

Agrarian South Network Research Bulletin

March — April 2022

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EDITORIAL***“Where there is a privilege, there is a denied right”***

This issue examines the significance of mobilization and movements from three different perspectives foregrounded by important feminist voices. Djerbi’s searing review of the conditions of female agrarian workers confirms in Tunisia a facet of agrarian economies that has remained little remarked in the emerging literature on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on developing country economies: that the sector endured largely thanks to the predominantly feminized labor that has for decades subsidized its accumulation. Add to this its role in sustaining poor households amidst crisis. Through an examination of the *Amilat* – female agricultural workers – we are confronted with the enduring question regarding the usefulness of largely urban focused unions for the organizing of working people, especially the casualised, informal, rural female labour force. This exclusion also runs through liberal policies that retain antipoor criteria for access to state resources with no regard for the existing agrarian structure. With a clear eye on the reality that reformist legislative action only risks legitimizing existing structures of exploitation, Djerbi argues that the future lies in organizing agriculture around small-scale farming, and of course, in shifting the paradigm of organizing the country’s agricultural sector.

Bansal et al trace the immiseration of peasant farmers through a critique of the political economy of India’s fertilizer crisis, showing how policy changes have resulted in a massive rise in the prices of fertilizers and constrained availability, with severe

implications for the Indian peasantry. The Indian state has given a differential treatment to the use of urea fertilizers, which is important to examine in order to understand the political economy of fertilizer sector reforms. In the post-liberalization era, increasing dependence on imports and private production of fertilizer has resulted in greater vulnerability of small farmers to price fluctuations, and more recently, the effect of ongoing imperialist aggression in fertilizer exporting countries is felt locally. Few alternatives exist to assuage especially poor farmers apart from a commitment by the government to increase investment in the public sector.

This issue also features a memoir of internationalist autonomous-feminist, Francesca Gargallo Celentani (1956-2022). Beautifully told by Fornero and Díaz, Gargallo’s is a story of struggle grounded in a feminist ethics and politics of transnational solidarity. The thematic title of this issue draws from her words, that “*Where there is a privilege, there is a denied right and, therefore, one thing and another cannot coexist*”. Her work was grounded in a critique of colonialism and imperialism; she spoke against the exercises of power that created more privileges and inequalities; and in a her critical reading of the Western feminist movement she insisted that feminism must be anti-racist if it intends to dialogue with indigenous and Black women. She therefore encouraged dialogue as a social research methodology, as a way of knowing the world. As poignantly summed up by the two authors who considered Gargallo as a teacher, it is a political act to admit to admire other women. We honor this feminist fighter

whose work transcended borders and ‘spoke from all the margins of empire’, and share her here as a restatement of our own feminist commitments along the road of struggle with the oppressed and working people of the world.

Enquiries, responses and submissions may be sent to the editors at: agrariansouthresearchbulletin@gmail.com

Syndical and state engagement with Tunisia's Amilat: A collection of reflections

Dhouha Djerbi¹

In 2020, the Tunisian government reported that agriculture was the sole sector not to succumb to the Coronavirus-induced recession. What the reporting neglected to highlight was that the sector's endurance was largely thanks to the predominantly feminized labor that has—for decades—subsidized its accumulation. In the wake of the pandemic, Tunisia's *Amilat* (female agricultural workers) attested to considering themselves essential workers, on equal footing with health care laborers for the indispensable work they perform to ensure the country's food security and pleaded for an amelioration of their working conditions.ⁱ Indeed, the lived reality of the *Amilat* reveals a story of an agricultural model of production to which the brutal exploitation of feminized labor is inherent to its functioning. The purpose of this essay is not an analysis of the patriarchal and capitalist dynamics that make Tunisia's agricultural economy possible. Rather, it offers an exploration of how different actors have engaged with the workers' struggle.

Meagerly compensated, the *Amilat* receive a monthly salary substantially lower than the minimum set by the state and enjoy little to no social protections.ⁱⁱ They perform duties so labor intensive that their male counterparts strive to avoid. One thus cannot speak of a singular labor market for agricultural workers in Tunisia, but of two distinct and

gender-segregated: One is male predominately formalized and active in state farms. The other is female, cheap(er), abundant, and informal—ideal for private agricultural lands where flagrant labor abuses thrive unencumbered by regulatory oversight.ⁱⁱⁱ Long hours, hazardous working conditions, and sexual harassment all characterize the experiences of women laborers. But discourse around this workforce only began to intensify as a result of their transportation to and from these exploitation sites. The mounting death and injury toll of road accidents claiming the lives of rural women at an alarming rate^{iv} did not inspire a national trade union (UGTT) with considerable political clout to shift from its urban-centric approach, nor did it perturb a state so eager to preserve its carefully crafted image as a beacon of women's liberation in the Arab world.

