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Peasants Prefiguring Agroecology, Critical Pedagogy and Peasant Feminism:

A Participatory Action Research Project with the Kenyan Peasants League

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First, I want to give space to commemorate the participants who sadly passed before the end of this project.

Collins Omondi, a fisherman, gave his life trying to save a drowning child in 2020.

Millicent Jonyo, a strong peasant feminist, tragically died due to complications of childbirth in 2021. Millicent leaves behind her husband Kennedy and their four children. Kennedy wrote the following in her memory:

Millicent was a strong wife and a pillar to my house since we got married in 2006, she has been supporting me in various ways. I now realize that women must be respected (viva to all women). Even though she departed spiritually we are one 💗😭🙏

Dick Olela, one of the founders of the KPL and the national convener of the KPL, passed away after a short illness in March 2023. Dick leaves behind his wife Evelyn and their four children.

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I dedicate this work to Abed, Collins, Dick and Millicent and all others who have lost their lives while fighting for food sovereignty, peasants' rights, and their right to exist.

Content

1. Introduction

Climate change is one of the biggest crises facing us today, and it is disproportionately affecting rural communities in the global south. However, the voices of those most affected are rarely heard, even though they also are the ones who have been fighting for political and social changes for a long time and who have been prefiguring practical solutions. This project aims to change that, by highlighting the political theories of one such movement – the Kenyan Peasants League. Moreover, in terms of climate change research, we have an obligation of not only researching the causes of the problem, but also the proposed solutions, from a political and sociological perspective. In other words, we need to take the contributions of social movements seriously. In this thesis I share what the Kenyan Peasants League has taught me about their theory and practice of agroecology, peasant feminism, peasant pedagogy and prefiguration. Consequently, this is a multidisciplinary project as the KPL is a movement whose activities span at least four different literatures. In this thesis I show how the theory of the Kenyan Peasants League adds valuable contributions to the literature on agroecology and teaching, the literature on scaling agroecology, and to the literature on social movements and prefiguration.

This project proposes to look deeper into the knowledge and theory created by social movements. This is a theory that is created through the discussions, the activism, the projects, the campaigns and the organization of a social movement, or their *cognitive praxis* (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991). This view of theory is first, based on the assumption that while some social movements use prefiguration as a strategy – prefiguration is understood as *both* the morally right and the strategically right approach if their goals are to be achieved (Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 13–15) – *all* social movements prefigure certain ways of life through their cognitive praxis. Second, this notion of *theory* is based on a decolonial approach to theory that refutes the dichotomy between mind and body – both insisting that we think with and through our bodily experiences, and that theory creation is a fundamental human praxis. Since the enlightenment westernized[1] science has been based on an assumed dichotomy between mind and matter, and below I demonstrate that this is the reason that not just social movement scholarship, but academia as such has taken so long to recognize theory and knowledge produced through lived experience or produced collectively (Berger & Kellner, 1981, pp. 25–26; hooks, 1994, pp. 16–17; Mies, 2014, pp. 38–40; Shiva, 2014c, pp. 25–28; Steager, 2013, p. 174).

This project started with an interest in how food sovereignty movements theorize food sovereignty, which led me to La Via Campesina (LVC), which coined the term, and to the Kenyan Peasants League (KPL), one of the newer members of LVC which sprang from the movements focus on expanding on the African

[1] Westernized is used as a supplement to "global north" or "Western" to highlight that this is a practice rather than solely a place (Cox et al., 2017, pp. 14–15). Moreover, westernized academia not only ignores the vast history of the global south, but also the indigenous and subaltern groups using prefigurative strategies within the geographical global north.

continent. While there is a vast amount of research on LVC movements, there is less work on LVC in Africa, as most of the African LVC movements are quite young.

