have 'nationalist' and anti-imperialist classes and in development economics the characterization of 'nationalist' is used to differentiate from compradorial classes which are carriers and facilitators of primitive accumulation and thus become the conveyor belt of imperialist capital which ultimately makes a farmer exploit himself to subsidize capital. As a result, the working people, especially the peasantry, are over-exploited, and live life as sub-humans (Shivji, 1987, 2018).

The environmental destruction and devastation of peasant life brought about by neoliberalism energizes new political dynamics and a repertoire of struggles with the potential to challenge neoliberalist policies by building organizations and various coalitions against neoliberalism, decolonizing, and opposing hegemony. Land reform was a key demand of peasant organizations in the 20th century and beyond; focuses on land redistribution, state-assisted development, subsidized credit, new agricultural technologies, training, and market access (Copeland, 2019a).

In the article Doronde & Şerban (2019) explored the responses of villagers from northwestern Bulgaria to the neoliberal policies promoted by the post-socialist state in rural areas. There are two strategies mobilized to defend their interests, the first is the strategy of daily peasant resistance by silent, closed and not open defiance of neoliberal policies on food acquisition and production. Second, open protests were organized against polluting corporations that were newly established and feared to threaten their livelihoods. In both cases villagers used transnational networks that were formed historically based on friendship and kinship.

In summary, it can be explained that the political process that occurs in global dynamics from neoliberalism hegemony to the rise of peasants and rural communities to fight as counter-hegemony against neoliberalism is mainly due to the occurrence of global crises in various sectors of people's lives, both in urban and rural areas in various parts of the world. Then, when the global crisis decreases the quality of life of the people in a wider and larger way, it is possible for people to find alternative ideas and organize themselves to find solutions. When they realize that any effort to solve the common problem must be more serious in the medium-term and even long-term struggle, they will build a network and institutionalize their struggle to dismantle the root of the problem. So when they understand that the source of the problem is rooted in neoliberalism, then they will direct the struggle against or carry out counter-hegemony against this neoliberalism.

### **The Transnational Peasant Movement: La Via Campesina**

La Via Campesina is a movement that claims to be a voice for farmers at the international level, consisting of 182 farmer organizations in 81 countries with members of more than 200,000,000 farmers. It also specifically organizes women and youth. La Via Campesina members are in various regions of the world, namely in Central America, the Caribbean, South America, North America, South and East Africa, West and Central Africa, South Asia, Southeast and East Asia, Europe, and other emerging regions. La Via Campesina has hosted international conferences in Mons (1993), Tlaxcala (1996), Bangalore (2000), Sao Paulo (2004), Maputo (2008), Jakarta (2013), and Derio (2017) ([viacampesina.org](http://viacampesina.org)).

The highest decision-making room in the movement is the International Conference which takes place every four years. Since 1993, La Via Campesina has hosted seven such International Conferences. The decisions resulting from this International Conference, which are based on the realities of life in rural communities around the world, are then implemented by a body of elected representatives of farmers from all continents. This body is called the International Coordination Committee. Elected representatives seek to meet at least twice a year to review and finalize the many activities and plans. This democratically elected representative body of farmers, composed of women, men, welcoming gender non-binary members, and also including youth, is supported by a lean team of technical staff, volunteers and apprentices who assist with its daily technical and logistical operations. global and regional secretariat.

Henry Saragih, General Chair of the Indonesian Farmers' Union who was once a co-coordinator with La Via Campesina explained that they are an international peasant movement whose membership organization is pluralist when dealing directly with neoliberals. The plurality of membership in La Via Campesina is carried out by placing more emphasis on platforms and not on ideology in their struggle. The rationality of the choice is carried out with a starting point from a real or real problem. La Via Campesina was born after the collapse of the West and East Blocks, in 1993 to be precise, two years later, in 1995, the World Trade Organization was born.

In La Via Campesina, there are at least three differences of opinion regarding the position before the World Trade Organization. The first is a group that demands the dissolution or abolition of the World Trade Organization as was done by KRRS India. The second is a group which states that an international trade regulatory system is needed to overcome conditions and power relations that tend to be one-sided in regional trade agreements as demanded by NFU Canada and UNORCA Mexico. The third is a group that wants to reform the World Trade Organization and ensure that it complies with international conventions on human rights as presented by the French Confederation Paysanne. In general, finally La Via Campesina stated that they did not demand dissolution but demanded a reduction in the powers of the World Trade Organization by removing the agricultural sector from its jurisdictional authority and placing it under the assistance of the United Nations, but which had undergone changes, was democratic and transparent.

La Via Campesina is a movement that relies on contributions from individuals and associations who believe in food sovereignty and the agricultural needs of farmers. All supporters who donate their time or resources to La Via Campesina, are activists who believe that social transformation is only possible through acts of solidarity. The peasant movement is a movement built and run by ordinary people who work the land. Individuals can become part of broad, diverse and dynamic coalitions of farmers and smallholders.

When asked about how the Indonesian Peasant Union as a member of La Via Campesina finances every struggle they carry out, Agus Ruli Ardiansyah, Secretary General of the Indonesian Peasant Union explained four schemes of sources of funding for their movement, namely: first, membership fees, second, organizational efforts through Organization-Owned Enterprises and cooperatives including collective land management as a result of reclaiming, thirdly government funds such as from the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Home Affairs, and fourthly international solidarity funds. Eka Kurniawan Sago Indra, Chair of the Indonesian Peasants' Cooperative (the economic organization wing of the Indonesian Farmers Union) explained that the membership fee per harvest or per six months is Rp. 50,000 (fifty thousand rupiahs) or the equivalent, may be paid in money or agricultural products produced such as rice, bananas, corn, coffee, and so on according to the commodities produced by the members. Usually, 30% of the membership fees that reach the Central Leadership Council after being deducted at the base, branch, and Regional Leadership Council (per province). The Indonesian Farmers Cooperative within the Indonesian Farmers Union in 2018 has 1,000 members and is targeted to increase to 10,000 people in 2019, and by 2024 it is expected to

have reached 200,000 people. Indonesian Peasant Cooperatives fight for the means of production, especially land, and production facilities including agricultural production equipment, fertilizers, farmer banks, and science and technology. In addition, post-production takes care of packaging and ensures a market for the products of its members.

La Via Campesina is the largest and most influential transnational social movement in the world, formed in 1993 when peasant interests were sidelined in pre-World Trade Organization trade negotiations and grew as a rural movement and organization and formulated reactions to the dislocation of the corporate food regime (Holt-Giménez & Shattuck, 2011; Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2010 in Copeland, 2019a), and became a unified transnational peasant movement in reaction to debilitating neoliberal policies farmers for global agribusiness and its free trade agenda (McMichael, 2014; Rosset, 2008 in Copeland, 2019a). The formation of a transnational peasant and rural community movement as large as La Via Campesina and its influence in Latin America is a record that is where the history of the emergence of the most dynamic peasant and rural community movement in the world. Perhaps what distinguishes La Via Campesina as a peasant and rural people's movement born in Latin America from other movements there and in the world is the historical experience of the peasant and rural people's movement that existed before it, as described below.