The *Amilat* and the UGTT

The *Amilat* are not afforded organizing rights with the UGTT, nor can they find refuge in the notoriously corrupt Union of Agriculture and Fishing (UTAP) comprised of large landowners and investors whose interests are diametrically opposed to the *Amilat's* aspirations for a dignified livelihood.^v While the UTAP's unwillingness to absorb its exploiters may be self-evident, the UGTT's aversion can seem perplexing, especially to those familiar with Tunisian labor code which

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has extended collective bargaining power to non-unionized workers since the 1970s.^{vi} Critics pointed towards the union's history of gender-blind organizing and persistent machismo culture among its leading ranks as a possible answer to this quagmire.^{vii} An important dimension notwithstanding, this does not fully explain the UGTT's taking charge of a sperate, yet equally-feminized workforce: textile factory workers whose labor is formalized. To this regard, the UGTT has claimed that it is the informal nature of the *Amilat's* labor which presents a hindrance on its ability to represent the women.^{viii} It has further posited that its leadership is ill-suited to guide a workforce whose labor falls under the mandate of an already existing and specialized trade union—the aforementioned UTAP.^{ix} Below the surface of these unpersuasive pretexts, however, lies an urban-centered trade union with an enduring legacy of rural organizing failures and weak track record of radical agrarian reform defense.^x Since its inception, the UGTT has been unsuccessful in harnessing the collective power of small farmers and concentrated its efforts on the industrial coasts and enclaves of the country. To this day, UGTT's influence in the countryside, if any, remains strictly limited to state farms.

In 2018, certain laborers attested that neither the UTAP nor the UGTT would agree to even speak with them.^{xi} This does not mean that the UGTT has not lent support to the cause of the *Amilat*. With each accident claiming the lives of more workers, the union transforms into a staunch defender, quick to organize protests decrying the state-sponsored collective death and injury of its peripheralized workers. On 29 April 2019, prompted by yet another road accident, the UGTT orchestrated

a governorate-wide public sector strike in Sidi Bouzid in parallel with a protest on what the union dubbed a 'day of mourning' for the victims. Coverage of the action showcased UGTT regional leaders leading the mobilization with the *Amilat* trailing behind. Among the Union's demands for more investment into the country's interior regions were vague calls for the 'preservation of the *Amilat's* dignity'.^{xiii} The UGTT's contributions ended there. What could have been an opportunity to capitalize on the momentum and channel the workers' grievances into a bigger, more impactful action was seemingly forgone, leaving a grief-stricken community in anticipation of the next inevitable tragedy.

The *Amilat* and the Ministry of Women

International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have intervened in postrevolutionary Tunisia with remarkable zeal, prescribing not only austerity measures but a plethora of 'entrepreneurial' projects for the country's chronically unemployed and insecurely employed, to distract from its plans for public sector downsizing. Following these logics, the Ministry of Women, Children, and the Elderly suggested—in its implementation of the *Rai'da* (Pioneer) project—that rural women can lift themselves out of endemic poverty by becoming 'entrepreneurs'. Dressed in the language of 'female empowerment', the scheme offers micro-finance to women looking to launch small businesses. Beyond the obvious critiques of such an outdated scheme from its potential to exacerbate household indebtedness to its diversion of the responsibility of poverty alleviation from the hands of the state to those it marginalizes, the project is in itself rife with contradiction:

women must have a university degree or a professional certificate to be eligible. This requirement immediately disqualifies the majority of the *Amilat* who have a 65% early education dropout rate and a 30% illiteracy rate—a testament to how detached the Ministry is from a demographic it claims to represent. A year after the program's launch and when confronted about the project's results, then-minister Naziha El-Abidi conceded on national television that the program was never intended to target women in the 'rural context'.^{xiii} In the same breath, she boasted the program's success in the hopes that the entrepreneurial women's endeavors would yield employment for those less fortunate—a 'trickle-down empowerment' of sorts.

Searching for solutions to the *Amilat*'s predicament in the Ministry of Women's repertoire of policies is a futile exercise, as these women are rarely reflected in the Tunisian state's neoliberal feminist project. For decades, the state has exploited the relatively modest gains women have secured as a 'public good' worthy of praise in the form of development loans, all the while cultivating a reputation as an exceptionally liberal nation amidst its more conservative neighbors. The *Amilat* sit in stark contrast to the image of the Tunisian woman the state propped up: educated, skilled, and preferably urban.^{xiv} It should come as no surprise that the only solution it can conceive of is to attempt to professionalize them, willfully overlooking that—as long as the current agrarian structures remain unchallenged—there will always be rural labor to be exploited. By no means is the Ministry's project the only micro-finance scheme targeting rural women. Non-governmental organizations, namely the

Tunisian Union for Social Solidarity, have also advanced micro-loans as a magical panacea to all economic ailments, and contributed to the recast of the aspirations of Tunisia's rural poor towards *Mashrou'* (business project) illusions and further away from radical land reform.