Food sovereignty was coined by LVC in a World Food Summit in 1996, as a more holistic counter narrative to food security (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 532; Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 7–8; Desmarais, 2007, pp. 34–36; Sandoval & Wathne, 2022). Food sovereignty is most recently defined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), where article 15.4 defines the right to food sovereignty;

> "4. Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to determine their own food and agriculture systems, recognized by many States and regions as the right to food sovereignty. This includes the right to participate in decision-making processes on food and agriculture policy and the right to healthy and adequate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods that respect their cultures." (UN, 2018, p. 10)

LVC was instrumental in getting the UNDROP written and passed in 2018. While food sovereignty was the original motivating concept for this thesis, it quickly became clear that what was interesting for the KPL members was not so much the concept of food sovereignty, but the actual practices that led them closer to creating a sustainable, democratic and culturally appropriate food system. This is why the focus shifted to teaching, scaling and prefiguring *agroecology* which, in its broader definition, is about creating food sovereign food systems. Moreover, during the collaboration with the KPL it became clear that only focusing on the movements conceptualization of *one* concept is extremely limited, and I realized that I was being taught the several political theories that were binding the knowledge of the KPL together, and not just *one* overarching theory. For example, for the KPL members, their prefiguration of peasant feminism was inextricably linked to their prefiguration of agroecology, which was linked to their peasant pedagogy, and so on. These connections are also explicitly acknowledged in the KPL's intersectional peasant feminist analysis of the patriarchal neo-agro colonial economy and how it affects the small-scale subsistence peasant farmer in the global south, which is the class position of most of the KPL members.

There are three overarching and tightly connected aims of this project: First, to document the knowledge of the KPL and co-create teaching materials that are useful for the KPL. Second, and in line with the first, to co-create more knowledge about peasant movements from the global south within social movement scholarship as they are specifically wildly underrepresented, and social movements from the African continent are in general underrepresented across literatures. And third, to take this particular movement, and all movements in general, serious as knowledge and theory creators. This has been an iterative project, which has been shaped by the interaction between the KPL and me. Focusing on documenting the knowledge being taught within the KPL of course led to a focus on teaching within the movement. Next, these discussions often led people to discuss how they use teaching to scale agroecology, both scale out, or expand the movement, and scale deep by having members internalize values. Both scaling out and scaling deep are crucial questions in

the literature and society as agroecology can help mitigating climate change (C. Anderson et al., 2020; Gliessman, 2018b; Mier y Terán et al., 2018). This in turn led me to see the connections between teaching, scaling and the prefiguration of agroecology and peasant feminism within the movement and how it tied it all together. Consequently, these three overarching themes led me to the following research questions which will guide you, the reader, through this thesis:

- How does the Kenyan Peasants League teach, and what is their theory of pedagogy?
- What is the Kenyan Peasants League approach to scaling agroecology?
- How does the Kenyan Peasants Leagues's context affect their theory of prefiguration?

This project is based on a constructivist decolonial feminist approach to science, therefore, knowledge is seen as co-created between subjects, which means that the researcher will always impact the research, and must be aware of her own embodied presence (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 58–59).

For many years, social movement research – as many other disciplines – has been shaped by a desire to be taken seriously by mainstream political science and sociology, and part of that has entailed challenging previous notions of social movements as unthinking, irrational, outbursts of social pathologies. This has moved the focus away from the normative side of social movements, and resulted in a focus on how social movements are rational strategic actors that can have positive, as well as negative, effects on society (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 12–13; Walder, 2009, pp. 398–400). This, of course, has been expanded by the cultural turn, which tempered the notion of what it means to be a *rational* actor by bringing emotions back into the study of social movements, however, the overall focus remained on organization and mobilization (Jasper & Polletta, 2019, pp. 63–64; Walder, 2009, pp. 394, 403–404). These developments within the now prominent field of social movements have been crucial in broadening the notion of what social movements are, and has highlighted the work, care and thought that goes into creating and maintaining social movements. However, if we are truly to take them seriously, we need to understand all the aspects of social movements and the content of their alternatives and proposed alternatives, as we do with other political actors.

Social movement scholars agree that social movements create an ideal space for experimenting with for example alternative forms of democratic participation and political community structures (della Porta, 2013, p. 43; della Porta & Pavan, 2017; della Porta & Rucht, 2013, pp. 3–4), however, we tend to focus more on the mechanisms than the content of the alternatives. And this is especially true for movements in the global south, and even more so for rural movements in the global south, with a few notable and world-famous exceptions – the MST or the Zapatistas comes to mind.