First, according to Bretón, González, Rubio & Vergara-Camus, (2022), in Latin America previously, projects of peasant and indigenous autonomy were carried out as an alternative to the neoliberal restructuring of the 1990s, but from the start they created serious contradictions because they wanted to solve problems through certain mechanisms which actually exacerbated other problems. The contradictions developed in three moments: first, in the early 1990s in response to the neoliberal market and state restructuring. Second, in the 2000s when several movements started political alliances with left-wing politicians and parties who promised to implement policies in line with historical demands leading to the pink wave government. Third, it coincided with the fall of the left-wing government, which was triggered by a cycle of devaluation of commodities and was marked by a new dilemma of movement strategy which became increasingly complicated due to the emergence of right-wing conservative forces. Three unresolved contradictions in the movement's strategy in Latin America at that time: first, the basis of the uncomfortable relationship between the peasant movement and the natives with left populist governments revolved around the political need to maintain subaltern historical rural blocs. Second, the fact of ethnic autonomy by indigenous actors and afro descent as the creation of a separate space in the language of territorial/political control which assumes that economic marginalization is handled through ethnic autonomy. Third, while the political alliances that many movements made with political parties and politicians in the early 1990s called for an interventionist state, these movements lost their ability to influence or suppress them during the first phase of the increase in the prices of primary goods.

Second, one of the obstacles in social movements in resolving certain problems as an issue that allows them to strengthen programs against neoliberalism, but can actually expand neoliberal governance is when the required material capabilities are not met. Copeland



(2019b) examines the food sovereignty movement through the agroecological program of social and state movements in Guatemala when there was a clear rejection of conventional inputs and market production, but insufficient state investment and redistribution created barriers to rural peasantry participation while the livelihood system in its market-led scientific development as hegemonial neoliberalism still existed. So agroecology may possibly work to strengthen the food sovereignty movement, but it can also strengthen the neoliberal food regime by promoting resilience and indigenous agriculture sufficient to solve the food crisis.

The broader La Via Campesina concepts of peasant rights, good livelihoods, indigenous spirituality, gender equality, agroecology, and the ancient right to save seeds; became an umbrella mirror for the new political trajectory of the Q'eqchi' organization in northern Guatemala. Although born out of a class-based organizing repertoire, as a federation of farmers they have embraced indigenous identity through a number of village autonomy declarations. Grandia, L. (2020) describes how they revived and adapted the oppressive political structures of 16th century colonial rule into creative political mechanisms to defend their territories from 21st century neoliberal land grabbing.

### **The Struggle of La Via Campesina as a Political Process: Transnationalization of Social Movements and Institutionalization of Peasant Rights**

Henry Saragih stated that the struggle to declare peasant rights began in the 1980s in North Sumatra. Henry Saragih was directly involved when he started forming a non-governmental organization, until it turned into the North Sumatra Farmers Union, and joined with other farmer unions from various regions in Indonesia to become the Indonesian Farmers Union, joining La Via Campesina in 1996. Meanwhile, the Indonesian Farmers Union only existed in 1998. At the internal level of the Indonesian Farmers Union the idea of human rights has been discussed by the North Sumatra Farmers Union, which is a member of the Indonesian Peasants Union, namely by formulating 7 articles of peasant rights in 1996. Peasants' human rights were then used as the contents of the pamphlet by members of the North Sumatra Farmers' Union in every action or farmer forums in the region.

Then, in 1999 a meeting was held between the Indonesian Association of Peasants for Integrated Pest Control and INSIST (an NGO) to formulate farmers' human rights without using the issue of Agrarian Reform. In 2000, the formulation of peasant rights was continued with Francis Wahono (INSIST), HS Dillon, Sandyawan Sumardi (Ciliwung Group), various other NGOs, which was also attended by Asmara Nababan from the National Commission on Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia. In 2000, the Indonesian Farmers' Union held a workshop in Medan to discuss agrarian reform. In the workshop, the rights of farmers were also discussed, regarding the 'Operational Concept of Protecting Farmers' Rights'. This departs from the efforts of the Indonesian Peasants' Union to formulate an agenda for upholding peasant rights as part of human rights that can go hand in hand with the agrarian reform agenda that emerged after the end of the New Order government.

From 17 to 20 April 2001, the National Commission on Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia initiated the National Conference on Agrarian Reform for the Fulfillment and Protection of Peasants' Human Rights in Cibubur, West Java (Cibubur Conference) to standardize various awareness and views on growing peasants' human rights, into a framework for struggle. According to Eka Kurniawan Sago Indra, the process of formulating peasant rights took place between 1998 and 2001 in Indonesia by going through several discussions in farmer forums, civil society and academics. The struggle of the Indonesian Peasants' Union was carried out together with mass organizations and other non-governmental organizations that are members of the National Committee for Agrarian Reform's Gerak Lawan. In addition, there is also the Indonesian Farmers Consultative Body, in which apart from the Indonesian Farmers Union there is also the Indonesian Farmers Alliance, the Indonesian Association of Integrated Pest Management Farmers, and the Forum for Indonesian Farmers and Fishermen Communities. Rustam Efendi added that the conference which finalized the formulation took place on 17-20 April 2001 during the National Conference on Agrarian Reform for the Fulfillment and Protection of Human Rights and Farmers' Rights. The conference was organized and attended by various government agencies, farmer organizations, civil society organizations and academics. The Cibubur Conference produced several important documents and decisions in forming the UNDROP's initial framework, namely the 'Declaration of the Human Rights of Indonesian Peasants' which consisted of 8 sections and 67 points. The significance of the Cibubur Conference can still be seen today. April 20, which is the day the 'Declaration of the Rights of Indonesian Peasants' was issued, is celebrated as 'Human Rights Day of Indonesian Peasants'.

Henry Saragih stated that in 2001 in April he began to be involved internationally in the World Social Forum to convey the rights of farmers raised by CETIM (Switzerland) which was then agreed to fight for until Geneva as a convention. In October 2001 an International Collective Committee was formed to continue this struggle. Peasant rights were first discussed in La Via Campesina starting in 2002, when the Indonesian Peasant Union brought the results of the formulation of Cibubur peasant rights to the Southeast Asia and East Asia Regional Meeting La Via Campesina in Jakarta which produced a Declaration of Fulfillment and Protection of Farmers' Rights.

Thus, the institutionalization or formalization of peasant rights within the La Via Campesina internal organization began in 2002, when the Indonesian Farmers' Union brought the peasants' human rights formulated by the Cibubur Conference to the La Via Campesina Southeast Asia and East Asia Regional Meetings in Jakarta. The Regional Meeting then produced a Declaration on the Fulfillment and Protection of Farmers' Human Rights. This is a progress in itself because it has brought the issue of farmers' rights to the international community. When the global crisis occurred in 2008, according to Henry Saragih, it became one of the momentums to push for a stronger political process carried out by the Indonesian Farmers' Union at the national, regional and global levels. Besides that, in 2009 it turned out that the United Nations High Commission declared the failure of the Millennium Development Goals. The next moment of struggle for peasants' rights was the International Conference on Peasant Rights: Toward International Convention or the International

Conference on Peasant Rights in Jakarta in 2008 which was attended by hundreds of member organizations of La Via Campesina in the world as well as thousands of members of the Indonesian Peasants' Union. According to Henry Saragih, this conference was a moment for peasant rights to be legalized as an international struggle La Via Campesina and to produce a Declaration of Farmers' Rights – Women and Men. After this conference, the text was brought to the highest decision-making forum of La Via Campesina, namely the Fifth Conference of La Via Campesina in Maputo, Mozambique.

In the 2009 Declaration of Peasant Rights, La Via Campesina stated that the majority of the world's population consists of small and medium-sized farmers. Even in a highly technical world, people eat food produced by farmers. Peasant farming is not only an economic activity, it is a vital livelihood for everyone. The security of the population depended on the welfare of the peasantry and agriculture. In order to protect human life, it is important to respect, protect and uphold the rights of farmers. In fact, the many violations of farmers' rights that are happening today threaten human life.