Failures of Reformist Approaches

The combination of state apathy and a syndical void made for fertile ground for civil society intervention into the cause of Tunisia's *Amilat*, advocating legislative remedies for their transportation woes. In 2019, the government—under mounting pressure from a coalition of civil society organizations operating under the banner of *Saalma Taa'ich* (Living Safely)—introduced a law to regulate all transportation of farm workers. With no state enforcement and oversight mechanisms in place, the decorative piece of legislation failed to create even the smallest dent in the increasing number of accidents.^{xv} Coronavirus-induced work disruptions also meant that the *Amilat* were more willing to tolerate dodgy transportation methods in pursuit of their only means of livelihood. Against the backdrop of an IFI-piloted assault on any semblance of a welfare state Tunisians have previously enjoyed, the *Amilat* are left with little choice but to continue working even during a pandemic.

The UGTT has continued along the same legislative avenues, pushing for the expansion and enforcement of regulatory mechanisms in the agricultural sector.^{xvi} More recently it has collaborated with a number of civil society organizations on a study series of Tunisia's agrarian economy, the preliminary results of which encouraged the pursuit of more investment agriculture.^{xvii} One document

in particular praised the Green Morocco Plan (PMV) for its ‘aggregation’ approach—a model wherein an ‘aggregator’ (an agri-industrialist) ‘cooperates’ with a small farmer—and encouraged its replication in Tunisia. Absent from these studies are discussions about how transformative this would be to the country’s reserve of agricultural laborers for whom an agricultural sector bowing to the demands of capital entails nothing but continued suffering, especially considering that the PMV itself rests comfortably on the abundance and precarity of Moroccan women farmhands.^{xviii} In short, The current structure of Tunisia’s agrarian economy is brutally exploitative and any proposed reform operating within its confines will yield no emancipatory outcomes. To be sure, I do not argue that in a future where Tunisian agriculture is organized around small-scale farming, the patriarchal dominion will suddenly cease to exist. What I do recognize is that agricultural commercialization has bolstered gender-based hierarchies, not only in Tunisia but in various corners of the world,^{xix} and that any serious effort to root out patriarchal hegemony in the countryside must

first start with tearing down capitalist agriculture structures.

Between a labor union that only acts when prompted by transport calamities and a government operating under the thumb of its creditors, Tunisia’s *Amilat*’s have been cast as a less-than-ideal ‘victim’: too rural and informal for the UGTT and too ‘uneducated’ for the state vision of a model female citizen. Attempts at immiseration alleviation—however well-intentioned—are no substitute for a desperately needed paradigm shift in the organization of the country’s agricultural sector, for which activists have passionately championed,^{xx} and without which the end of the *Amilat*’s abuse is improbable. In the same vein, reformist legislative action risks legitimizing structures of exploitation more so than it promises emancipatory solutions. In the interim, the *Amilat*’s struggle for dignified working conditions persists, yet their perseverance is not infinite: “We should revolt ... We should make a revolution. We would burn and demolish. Let them take us to jail, we have nothing to lose”^{xxi} one worker proclaimed.

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The Political Economy of Fertilizer Crisis in India

Prachi Bansal, Suresh Garimella and Sunit Arora¹

Indian farmers have been facing a major crisis since last year because of shortages in the availability and an unprecedented rise in prices of fertilizers. The shortage of fertilizers created havoc in the lives of the farmers. Farmers across India had to protest, demanding the government to address the crisis and ensure availability of fertilizers. This article summarizes the changes in fertilizer policies post-liberalisation, explains the recent crisis in the availability of fertilizers and presents evidence of the crisis from case studies in rural India.

Fertilizer Policies in India

The use of chemical fertilizers has been key to agricultural growth in India since the 1970s. The widespread adoption of chemical fertilizers along with other modern inputs became possible because of specific policies that were introduced in the wake of the Green Revolution. Fertilizer policies following the Green Revolution were designed to meet the dual objectives of expanding domestic capacity for fertilizer production and making fertilizers available to farmers at affordable prices. During this period, state policy ensured an increase in the supply of raw materials required for manufacturing fertilizers. The public sector and cooperatives led the production of

fertilizers, and both fertilizer prices and the distribution of fertilizers across states were regulated by the government. The system of controls and subsidies was designed to provide assured returns to fertilizer manufacturers as well as keep fertilizer prices low for farmers.

The post-liberalisation period saw a distinct change in the direction of fertilizer policies, from uniform and controlled prices towards a regime of decontrolled fertilizer prices. Until 1991, fertilizer prices were controlled through the Retention Price Scheme and the distribution of fertilizers was controlled under the Essential Commodities Act. Decontrolling the prices of all non-urea fertilizers was the most significant change brought about during the post-liberalisation period. This resulted in a surge in the prices of fertilizers and a bias towards urea consumption. There was a phased decontrol of fertilizer prices in India.