After the La Via Campesina Southeast Asia and East Asia regional meetings in Jakarta in 2002, the globalization of the issue of farmers' human rights was rife within La Via Campesina which made members of the global peasant movement aware that violations of the fundamental rights of farmers also occurred throughout the world: not only in Indonesia, or Asia. La Via Campesina then took the initiative together with FIAN International and CETIM to start making reports regarding violations of peasants' human rights which were subsequently reported to the Human Rights Commission (before changing to the Human Rights Council) in 2004, 2006 and 2008. The global food crisis that occurred in 2007-2008, became the momentum to campaign for peasants' human rights as an instrument to protect farmers throughout the world. Afgan Fadillah as one of the Staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Central Leadership Council of the Indonesian Farmers Union stated that the Core Team from SPI who joined La Via Campesina in fighting for the UNDROP declaration were Henry Saragih, Henry Thomas Simarmata, Zainal Arifin Fuad, and Mohammad Ikhwan. Meanwhile, the Core Team at the international level is La Via Campesina (which includes the Indonesian Farmers Union) and CETIM as the core group that understands the substance and field or arena of struggle with support from countries such as Bolivia as sponsor, Cuba, Venezuela, Ecuador and South Africa as co-sponsor. Apart from that, there was also support from countries that were members of the Non-Aligned Movement which at that time was approved and Indonesia was being led by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

In 2009, the Advisory Council of the United Nations Human Rights Council (Advisory Council) conducted a study on the discrimination of peasant rights in the context of the right to food. In March 2012, this Advisory Body then presented a further study on the promotion of peasant rights. The Advisory Committee finally recommended that the United Nations Human Rights Council form an intergovernmental working group to negotiate and finalize a text of the United Nations Declaration which regulates the human rights of peasants and people working in rural areas. This working group was formed based on the mandate of the United Nations Human Rights Council on 11 October 2012 in resolution A/HRC/RES/21/19.

Starting from its formation to the adoption of UNDROP, this working group has held 5 meeting sessions where each session is filled with negotiation steps, both related to the content and position of UNDROP itself in the international human rights framework.

UNDROP in the formal process of the UN mechanism at the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly took place from 2013 to 2018, the negotiation process was mostly carried out within an Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group on The Rights of Peasant and Other People Working in Rural Areas. The Indonesian Farmers' Union plays an active role in interstate working groups and the process of promoting human rights at the United Nations. The negotiations carried out by SPI in the La Via Campesina peasant movement are a reflection of the ideals of the Asian-African struggle. SPI sees that these ideals continue to live in HAP's struggle. Asian-African countries immediately saw the importance of this HAP struggle. Nations like India, South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, the Philippines, among many other countries .

For La Via Campesina, according to Henry Saragih, the World Trade Organization is one of the instruments of neoliberal financial capital power besides the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The world power with regard to neoliberal financial capital is not the United Nations, either de facto or de jure. But the United Nations became an international organization to which most of the governments of every country in the world are members. That is why it must be sued through the United Nations in UNDROP in order to have binding power against the three international institutions. The aim is that there will be no more neoliberal international trade because everything on earth is considered as public common goods.

To fight for UNDROP, Members of La Via Campesina work in parallel and are responsible for the process they put in place to find support in gaining access to the United Nations from experienced people and organizations. La Via Campesina's strategy in the wider political process towards UNDROP adoption is: first, to mobilize the power of the world's farmers; secondly, finding common ground with various social movements in the world; third, making alliances with experts, academics, research institutions, and so on; and fourth, advocating at the national level through dialogue with governments in various countries.

La Via Campesina's demands for the declaration of the rights of farmers and other people working in rural areas by the United Nations include: first, food sovereignty for a future world without hunger by taking into account food producers, not ignoring the contribution of farmers. Food is a basic human right that is embodied in a food sovereignty system, the right of every nation to maintain and develop its own ability to produce staple food by respecting cultural diversity, and being productive in their own territory, achieved through solidarity and long-term political will, and caring for the natural environment. Food sovereignty aims to regenerate the diversity of self-sufficient food systems in rural and urban areas as a transformative process of reinventing the realm of democracy and regenerating the diversity of local food systems based on equity, social justice and ecological sustainability.

Second, La Via Campesina rejects the economic and political conditions that destroy their livelihoods, communities, culture and natural environment. Trade liberalization and structural adjustment economic policies globalized poverty and hunger in the world and destroyed the productive capacities of local and rural communities. An unjust system that treats nature and humans as means to the ends of the sole purpose of profiting the few. Farmers and smallholders are denied access to and control over land, water, seeds and natural resources. La Via Campesina challenges these conditions and develops alternatives by creating a rural economy based on respect for self and the earth, food sovereignty and fair trade.

Third, women play a central role in the household and community food sovereignty. They therefore have inherent rights to resources for the production of food, land, credit, capital, technology, education and social services, and equal opportunities to develop and use their skills. Fourthly, global warming, La Via Campesina states that small producers are cooling the planet because the current pattern of global production, consumption and markets is causing massive environmental damage, which is endangering ecosystems and leading the human community towards disaster. Global warming shows the failure of a development model based on fossil energy consumption, overproduction and free trade.

In building alliances with various parties, it has proven its ability to build transnational networks: first, CETIM, which together with La Via Campesina, has become the core group because it understands the substance and field or arena of struggle. Second, FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN) International, a global human rights organization that advocates for the right to adequate food and nutrition. Third, Amnesty International, a global movement of more than 10 million people against injustice, campaigns for human rights for all people. La Via Campesina also synergizes with other social movements without being forced to join an alliance, but can still reach out to join an alliance.

Henry Saragih stated that in fighting for UNDROP he was also inspired by the existence of the United Nations Declaration on the Right of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), as well as the Convention on Labor, the Convention on Children and the Convention on Women. In the process of struggle, they also felt assisted by UN Special Rapporteurs on Right to Food namely Jan Ziegler and Oliver de Schutter whose main supporters were the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF Workers), the World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP), and the International Federation of Catholic Rural Movements (FIMARC).

### **Adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other Persons Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP)**

On December 17, 2018, at the 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, United States, UNDROP was officially adopted. General Chairperson of the Indonesian Peasant Union, a farmer organization in Indonesia which is a member of La Via Campesina, Henry Saragih said that 17 December 2018 was the culmination of 17 years of struggle by peasants and rural communities fighting for their rights. This moment is the

culmination of the history of the struggle of the peasantry, especially Indonesia – because this UNDROP proposal emerged from the base villages of members of the Indonesian Peasants' Union, and peasant organizations and fighters for agrarian reform in Indonesia. UNDROP is a legal and human rights instrument worldwide that regulates rights to land, seeds, water, biodiversity, prioritizing the rights of women farmers and young people, and other fundamental rights of farmers.

Zainal Arifin Fuad, Head of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Central Executive Board, Indonesian Peasant Union who is also a member of the La Via Campesina International Coordinating Committee stated, in the final voting at the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly which was held on Monday 19 November 2018 at 15.00 New York time, out of a total of 174 countries, 117 countries approved, 50 abstained, and 7 countries rejected namely Australia, Hungary, Israel, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. This is a victory for peasants all over the world, whose embryo from the farmers' villages of the Indonesian Peasants' Union has gone global thanks to the support of quite a number of social movements, especially La Via Campesina as an international peasant movement. Zainal Arifin Fuad explained that 2018 was a crucial year towards the birth of UNDROP. In April, the 5th Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group of the Human Rights Council concluded negotiations and finalized the text for UNDROP. Then in September, the 39th Session of the Human Rights Council conducted an initial vote, in which 33 out of 47 countries agreed to the text of the UNDROP.

Then in October, at the Global Committee Forum on Food Security in Rome Italy, La Via Campesina with the support of several countries and United Nations institutions organized activities to promote UNDROP under the framework of the “Family Based Agriculture Decade” campaigned by the Food and Agriculture Organization. Then in November, UNDROP arrived in New York, at the United Nations headquarters. The next process ends with UNDROP's adoption. On December 17, 2018 New York time, the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly was held. Of the 193 member states of the United Nations, 121 voted in favor of UNDROP ratification. While 8 votes against and 54 other votes abstained. According to Henry Saragih, UNDROP will become good international standards for the protection and empowerment of farmers and rural communities. Developing countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America are generally expected to ratify this Declaration, so that it can be implemented and of course monitored through existing mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels.

### **The Struggle of La Via Campesina as a Political Process for Social Transformation in a Coxian Perspective**

According to Cox (1996: 97), some of the basic premises of Critical Theory can be stated as follows: (1) the awareness that action is never truly free but occurs within the framework of action. Critical Theory begins with this framework, the historical inquiry or appreciation of human experience that gives rise to the need for theory. (2) Awareness that not only actions, but also theories are shaped by problems. Critical theory is aware of its relativity but through it can achieve a broader perspective of time and become less relative than problem-solving

theory. Critical Theory recognizes that theorizing tasks can never be completed in a closed system but must be continually started again. (3) The framework for change is action over time, and the main goal of Critical Theory is to understand change. (4) The framework in the form of a historical structure, a combination of certain mindsets, material conditions, and human institutions, has a certain coherence among its elements. This structure does not determine people's actions in a mechanical sense, but is the context of habits, pressures, expectations and constraints in which action takes place. (5) The framework or structure in which action takes place must be looked at, not from above in terms of requirements for balance or reproduction (which would lead back to solving problems), but from below or from outside in terms of the conflicts that arise within them and open up possibilities for their transformation.

At the base of the structure of the world order that emerges thus appearing as a multi-level structure is social power. The prospect for the rise of social movements lies in committing their organizational and ideological mobilization capabilities to the task of building broader coalitions of social forces. Whether they are self-aware and articulated into what Gramsci calls historical blocs, or depoliticized and manipulated, is a key issue in the making of the future. Many locally based social forces must build transnational arrangements to support each other. The alternative to capitalist globalization needs to build on the productive forces created by capitalism by transforming it to serve society. The counterforce to capitalist globalization is also global, but it cannot be global all at once (Cox, 1996: 307-310).

Cox explains his approach as follows: (1) action is not fragmented into a series of discrete events but always presupposes a context that gives it meaning (events without meaning are merely programmed responses to certain stimuli). (2) The first task of analysis is to distinguish the historical context or structure from the social reality in which action takes place, the structure of which is objectively composed of power relations and subjectively of shared webs of meaning. (3) Ideological analysis or attempts to reconstruct the mental framework through which individuals and groups understand their actions, is the best way to access knowledge about historical structures, knowledge that must be approached by critical confrontation and not just passively, accepting the perspective of one group or another. (4) The next task of political analysis is to find out whether actions tend to reinforce or give rise to alternatives to change historical structures, and can only be understood in terms of the consequences of actions rather than the motivations behind them (Cox, 1996: 475).

Historical structure is a pattern of human activity and thought that persists over a relatively long period of time, the result of collective responses to certain common problems -related to the satisfaction of material desires (economics), the organization of cooperation and security (politics), or the explanation of human conditions and goals (religion and ideology) - which become frozen in practice, institutions, and intersubjective meanings for a significant group of people. These practices and meanings constitute an objective world for these people. These structures are historical in that they arise under specific historical circumstances and can be explained in response to circumstances, changing when material circumstances have changed or prevailing meanings and goals have been challenged by new practices. The flexibility of

this historical structure distinguishes it from structuralism, which argues that structures are fixed and unchanging, such as neorealism, for example (Cox, 1996: 514).

Capitalism, as Braudel emphasizes, is not simply a way of organizing the economy. Capitalism, in each of its distinct historical forms, is also a distinct value system, consumption pattern, social structure and state form. Each form also projects a conception of world order. The new capitalism with its global calling includes all of these things (Cox, 1992:527). The social forces challenging the new capitalism were probably stronger and better organized in Europe than elsewhere; but challenges can come from many places (Cox, 1996: 534).

Three categories of power (expressed as potentials) interact within the structure: material capabilities, ideas, and institutions. No one-way determinism needs to be assumed between the three; relationship can be considered reciprocal. The question in which direction the gait lines go is always a historical question that must be answered by studying a particular case. Material capabilities are productive and destructive potential. In its dynamic form, it exists as technological and organizational capabilities, and in its accumulated form as natural resources that can be modified by technology, stocks of equipment (eg, industry and armaments), and wealth that can control them (Cox, 1996: 98).

Ideas are broadly of two types. One type consists of intersubjective meanings, or shared ideas about the nature of social relations that tend to perpetuate behavioral habits and expectations. An example of intersubjective meaning in contemporary world politics is the idea that people are governed and ordered by a state that has authority over a certain area; that countries relate to each other through diplomatic agents; that certain rules apply to the protection of diplomatic agents as a common interest of all countries; and that certain types of behavior are expected when conflicts arise between countries, such as negotiations, confrontations, or wars. This idea, though enduring over a long period of time, is historically conditioned. World political realities have not always been accurately represented in this way and may not be in the future. It is possible to trace the origins of such ideas and also to detect signs of weakening in some of them. Another type of idea that is relevant to historical structures is the collective picture of the social order shared by different groups of people. These are different views on the nature and legitimacy of prevailing power relations, the meaning of justice and public good, and so on. Whereas intersubjective meanings are broadly common across specific historical structures and constitute the common ground of social discourse (including conflict), collective images may be multiple and contradictory. The clash of competing collective images provides evidence of the potential of alternative development paths and raises questions about the possible material and institutional basis for the emergence of alternative structures (Cox, 1996: 98).

Institutionalization is a means to stabilize and perpetuate a certain order. Institutions reflect the prevailing power relations at their point of origin and tend, at least initially, to foster a collective image consistent with these power relations. Ultimately, institutions live lives of their own; they may become battlegrounds of opposing tendencies, or rival institutions may



reflect different tendencies. Institutions are a special mix of ideas and material forces which in turn influence the development of material ideas and abilities (Cox, 1996: 99).

There is a close relationship between institutionalization and what Gramsci calls hegemony. Institutions provide ways to handle conflict so as to minimize the use of force. There is a potential for coercion in the material power relations underlying any structure, whereby the strong can destroy the weak if it deems necessary. But force must not be used to ensure the domination of the strong to the extent that the weak accept the prevailing power relations as valid. This can be exercised by the weak if the strong see their mission as hegemonic and not merely dominant or dictatorial, that is, if they are willing to make concessions that will secure the weak's approval in their leadership and if they can express this leadership in terms of universal or common interests, not simply as serving their own special interests. Institutions can become anchors for such hegemonic strategies because they lend themselves both to the representation of diverse interests and to the universalization of policies (Cox, 1996: 99).

It is easier to distinguish between hegemonic and non-hegemonic structures, that is, between those in which the power base of the structure tends to recede into the background of consciousness, and those in which the management of power relations is always at the forefront. However, hegemony cannot be reduced to an institutional dimension. One must be careful that the focus on institutions obscures either changes in material power relations, or the emergence of ideological challenges to the former order. Institutions may be out of phase with other aspects of this reality and their efficacy as a means of regulating conflict (and thus their hegemonic function) is undermined. They may be expressions of hegemony but cannot be considered synonymous with hegemony (Cox, 1996: 99-100).