Continuing with its efforts to decontrol fertilizer prices, the Indian government introduced a shift in the subsidy regime with a scheme called the Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) scheme in 2010. The NBS Scheme introduced three main changes in the system of fertilizer subsidies. First, the subsidy given to manufacturers was delinked from inter-

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national prices and the cost of production. Secondly, the subsidy was specified by the national government in terms of nutrient content per unit of nitrogen(N), phosphorus(P), potash(K) and sulphur (S) rather than for different fertilizer products. And thirdly, under the NBS, fertilizer manufacturers were given the freedom to set the retail prices of the fertilizers and the system of government regulation of prices of fertilizers (other than urea) was dismantled.

A substantial top up in the form of nutrient-based subsidy, over and above decontrolled prices, has meant that while fertilizer manufacturers and importers have made windfall profits, farmers have been paying very high prices for diammonium phosphate (DAP). The price of DAP more than doubled from Rs 9,350 per tonne in 2009-10 to Rs. 20,000 per tonne in 2011-12 and to Rs. 25,000 per tonne in 2018-19. DAP was 1.5 times as expensive as urea in 1991 and by 2018, it became about 4.5 times as expensive as urea. The price of muriate of potash (MoP) increased from Rs 4,455 per tonne in 2009-10 to Rs 12,040 per tonne in 2011-12 and remained at that level for a long time. Single super phosphate (SSP), which used to be cheaper than urea until 2010 and was the main phosphatic fertilizer used by poor farmers, became 1.4 times more expensive than urea in 2018.

This policy change has resulted in a massive rise in the prices of non-urea fertilizers, which has severe implications for the Indian peasantry. The Indian state has given a differential treatment to the use of urea fertilizers, which is important to examine in order to understand the political economy of fertilizer sector reforms.

Disruption in Supply from Major Exporters

The availability of fertilizers in India has become increasingly dependent on imports. In 2021, imported urea accounted for about 21 per cent (6.4 million MT) of the total available urea in the country. The corresponding share for DAP was 55 percent (4.5 million MT) and MoP was nearly 100 percent (1.5 million MT).

In recent years, China has emerged as the most important exporter of DAP to India. Globally, China accounts for nearly one-third of the total DAP trade and one tenth of urea. In 2021, 40 percent of the total Indian DAP imports were from China. However due to an energy crisis in December 2021, China halted the exports of DAP until June 2022. This is an important cause of the sharp rise in the international price of DAP. Along with this, with an increase in the price of natural gas, the main raw material for nitrogenous fertilizers, Russia, one of the biggest exporters of urea, has cut down exports in December 2021 and banned exports of ammonium nitrate from February 2022. Also as noted above, MoP used in India is almost entirely imported. Belarus, one of the major exporters of MoP to India (30 percent of total imports in 2021), is facing sanctions from the United States (US) and European Union (EU). This is likely to affect both its international price and imports to India.

In addition, the recent eruption of hostilities in the Russia-Ukraine crisis and related sanctions by the EU and the US on Russia have resulted in increasing price of crude oil and natural gas, disruption in shipping lines and other freight movement. The crisis further pushes the international price of fertilizers upwards and create havoc

among the importing nations including India. In other words, there is a simultaneous disruption in supply of all the three most important fertilizers from key exporting countries. In addition to all this, the COVID-19 pandemic and the shortages in availability of shipping containers continue to aggravate disruptions in the supply of finished fertilizers as well as key raw materials like rock phosphate and phosphoric acid.

Shortfall in Domestic Availability

The fall in imports and shortages in supplies of raw materials for domestic producers has resulted in a crisis in availability of fertilizers across the country. The data presented in Figure 1 and 2 are at complete variance with the Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviyas's denial in Parliament of any shortage in the supply of fertilizers. The Minister instead blamed the farmers for hoarding and black marketing.

Shortage of fertilizers started since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, instead of listening to the wakeup call and dealing with the structural weaknesses, the government initially treated it as short-term supply disruption caused by the COVID lockdown, which would vanish once transport disruptions were dealt with, and then as an issue of rising prices, that could be dealt with by temporarily increasing the subsidy. In line with this belief, the government increased the subsidy in May 2021 and again in October 2021. The crisis, however, only worsened and the shortfall in supply of DAP became more and more acute from one season to the next.

Case Studies from Central India

In order to assess the impact of changes in the availability and prices of

fertilizers on agricultural activity, we conducted short village-level studies in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh in December 2021. The two study villages were the village of Aavli in Hoshangabad district and the village of Barali in Morena district.¹ Sowing for the Rabi season was complete at the time of these surveys. The main Rabi crops were wheat and black gram in Aavli and mustard and wheat in Barali. The main fertilizers used in both villages were DAP and urea. These were usually procured on credit from the village cooperative societies and the payment was made after selling the Rabi produce.