Cox's middle-range historical structure method as a conceptual tool and heuristic device designed to be developed and applied to three levels or spheres/fields of activity/activities and interactions where hegemony is built: (1) organizing the social relations of production, more specifically with regard to/referring to the social forces generated/produced by the production process; (2) state formations historically derived from the study of the contingent state-civil society complex; and (3) world order, that is, certain configurations of power that successively/sequentially determine the phases of stability or conflict for a state system, for example a matter of war or peace for an ensemble/group of nations. Each of these levels can be studied as a succession of emerging and dominant rival/alternative structures. The three levels or scope of activity/interaction are interrelated/interact and mutually constitutive. Changes in the organization of production generate new social forces which bring about changes in the structure of the state; and the generalization of changes in the state structure changing the problems of the world order (Cox, 1996: 100,135-138).

This means starting from the beginning with production, to take into account the various modes of production and the resulting social relations in the process of production, the conditioning of social forces that can become the basis of power in the formation of states and world orders. It also means going in the opposite direction to consider how power is

institutionalized in the world order and the state is formed and controls the development of relations of production (Cox, 1987: 4).

Cox always emphasizes and shows the interrelationships of social power, state formation, and world order structures in the process of global transformation (Cox, 1996: 26). According to Cox, there was no disposition in Edward Hallett Carr to isolate levels of analysis. Carr saw the interrelationships of industrialization, changes in state formation, changes in ideas, and changes in world order. Carr brings a historical way of thinking to everything he writes. Carr is equally alive with economic, social, cultural, and ideological issues. Carr studied individuals, especially those whose intellectual influence marked an era; but most importantly, he brings all these elements to an understanding of structural change (Cox, 1996: 27).

Cox has attempted to sketch a research program that will examine the interrelationships between changes in production, state formation, and world order (Cox, 1996: 54). According to Cox, the prospect of a plurality of state formations, expressing different configurations of the state/society complex, remains largely unexplored, at least in relation to IR studies (Cox, 1996: 86). Cox argues that to think about possible future world orders requires extending inquiry beyond conventional international relations, so as to include the basic processes at work in the development of social power and state formation, and in the structure of the global political economy (Cox, 1996: 90-91).

Transnational social forces have influenced the state through world structure, as evidenced by the influence of expansive 19th-century capitalism, the conquering bourgeoisie, on the development of state structures at both the core and the periphery. State formations also influence the development of social power through the kind of domination they exercise, for example by advancing one class interest and thwarting the interests of another. Separately, social power, state formation, and world order can be represented in the initial approximations as specific configurations of material capabilities, ideas, and institutions. Considered in relation to one another, and thus moving towards a more complete representation of the historical process, each will be seen as containing, as well as bearing the effects of the other (Cox, 1996: 101). Neorealism generally rejects social power as irrelevant, cares little for disparate state formations (except insofar as “strong society” in liberal democratic politics can inhibit state use of force or advances certain interests above national interests), and tends to place a low value on normative and institutional aspects of the world order (Cox, 1996: 102).

The idea of hegemony as a correspondence between power, ideas, and institutions makes it possible to treat some of the problems in state domination theory as a necessary condition for a stable international order; it allows for indolence and leads to hegemony (Cox, 1996: 104). Hegemony as a match between material power and institutions, fits into the theory of historical cycles; three dimensions fit together at certain times and places and apart at others. What's missing are some theories about how and why matches arise and fall apart. Cox

argues that the explanation can be sought in the realm of social forces shaped by production relations (Cox, 1996: 105).

Social power does not exist only within states, it can transcend state boundaries, and world structures can be described in terms of social forces just as they can be described as configurations of state power. The world can be represented as a pattern of interaction of social forces in which the state plays an intermediate though autonomous role between the structure of global social forces and the configuration of local social forces within a given state. This can be called a world politico-economic perspective: power is seen as something that arises from social processes rather than as something that is given in the form of accumulated material capabilities, that is, as a result of these processes (Cox, 1996: 105). This can be called a world political-economic perspective: power is seen as something that arises from social processes rather than as something that is given in the form of accumulated material capabilities, that is, as a result of these processes. In attaining a political-economic perspective, moving from identifying the structural characteristics of the world order as configurations of material capabilities, ideas, and institutions to explaining its origin, growth, and breakdown in terms of the interrelationships of the three levels of structure (Cox, 1996: 105).

The collapse of the hegemonic order can also be explained by the development of social power. Capitalism mobilizes the industrial workforce in the most developed countries, and industrial workers have an impact on the state structure in these countries. The incorporation of the industrial worker, the new social force created by manufacturing capitalism, into the nation involves expanding the range of state action in the form of economic intervention and social policy. This brings the factor of domestic well-being (the social minimum required to maintain workers' loyalty) into the realm of foreign policy. Welfare claims compete with the urgency of liberal internationalism in state management; when the former gained ground, protectionism, a new imperialism, and finally the end of the gold standard marked the long decline of liberal internationalism. The liberal form of the state is slowly being replaced by the nationalist-welfare state (Cox, 1996: 105-106). International production mobilizes social forces, and it is through these forces that the main political consequences vis-a-vis the nature of the state and the future world order can be anticipated. Until now, social classes have been found to exist within nationally defined social formations, despite rhetorical calls to international solidarity of workers. As a consequence of international production, it becomes increasingly important to think in terms of global class structures alongside or superimposed on national class structures (Cox, 1996: 106).

The spread of industrialization, and the resulting social class mobilization, not only changed the nature of the state but also changed the international configuration of state power as new rivals took over. The new imperialism of the great industrial powers is the projection abroad of the nationalist consensus of the well-being among social forces that is sought or achieved within the nation. As the material domination of the economy and the appeal of the hegemonic ideology weaken, the hegemonic world order gives place to non-hegemonic

configurations of rival power blocs (Cox, 1996: 106). A special match between power, ideology, and institutions that shape historical structures emerges (Cox, 1996: 107).

The social forces generated by changes in the production process are a starting point for thinking about possible futures. These forces can combine in different configurations, and as an exercise one can consider the hypothetical configurations that are most likely to lead to three different outcomes for the future of the state system. This focus on these three outcomes does not, of course, imply that no other outcomes or configurations of social power are possible. The first is the prospect of a new hegemony based on the global structure of social power generated by the internationalization of production. The second possible result is a non-hegemonic world structure of conflicting centers of power. A third and possibly further outcome is the development of counter-hegemony based on Third World coalitions against core state dominance and leading to the autonomous development of periphery states and a breakdown of core-periphery relations (Cox, 1996: 113-115).

Institutions and institutionalization are further concepts that can be applied to the comparative study of world orders. Institutions are widely understood and accepted ways of organizing certain areas of social action. Institutions are the ways in which social practices develop in response to certain problems facing society by becoming routinized into certain sets of rules. They may be more or less formally organized, and the sanctions that maintain rules can range from opinion pressure to enforceable laws. Institutions are maintained in something broader called structure. Structure is the product of repeated patterns of actions and expectations, the repeated movements of Braudel's *longue duree*. Structures are built socially, that is, they become part of the objective world by virtue of their existence in the intersubjectivity of the relevant group of people. The objective world of the institution is real because it is made so by sharing in everyone's mind an image independently of how to value it, whether to approve or disapprove of it. Reality is intersubjective, the institutions constituting how material life is organized and produced are part of the material world and are as independent of individual will as the gross physical matter in which these institutions work (Cox, 1996: 149-150).

In the changing role and capacities of the state, it becomes increasingly meaningless to talk about the state as neorealists do, or even (as among Marxists) about the capitalist state. It becomes more useful to think in terms of state formations – the different formations that condition the ways in which various societies are connected to the global political economy (Cox, 1996: 154).