We found acute shortages in availability of fertilizers, both DAP and urea, during the Rabi season in 2021-22. Due to unavailability/ delay in arrival of DAP and urea in village societies, farmers purchased fertilizers from private dealers and paid in cash rather than buying on credit from the society. Change in the mode of payment for fertilizers from credit to cash payments put additional financial strain on the farmers. Moreover, there was considerable difference in the prices at which fertilizers were sold by the cooperative societies and private shops. A fifty kg bag of DAP was sold by the societies at Rs. 1200 whereas the prices were in the range of Rs. 1250-1400 in the private shops. Similarly, a forty-five kg bag of urea was sold for Rs. 267 by the societies but was priced between Rs. 300-350 in private shops. Limits on the sale of fertilizers were enforced through the use of Aadhaar cards, which were mandatory for purchase of DAP, urea and NPK fertilizers. Also, due to unavailability of DAP in the market, many farmers had to switch to more expensive alternatives like different compositions of NPK fertilizer. Use of NPK in place of DAP added to the costs of cultivation for three

reasons: first, a fifty kg bag of popular variants of NPK was priced at around Rs. 1500, as compared to a fifty kg bag of DAP priced between Rs. 1200-1400; second, farmers used larger amounts of NPK per hectare to compensate for the perceived loss of nutrients, especially phosphorous, resulting from the lack of application of DAP at the time of sowing, and third, certain other inputs to aid plant growth were used to make up for the sudden change in the fertilizer used.

There were variations in access to fertilizers across classes of farmers. Large farmers found it relatively easier to procure fertilizers as they purchased them much in advance of the sowing for Rabi season in 2021. Here, it needs to be noted that they were able to get prior information through their networks about the expected shortage of fertilizers and purchase fertilizers before a significant increase in prices. This was aided by the ability of large farmers to manage the necessary finances to buy the fertilizers in cash. We also found evidence of small farmers resorting to short-term borrowing to meet the additional expenses on

fertilizers due to increase in cost of fertilizers and the requirement to pay in cash.

Thus, shortages in availability of commonly used fertilizers during Rabi season 2021-22 resulted in a switch to more expensive alternatives, changes in the mode of payment for fertilizers from credit to cash and increases in the costs of cultivation.

The policies adopted over the last two decades after economic reforms have undermined the domestic production of fertilizers led by the public sector and increased dependence on imports and production by the private sector. Given that India does not have key raw materials for producing fertilizers, strategic planning by the government to secure supplies of raw materials and produce fertilizers domestically has played a historic role in supporting India's food security. The ad hoc measures by the government such as making Aadhar card mandatory and limits on individual buyers is not enough to address the crisis and strategic goals can only be achieved by ensuring increased investments in the public sector.

¹In order to safeguard the identity of the residents, the names of the study villages have been changed

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Figure 1: Shortfall in monthly availability of DAP and MoP in 2020 and 2021 in comparison with the corresponding month in 2019 (thousand metric tonnes)