It is important to identify possible sources of opposition to globalization – those relatively disadvantaged who will assert the right of social forces to make economies and governments serve their own purposes. The confrontation fueled by globalization heralds a new synthesis in which economic efficiency can better serve social ends and underpin self-defined social group identities. Relevant sources of opposition include new social movements, labor movements that are able to transcend what Gramsci calls the corporate-economic level of consciousness, democratization movements that seek to increase people's control over those aspects of social organization that directly affect people's lives. The forms of struggle also

changed, and the divisions that emerged were aligned with ideology in new ways (Cox, 1996: 156).

Social forces are emerging among women, environmentalists, peace activists, indigenous peoples, trade unions, and churches, to name but a few examples of popular sector movements increasingly confronting the harmful consequences of globalization. These movements present very different social options and have the potential, if they can combine their awareness and concern, for a new political discourse (Cox, 1996: 191). The political basis of social action to deal with emerging global trends must be reconsidered and reconstructed in relation to past strategies by analyzing the dynamics of restructuring social relations on a world scale, it can be seen how changes in production become the basis for social movements for change, new state formations, and world orders (Cox, 1996: 192). The tendency leading to core/peripheral restructuring of the production process manifests itself in mutations in state formations (Cox, 1996: 197). If it ultimately results in a new type of state, this state formation will emerge from the collective practice of non-state popular action, not from the expansion of existing types of (state) administrative control (Cox, 1996: 207).

Cox in discussing hegemony and counter-hegemony, institutions and processes of struggle between competing social forces that occur within and around them has a close relationship with Gramsci's discussion of hegemony (Cox, 1996:11). The concept of hegemony is needed to question the form of power that underlies the state and produce a special understanding of national interests, this special *raison d'etat* is the historical bloc configuration (Cox, 1996:56). There is a close relationship between institutionalization and what Gramsci calls hegemony. However, hegemony cannot be reduced to an institutional dimension (Cox, 1996:99-100).

Relative stability in a regular world order can be done by equating stability with the concept of hegemony which is based on a coherent relationship or compatibility between configurations of material power, a common collective image of the world order (including certain norms) and a set of institutions that regulate the order with a certain semblance of universality (not just as open instruments of certain state domination) (Cox, 1996:103).

The notion of hegemony as the correspondence between power, ideas, and institutions makes it possible to deal with some of the problems in state domination theory as a necessary condition for a stable international order (Cox, 1996:104). three dimensions fit together at certain times and places and apart at others (Cox, 1996:105). The prospect of a new hegemony is based on the global structure of social power generated by the internationalization of production (Cox, 1996:113).

Gramsci's main application of the concept of hegemony is in relations between social classes – for example, in explaining the inability of the Italian industrial bourgeoisie to establish its hegemony after Italian unification and in examining the prospects for Italian industrial workers to establish their class hegemony. over the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie to create a new historical bloc, a term which in Gramsci's work roughly corresponds to the idea of historical structure. (Cox, 1996:119).

To illustrate the difference in circumstances and the consequences of the different strategies required, Gramsci uses the military analogy of wars of movement and wars of position (Cox, 1996:127). A relatively small working class led by disciplined vanguards is able to defeat the state in a war of movements and is not met with effective resistance from the rest of civil society. A war of movements may conceivably, in conditions of extraordinary upheaval, allow the revolutionary vanguard to seize control of the state apparatus, but because of the resilience of civil society, such exploitation is doomed in the long run. (Cox, 1996:128).

Gramsci argues that a war of movements cannot be effective against a hegemonic state-society; the alternative strategy is a war of positions that slowly builds the strength of the social foundations of a new state. To counter the hegemonic state-society, the struggle must be won within civil society before any attack on the state can be successful. A premature attack on the state by a war of movements will only expose the weakness of the opposition and lead to a reimposition of bourgeois domination as the institutions of civil society reassert control (Cox, 1996:128).

Cox stated that the strategic implications of this analysis are clear but fraught with difficulties. Building an alternative basis of state and society on the basis of working class leadership means creating alternative institutions and alternative intellectual resources within the existing society and building bridges between the working class and other subordinate classes. This means actively building counter-hegemony within the established hegemony while resisting pressure and temptation to return to the pursuit of co-benefits for subaltern groups within the framework of bourgeois hegemony. This is the line between the war of positions as a long-term revolutionary strategy and social democracy as a policy of gaining advantage in the established order (Cox, 1996:128-129).

In carrying out a war of global positions, it requires effective and differentiated organizing, resources, organized masses, ideologically cohesive, politically active, and broadly networked; to influence policy and culture, through established channels of political and mass communication. Action repertoires require a combination of production and dissemination of knowledge through channels of political elites and media, lobbying of key institutions such as the United Nations, and facilitating consensus building among global and national elites (Carroll, 2007).

The resulting stalemate with the traditionally dominant social class creates the conditions for what Gramsci calls passive revolution, the introduction of change that does not involve the awakening of popular power. One of the typical accompaniments of passive revolution in Gramsci's analysis is caesarism: a powerful intervention to resolve an impasse between equal and opposing social forces. There are progressive and reactionary forms of caesarism: progressive when a strong government leads to the development of a new, more ordered state, reactionary when it stabilizes the existing power (Cox, 1996:129).

The lack of sustained and widespread popular participation in the unification movement explains the passive revolutionary character of its results. Besides caesarism, the second major feature of Gramsci's passive revolution is called *trasformismo*, which seeks to create the widest possible coalition of interests and dominates the political scene. *Trasformismo* works to co-opt potential leaders of subaltern social groups. Furthermore, *trasformismo* can serve as a strategy of assimilation and domestication of potentially harmful ideas by adapting them to the policies of the dominant coalition and thus can hinder the formation of class-based organized oppositions to established social and political forces. The concept of passive revolution is a counterpoint to the concept of hegemony because it describes the condition of a non-hegemonic society, in which no dominant class is able to build hegemony in Gramsci's sense of the term (Cox, 1996:130).

Historical bloc is understood in the Gramscian sense as a coalition of social forces bound by agreement and coercion (Cox, 1996: 9). In the national context, the form of the historical bloc influences the form of power that underlies the state and produces a special understanding of its national interests (Cox, 1996: 56). Gramsci saw ideas, politics, and economics as reciprocal relations, interchangeable and bound together in historical blocks (Cox, 1996: 118). Gramsci attributes the source of his ideas on historical bloc to Georges Sorel, although Sorel never used that or any other term in exactly the way Gramsci gave it to him (Cox, 1996: 131).

For Gramsci, the historical bloc also has a revolutionary orientation through its emphasis on the unity and coherence of the socio-political order. It is an intellectual defense against co-optation by *trasformismo* or transformism. Historical block is a dialectical concept in the sense that the interacting elements create a larger whole. Gramsci describes these interacting elements sometimes as subjective and objective, sometimes as superstructure and structure. The structure and superstructure form the historical block. In other words, the complex ensemble of contradictory and contradictory superstructures is a reflection of the ensemble of social relations of production (Cox, 1996: 131).

A historical bloc cannot exist without a hegemonic social class. Where the hegemonic class is the dominant class in the state or social formation, the state (in Gramsci's concept) maintains cohesion and identity within the bloc through the spread of shared culture. A new bloc is formed when a subordinate class (eg workers) establishes its hegemony over other subordinate groups (eg small farmers, marginal). This process requires intensive dialogue between leaders and followers within the hegemonic class candidate. Intellectuals play a key role in building a historical bloc. Intellectuals are not distinct and relatively classless social strata. Gramsci saw them as organically connected by social class. They perform the function of developing and maintaining the mental, technological, and organizational images that unite members of historical classes and blocs into a common identity. Bourgeois intellectuals do this for the whole society in which the bourgeoisie is hegemonic. The organic intellectuals of the working class will perform the same role in the creation of a new historical bloc under the hegemony of the working class in that society. To do this they had to develop a distinctly distinct culture, organization, and technique, and do so in constant interaction with emerging

bloc members. Everyone, for Gramsci, is partly an intellectual, although only a part carries out the full social intellectual function. In this task, the party, in its conception, is a collective intellectual (Cox, 1996:132-133).