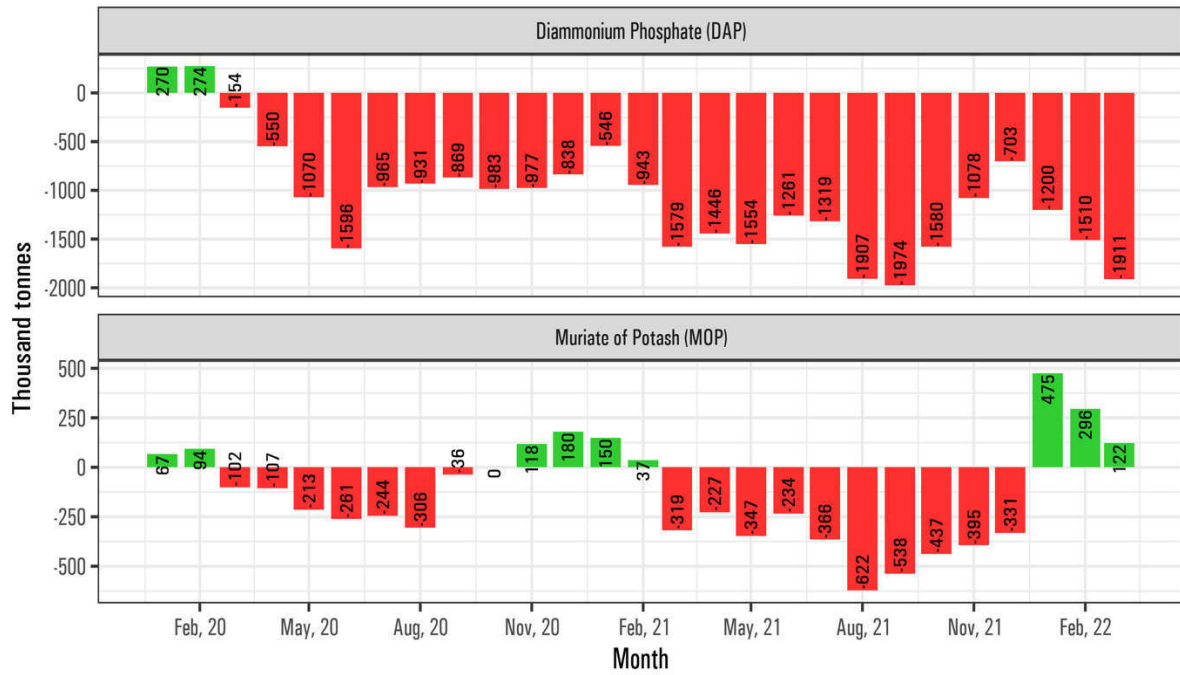
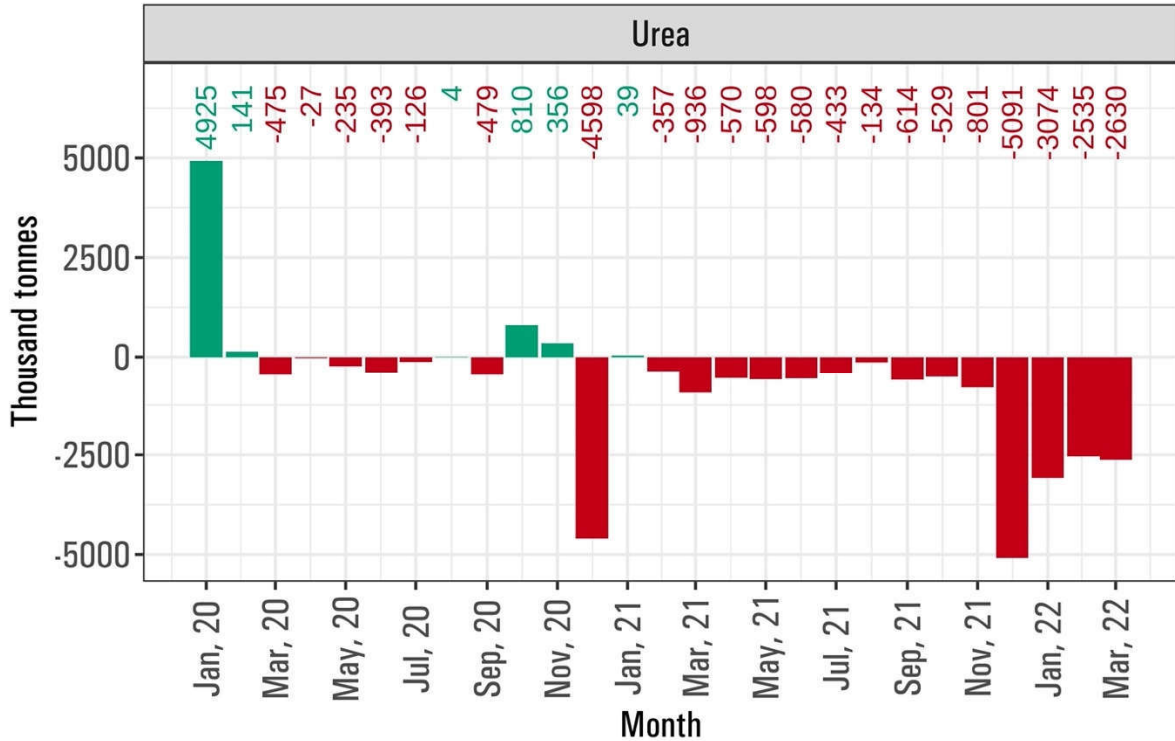


Figure 2: Shortfall in monthly availability of Urea in 2020 and 2021 in comparison with the corresponding month in 2019 (thousand metric tonnes)



A Memoir of Francesca Gargallo Celentani: Internationalist Autonomous-Feminist

Agustina Fornero¹ and Sandra Escutia Díaz²

Who was Francesca Gargallo? Why did the congress of Mexico give her a minute of applause? Why did her name become a *Trending Topic* in unusual places for feminists, writers or poets? Her name was remembered and mentioned in practically all of the countries of “NuestraAmerica” [Our America] -as José Martí called Latin America - or Abya Yala -as she herself took up from the Kuna indigenous people.

Francesca Gargallo [1956-2022], of Sicilian origin, graduated in Philosophy from the University of Rome La Sapienza, and came to Mexico in 1979 to study at the National Autonomous University of Mexico for a PhD in Latin American Studies. Here praxis took her over, becoming part of different autonomous-feminist political groups, with indigenous women from popular organizations and sexual dissidence.

Her thought was born from inhabiting the struggles of women with the body. As she said: “*Where there is a privilege, there is a denied right and, therefore, one thing and another cannot coexist*”. On her critique to colonialism and imperialism, as well as the exercises of power that created more privileges and inequalities, was part of international solidarity with the El Salvador and Nicaragua people in her early years. Later she committed herself to other Central American political processes, as well as opposition against the dictatorships of the Southern Cone, all in coordination with other

feminists movements. She was linked to the recognition of the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, and would do the same with the Palestinian and Kurdish people's struggle in the 1980. She accompanied all these struggles reflecting from a feminist ethics and politics. She collaborated in women's self-awareness groups, and during the 1990s consolidated herself in autonomous-feminism within the “Encuentros Feministas de América Latina y el Caribe (EFLAC)”, warning about the political risks of the institutionalization and NGOization of the movement.

Francesca was a tireless traveler, from Mexico to all over NuestraAmerica, but also visiting parts of Asia and Africa. As she said: “*The street belongs to whoever walks it, borders are killers*”. Condensing in this statement much of her life trajectory, where she knew how to intertwine her intellectual and literary production with her walk-in-the-world. The phrase goes beyond a metaphor, they are words consistent with the work of this NuestraAmerica or Abya Yala philosophe. She settled in Mexico City, in recent years in an old house in the Santa María la Ribera neighborhood, called “La Verde Morada”, which became a common place for political encounters and collective works. She believed in the politic spirit of choose your family.

Francesca wrote from an internationalist, autonomous, critical feminism with a great capacity for listening

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and dialogue. Her extensive body of workⁱ, integrate novelsⁱⁱ, poetryⁱⁱⁱ, short and child's stories^{iv}, feminist philosophy and aesthetics theory^v. In all of this she always considers two articulated dimensions that acquire particular relevance: “narrative reason” and feminism. These dimensions allow us to look at the epistemological and political contributions in her texts. She captures the importance of narrative as a relational resource that allows us to contrast, or “read against the grain”, as Benjamin say. In this regard Gargallo points out:

“I consider it very positive that the history of women, which has developed from the political affirmation of women in the 20th century, mixes narrative history with comparative and reflective histories, taking advantage of anthropology, linguistics, sociology. In philosophy, feminist political theory seeks the connection between the practical action of its militants and the ideas derived from it in the narration of a fundamental fact: how ideas are generated from a dialogue and how feminists build the spaces to make this dialogue possible, a fact that has accompanied a century of history of feminism.”^{vi}

Francesca displays in her texts, through this “narrative reason”, contributions in all the aforementioned areas. At the same time, this commitment to a post-disciplinary critique were based on a feminist approach,

"which is an ethic, because it does not leave out of its reasoning any element of the human. Is a different civilizational proposal, a transformation of all the relationships that the human being is capable of producing. (...) Ethics is the process of building a relationship of respect between my way of being and those of others, between me and the nature of which I am a part, which starts

from the awareness that there are no equal norms in inequality.”^{vii}

As for contributions on feminism and liberation, there are three works to highlight. The first is “Las ideas Feministas Latinoamericanas” [Latin-American Feminist Ideas] (2004) in which she critically observes the “gender perspective” movement that, since the 1990s, has gained ground in various institutions. There she talks about the feminist utopia in Latin America and wonder about non-Western feminisms. Between the first and second editions of this book there are one hundred more pages of work, derived from debates, contributions and critics that she received from lesbo-feminists and women from indigenous communities. In her critical reading of the Western feminist movement, Francesca urges to assume that feminism must be anti-racist if it intends to dialogue with indigenous and black women. Secondly we have the diverse and comprehensive collective work of two volumes “Antología del Pensamiento Feminista Nuestroamericano” [Anthology of OurAmerica Feminist Thought] (2015), which she coordinated and, although it is not published yet, she made available online.^{viii} Finally, her best-known publication “Feminismos desde el Abya Yala: ideas y proposiciones de las mujeres de 607 pueblos en nuestra América” [Feminisms from Abya Yala: ideas and propositions of the women of 607 villages in OurAmerica] (2012)^{ix}, a fundamental contribution of Latin American critical thought. In this peace theoretical, methodological and epistemic discussions are proposed to rethinking feminisms, racism and modernity. As she herself defined it, this book is the beginning of listening to the non-Western ideas produced by the feminists of the Abya Yala people, with the aim of advancing towards the decolonization and

depatriarchalization of Latin American societies. It is a polyphonic work that embodies dialogue as a social research methodology, as a way of knowing the world. A “*dialogue that comes from two practices: self-awareness and assembly. Two political practices.*”^x In this texts Francesca reconceptualizes feminism, understanding it as the concrete search undertaken by women for a life-with-dignity of hers other women, in dialogue with each other. A dialogue to unravel the social practices that place us women in a secondary place, with fewer rights, in relation to men.

March 3 in Mexico City the earth trembled and many of us, even without knowing each other, hug each other in the desolation of saying goodbye to Francesca Gargallo; writer, poet, narrator, mother of Helena, autonomous-feminist, philosopher, historian of ideas, friend, teacher. For us it is still difficult to use the past as a verbal tense to describe her. Our teacher became a flag of struggle in the streets of this last 8M. We know that it is a political act to admit to admire other women, so here we are, together, sharing our admiration for an autonomous, internationalist, irreverent and uncomfortable feminist, for this capitalist, colonialist and patriarchal world.