In the movement towards hegemony and the formation of historical blocs, Gramsci distinguishes three levels of consciousness: the eco-corporate, which recognizes the special interests of certain groups; solidarity or class consciousness, which extends across social classes but remains at a purely economic level; and hegemonic, which aligns the interests of the ruling class with those of the subordinate classes and incorporates these other interests into ideology expressed in universal terms (Cox, 1996:133).

At the international and world order level, when representation in international institutions is firmly based on clear social and political challenges to hegemony – on nascent historical blocs and counter-hegemony – participation can pose a real threat. The world order is based on social relations. Therefore, significant structural changes in the world order are most likely to be traced to some fundamental changes in social relations and in the national political order corresponding to the structure of national social relations. In Gramsci's thinking, this will happen with the emergence of a new historical bloc (Cox, 1996:139-140).

Must shift the problem of changing the world order back from international institutions to the national community. Gramsci's analysis of Italy is more valid when applied to world orders; only positional wars can, in the long term, bring about structural change, and positional wars involve building a sociopolitical basis for change through the formation of new historical blocs. The national context remains the only place in which a historical bloc can be established, even if world economic and world political conditions materially affect the prospects for such an undertaking. The political preparation of the population in sufficient depth may not keep pace with the revolutionary opportunities and this diminishes the prospects for a new historical bloc. In short, the task of changing the world order begins with a long and painstaking effort to build new historical blocs within state boundaries (Cox, 1996: 140-141).

In discussing the case, Cox writes that the disintegration of the neoliberal historical bloc was prepared by a collective effort of ideological revision carried out through various unofficial institutions - the Trilateral Commission, the Bilderberg conference, the Club of Rome, and other less prestigious forums - and then supported through more formal consensus-building agencies such as the OECD. If tensions leading to the disintegration of the neoliberal historical bloc have been evident since the mid-1970s, it is too early to define the outlines of a new historical bloc that is likely to achieve any resilience as the basis for a new state form (Cox, 1996:198-199).

The state-capitalist alternative has several potentials to reconstruct national hegemony and overcome the deadlock that hyperliberalism tends to stiffen. The narrowing base of corporatism (particularly in terms of the labor component) on which state capitalism rests, however, contains a latent contradiction to the legitimacy of democracy. Historical blocks



will be thin. The excluded groups available for mobilization into counter-hegemony will be enormous, although the fragmentation and disempowerment of these groups will make the task onerous. In the medium term, the state-capitalist structure appears to be a viable alternative to the hyperliberal impasse. The long-term survival of these forms is a more open question (Cox, 1996:204).

The condition for the restructuring of society and government is to build a new historical bloc capable of sustaining a long war of positions until it is strong enough to become an alternative political basis. This effort must be based on the strata of the people. The activities included in it are unlikely to be directed at the state due to the degree of depoliticization and alienation from the state among these strata. They will most likely be directed to local authorities and self-help collectives. They will in most cases be local responses to global problems – environmental problems, organizing production, welfare provision, migration. If they eventually produce a new type of state, it will emerge from the collective practice of non-state popular action, not from the extension of existing types of administrative control (Cox, 1996:207). The world order, which appears as a multi-level structure, is social power at its base. Self-awareness and articulation into historical blocs, or depoliticized and manipulated, are major issues in future-making (Cox, 1996:308).

In a transcript of an interview with Cox entitled "Overcoming Blockages" on May 1, 2009 in Toronto, Canada by Brazilian students Ana S. Garcia, Miguel Borba de Sá, and Alessandro Biazzini Couto; Cox is cited as one of the most prominent Gramscian Scholars of her generation, especially in fields such as the disciplines of International Relations and International Political Economy. Although Cox resists being labeled Gramscian or Neo-Gramscian – as he put it, "I have always resisted being put into categories" – however, any attempt to separate his work of the last three decades from the Italian Marxists seems nearly impossible, as the title of the very first lecture he taught at York University "From Vico to Gramsci" already indicates that. Cox is known for concepts such as "self-organization" and "plural world". The close relationship between political theory and practice is a major concern for Cox. It is not only about understanding the past, but also about being able to make the right choices for the future ([periodicos.pucminas.br](http://periodicos.pucminas.br)).

"What is 'social power'?" According to Cox to find out, it's not out there by definition, but out there to be found. This attitude explains Cox's reluctance to point to specific social forces or political movements that can assume the role of potential revolutionary subjects in today's world. Instead, Cox reiterates the importance of national struggles, counter-hegemonic movements from below to "be strong in their ability to resist simple means of being co-opted", suggesting that transnational solidarity may be a helpful strategy for that task. Participation invariably leads to co-optation and weakening of groups that have independent and opposing positions. People who are with social movements must be strong in their ability to resist simple ways of being co-opted. Spreading awareness is one way to fight back. It's a particularly good initiative because it involves a number of countries, not just one country, which would make it more vulnerable to government action. In this way, efforts to co-opt the

movement in one country can be counterbalanced by the influence of movements in all other countries to fight it, which is a matter of building strength ([periodicos.pucminas.br](http://periodicos.pucminas.br)).

Cox (1999) divides world producers into three broad categories: first, at the top is a core workforce of highly skilled people who are integrated into management processes to make decisions about what is produced and where and by whom. They carry out research and development, maintain productive equipment, set up administrative frameworks, and propagate the ideology of globalization. At the second level, the unified core is flanked by more support workers whose numbers vary according to the level of demand for the product. Lower skill levels make them easier to dispose of and replace as precarious workers who are in business are offered the lowest labor costs, the greatest flexibility in employment, the least protection of workers' rights in employment; and the weakest environmental control. Segmented based on ethnicity, religion, gender, and geography, so it is not easy to be organized collectively to face unified management. The production of transnationalization has accentuated social fragmentation and environmental degradation. The third tier consists of those who are excluded from international production, including the unemployed, the low-tech little people who enter rich countries, and the large proportion of the marginalized population in poor countries.

The division of producers in the Coxian perspective is used to analyze the smallholder class and other rural workers organized by La Via Campesina, from the existing categories it can be concluded that they are part of the third class or social level. Not considered and included in international production either in the fields of economics, culture, let alone ideological politics. As explained by Zainal Arifin Fuad in an interview in Jakarta in 2019, even though La Via Campesina did not explicitly mention one particular type of ideology that they agreed on, they chose and united on one platform to fight against the ideology of capitalism which operates in its variant called neoliberalism.

In Coxian's analysis, the bigger struggle of La Via Campesina than just fighting for the adoption of UNDROP is fighting for social change or the transformation of the existing world order with an alternative world order. A counter-hegemonic struggle against neoliberal historical structures with alternative historical structures that are expected to fulfill the human rights of farmers and other people working in rural areas based on the implementation of UNDROP globally. In carrying out this counter-hegemony, La Via Campesina must become a social force from the economic, ideological, and cultural production process by combining material capabilities, ideas, and institutionalization to build global historical blocs which then carry out positional wars within the existing structure, in addition to continuing to carry out movement wars through the actions they have previously and have been carrying out.

La Via Campesina as a civil society organization means as an international actor as well as an agent of social change in the global sphere. Being a civil society organization means that La Via Campesina has social power from the production process economically, ideologically and culturally. It is this social power in the combination of ideas or notions, material capabilities and institutional capabilities that will become the basis for La Via Campesina to proceed

politically and win it in the realm of civil society in the complexity of relations between the state and society. Winning politics in the realm of civil society means having the ability to determine what kind of state formation is desired and become a means of further struggle in realizing an alternative world order that is different from the existing one, namely the neoliberal capitalist world order.

The ideas built and organized by La Via Campesina internally and also spread widely externally globally. The direct practice of alternative ideas to neoliberalism by La Via Campesina which is widely spread proves like Cox's concept of ideas which are both subjective and intersubjective images that have the potential to become social forces. An alternative idea in this case is related to the rights of farmers and more specifically to the rights of farmers who are converted or transgressed from agrarian issues which are political issues. Alternative ideas which are parts of an alternative picture of the neoliberal world order and reinforce their demands for the declaration of the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas by the United Nations.

They were also able to institutionalize peasant rights into UNDROP and also proved the success of their struggle, from demands in various forms of direct action to street demonstrations and propaganda in various mass media and social media to negotiating tables in court forums for decision-making to become institutional policies. This success in institutionalization provides at least two important meanings: first, La Via Campesina provides a concrete example of more advanced steps that civil society organizations can take in global social movements; and secondly, this is also a step forward to carry out counter-hegemony against the existing historical structure or world order, namely global neoliberal capitalism which will be replaced by an alternative historical structure or world order, which is in accordance with the wishes of La Via Campesina and her allies in the alternative international historical bloc.

Even though La Via Campesina succeeded in fighting for the adoption of UNDROP, it must reconsider the political steps going forward in ensuring its implementation by Member States of the United Nations. In fact, not only at the level of government in each country, the challenges are also at the level of global civil society, especially farmers and other rural communities. The positioning of the state and its formation is important because the state is still at the center of the core of power and hegemony downward or inward (domestic) and upward or external (international).

## **Conclusion**

La Via Campesina as a transnational peasant social movement succeeded in fighting for the Declaration of Peasant Rights to become the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasant and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP). The struggle of La Via Campesina is understood as a political process carried out by organized civil society in two ways: transnationalization (peasant social movements and peasant rights) and institutionalization (peasant rights became UNDROP). The political process of

transnationalization and institutionalization is described from a Coxian perspective or Cox's Critical Theory in International Relations Studies. Overall, Coxian's perspective does not only offer a descriptive analysis of dialectical historical structures, but also a guide to action or action, according to its emancipatory mission and social transformation in the vision of global social justice.

In Coxian's perspective, the success of the political process of transnationalization and institutionalization of La Via Campesina is understood by an analysis that operationalizes the concepts of scope of activity at three levels, namely the social power of production, state formation, and world order based on the complex relations of society and the state, and the three hegemonic/counter-hegemonic potentials, namely material capabilities, ideas/ideas, and institutions through position wars. But even so, the struggle of La Via Campesina has not been able to reach the end point or peak to carry out counter-hegemony in their resistance to the world order or the historical structure of global neoliberalism because it has not been able to realize an alternative global historical block to present an alternative world order in structurally replacing neoliberalism to create a different international system.

On the one hand, the success of La Via Campesina in transnationalizing social movements was actually influenced by material conditions in the form of the global crisis of neoliberal capitalism which opened up gaps in the global political structure and the international economic system or the weakening of neoliberal hegemony; besides that political accommodation in international intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations which has a human rights mechanism to open opportunities for the participation of civil society organizations in emancipating themselves and their interests for global governance on human rights issues. On the other hand, La Via Campesina has actually not been fully successful because UNDROP, which is only a series of norms, does not have strong binding power for member states of the United Nations as well as international organizations and transnational corporations to implement them; until La Via Campesina is able to have the strength and power to direct and even force other political, economic and cultural institutions to ensure the implementation of the declaration. So that theoretically La Via Campesina should build a broad, stronger alliance called the global historical bloc as an alternative to counter-hegemony.

From this discussion it is known and understood that the post-declaration challenge of UNDROP is its implementation in the world which must go through ratification or adoption by every member country of the United Nations. To make all parties involved in the global structure at local, national and international levels; willing and able to more easily realize that, then the key is ideological political power, collectivist economy, and an emancipatory culture that is non-capitalist neoliberal. Power in these various sectors or fields of life theoretically or practically can only be realized with social power from the process of production, formatting the state, and organizing the world which is carried out with real material capabilities, ideas or ideas born from collective images, institutionalization capabilities at various levels of existing political activity space. While La Via Campesina until now still chooses to become a civil society movement organization, then in the future it

must consider and even realize the possibility of controlling the country and organizing the world in the realm of organization and under their leadership.

Practical suggestions recommended from the results of this discussion are as follows: first, structural social change and replacement of the international system is something that is possible to happen and be carried out by anyone who is organized as a civil society when they are able to manage material capabilities, ideas/ideas, and institutions in building social power from production economically, ideologically, and culturally which is then used to seize power to form a state that ultimately organizes the world according to the goals of social justice and world peace. La Via Campesina has provided a direct example of the practice of this struggle through the transnational peasant movement whose political process was able to transnationalize social movements and institutionalize the issue of peasants' rights into UNDROP, although there is still further struggle to be carried out, seizing power at the level of countries where members of La Via Campesina exist and then building an alternative global historical bloc to create a better world order for farmers, rural workers, and all people in the world.

Second, the next struggle that must be carried out by La Via Campesina is: (a) to ensure that UNDROP is implemented at the national level by the state and internationally by international organizations institutionally, meaning building a different structure to create an alternative system. (b) To ensure the implementation of UNDROP, La Via Campesina must come to power at the national level by seizing the state and at the international level to manage the international system globally through a war of positions, namely democratic means and/or movement wars, namely revolutionary means. (c) To ensure that La Via Campesina comes to power at various levels of scope of global political activity it must be able to build social power from production economically, ideologically and culturally in the daily lives of its members and the wider community of non-members or outside their movement organizations in a more militant alliance called the alternative global historical bloc. (d) To ensure that social forces from economic production, ideology and culture can be properly organized, concrete organizational and institutionalization models are needed other than a transnational civil society organization called La Via Campesina which is actually only an instrument of education and cultural political struggle outside legal and formal political institutions and institutions. (e) To ensure the potential for social power from economic production, it is recommended to build strong cooperatives because they are managed properly (in governance/management) and correctly (according to their values and principles); while politically it is recommended to build a strong political party as a cadre-based and mass-based party in dealing with political dynamics that require democratic (wars of positional) and revolutionary (wars of movement) actions.

The recommended methodological suggestions from the results of this discussion are as follows: first, research on transnational social movements as international civil society organizations is necessary and important to continue to be carried out because the political reality in practice is that their existence is real and the politics that they carry out are factually capable of influencing international political contexts and the dynamics of global

international relations. Conceptually and theoretically, in International Relations there are also various existing perspectives with different paradigms to understand it. Second, studies in International Relations in general and in particular on transnational social movements must also be able to be carried out with more diverse methods such as field research and interviews in collecting information or data, also more diverse analytical methods such as ethnography and meta-analysis.

Third, studies in International Relations which are more diverse in terms of issues and methods and approaches will contribute directly and significantly to developing International Relations scholarship not only theoretically but also paradigmatically, even for International Relations students, academics and scientists if possible not only being able to understand and interpret the world, because what is more important than that is changing it. Especially when International Relations is always called and glorified as a science that will create world peace. Fourth, further studies, to explain the very complex hegemony, it is suggested not only to put the framework of thought as a basis for analysis with Gramscian and neo-Gramscian hegemonic theories (one of them is Coxian), but also complex hegemonic theory (Williams). Thus, counter-hegemony also adjusts, namely complex counter-hegemony.

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