Her work transcends borders. Is an invitation to think from all places in the

Global South. From all the margins of the empire. Francesca shares with us in her work the love for freedom, for other points of view of reality that are not misogynistic, giving value to the voices and steps of women, and the encounter between them, from different geographies. There are many ways to approach Francesca and get to know her - from literature, poetry or philosophy, aesthetics and the history of ideas. Her work acquires value because she thinks from her walk around the world and in dialogue. She knew that

"to think about women is to do it from bodies that have been subjected to repeated attempts at definition, subjection and control to be expelled from the rationality and converted into a machine for reproduction. It is to think from the place that bodies are, from the body-territory that resists the modern idea that women embody the animality to be defeated, the lack of self-control and a-historicity, and that with their indiscipline they have built the possibility of an alternative to the universal individual subject".^{xi}

Her thought leaves a mark on the way to continue thinking and building a fairer world. As Claudia Korol said, "*her life is an invitation to irreverence, joy, friendship between women and enjoyment.*"^{xii} May her rebellion multiply!

ⁱ Freely and openly available by herself at <https://francescagargallo.wordpress.com/>.

ⁱⁱ In his literary work the relationships between women, friendship, autonomy and freedom are present. Her novels are Days without censorship (1986); Shut up my love that I live (1990); Being in the world (1994); Spring of two sources (1994); The Captain's Choice (1997); The fishermen of the Kukulcan (1998); Dry March (1999); As days go by (2013) and Strangers on the ground floor (2015).

ⁱⁱⁱ "Itinerare" (1980); "There is a poem in the world" (1986); "As a portrait, a woman crosses the street" (1990); "The afternoon is prepared for the rain" (2010); and "If I can participate" (2020).

^{iv} As a storyteller she published: Le tre Elene (1980); Thinking with Cayetana (1996); Summer with rain (2003). Literature focused on children and young people was also part of the author's work, stories such as "The noise of music" (2005) and "The friends of the laughing and crazy coyota" (1996), the last one translated into zapotec by Mario Molina Cruz and Illustrated by Guillermo Scully. Childhood, both in her work and in the care she gave in everyday life, was very important.

^v Among her essays focused on the study of feminist and libertarian movements in Latin America, are the books *Tan derechas y tan humanas. Manual ético de derechos humanos de las mujeres* [So right and so human. Women's Human Rights Ethics Manual] (2000); *Garífuna Garínagu, Caribe: historia de una nación libertaria* [Garífuna Garínagu, Caribe: Story of a Libertarian Nation] (2002); *Las ideas feministas latinoamericanas* (2004); *Saharauis. La sonrisa del Sol* [Saharawis. The smile of the Sun] (2006); *Feminismos desde Abya Yala: ideas y proposiciones de las mujeres de 607 pueblos en nuestra América* (2012); *Revocar el silencio* [Revoke the silence] (2018); y *Las bordadoras de arte. Estéticas feministas* ; and [The art embroiderers. Feminist Aesthetics] (2020).

^{vi} Gargallo, Francesca (2003). “Intentando acercarme a una razón narrativa”. *Intersticios* 8 (19).

^{vii} Gargallo, Francesca (2004). “Ética, ética feminista y libertad”. In Ximena Bedregal (coord.), *Ética feminista. Fem-e-libros/Creatividad feminista*, City of México. [1 edition published by La Correa Feminista in 1994].

^{viii} Book 1: <https://kolectivoporoto.cl/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Gargallo-Francesca-Antolog%C3%ADa-del-Pensamiento-Feminista-Nuestroamericano-Tomo-I.pdf>; Book 2: <https://kolectivoporoto.cl/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Gargallo-Francesca-Antolog%C3%ADa-del-Pensamiento-Feminista-Nuestroamericano-Tomo-II.pdf>

^{ix} For a review of the book: Fornero, A. (2015). Review of *Feminisms from Abya Yala. Ideas and propositions of the women of 607 peoples in our America* by Francesca Gargallo. *Pelicano* (1). Available at: <http://pelicano.ucc.edu.ar/ojs/index.php/pel/article/view/24/5>

^x Cruz, G. and Fornero, A. (2020) “History of ideas in feminist dialogues. Interview with Francesca Gargallo Celentani”. *Wirapuru: Latin American Journal of Studies of Ideas* (1), pp. 120-128. Available at: <https://www.wirapuru.cl/index.php/publicaciones/2020/1er-semester>

^{xi} Gargallo Francesca (2013). *Feminismos desde Abya Yala. Ideas y proposiciones de las mujeres de 607 pueblos en nuestra América*. América Libre: Buenos Aires. Page 76.

^{xii} Korol, Claudia. “Adiós a Francesca Gargallo, una teórica feminista incómoda para la academia”. Página 12. Available in: <https://www.pagina12.com.ar/406845-adios-a-francesca-gargallo-una-teorica-feminista-incomoda-pa>.