Social movements are at their core moral actors: Social movements are either trying to create change or prevent change from happening, based on a shared *normative*, or moral, perspective on these changes (della

Porta, 2013; della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 240–241). In social movements, both actions and discussions of how and why to act are integral to their existence, and it is in this metacritique of society that we see within both their discourses and their actions *is* theory, *political theory*. They are not only analysing their societal context, they are also proposing how it should change or avoid change, redefining concepts and creating new knowledge (della Porta & Diani, 2006; della Porta & Pavan, 2017; Hardt & Negri, 2017, pp. 20–21; Milan, 2014, p. 448; P. Rosset, 2020, pp. 50–51; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 15–18; Wright, 2010, pp. 26–29). This political theory is their *practical* moral compass, or their roadmap. However, the research into the concepts, proposals or knowledge of social movements often focus on the how, when and who of knowledge and theory diffusion, and rarely do we as social movements scholars focus on the content of that knowledge and theory. As social movement scholars we are missing a huge part of social movements when we do not look further into the *what* of what social movements are creating.

Studying the movements of racialized and indigenous peoples challenges us to move academia away from its colonial roots which necessitates a epistemological and structural change to the role of the researcher and knowledge production itself, in order to create epistemic justice (Smith, 2012, pp. 201–202). Western academic research was built upon the colonial project and has historically profited from the suffering of colonized peoples everywhere by both dehumanizing, silencing and appropriating their voices and experiences (Bhambra, 2007, p. 22; Hasan-Bounds et al., 2020, pp. 81–82; Smith, 2012, pp. 69–73; Thiong'o, 2012, pp. 32–33; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, p. 17). Throughout this project I have also been learning by doing, in terms of how to change my approach to research, and how to approach the KPL members as colleagues rather than subjects, through an iterative participatory action research project. Furthermore, the *feminist* part of the approach, does not imply a singular focus on women or gender, rather it implies a self-critical focus on the inherent power relations of qualitative research whether that is exemplified through gender, class, race, physical disabilities etc. Such self-critique is vital both to the decolonial and feminist outset and goal of this project. Moreover, a feminist approach is explicitly concerned with the portrayal of the participants and how it reproduces certain power relations within a particular historical context, which goes hand in hand with a PAR approach (Smith, 2012, pp. 138–139). Saturnino M. Borras Jr. highlights how we can either read the work of social movements from a glass half empty or a glass half full approach, where the first is focusing only on the problems while the latter focuses on the *gains and breakthroughs of a movement* without ignoring the struggles and inconsistencies (Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 19–21).

Consequently, in this thesis I take the position of a political theorist interacting with the work of theorists that I believe more people should engage with, by explaining their work and situating them in the literatures they speak to (Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 16–17, 45–47). The only difference is that I am doing this with the theoretical work of activist and not academics.

Explaining the difference between theory made by academics, and theory made by activists I think a great analogy is cooking, which is also appropriate for the topics discussed in this thesis. While professional chefs have the time, the resources, and often the training, to make better food than many of us, everyone has the ability to cook if they spend enough time and energy trying. We probably all have people in our lives, who are not professional chefs, but who cook more delicious food in their home than we have ever encountered in a restaurant. And most of us have probably also been to restaurants where the food was terrible. The same goes for theory – academics are trained to theorize and have the time and recourses to really make a great finished product, but that does not mean it is always good or useful. While activists often do not have the time to sit back and theorize, because they are not paid to do so, that does not mean that they cannot do it or that all their theories are bad. My point of this analogy is that we are missing so many delicious meals when we only limit ourselves to looking at theory made by academics, especially when it comes to theory that is meant to speak to the work of activists (Bevington & Dixon, 2005; Cox et al., 2017, pp. 1–3; Cox, 2019; P. Rosset, 2020, p. 50; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 15–18). Moreover, theory, just as food, hits differently depending on the context it is made in and the context in which we encounter it. And when food is only cooked by the same people, with the same ingredients it is hard to bring to life the huge abundance of diversity of food. For example, while much of western academia is struggling with the concept of the Anthropocene and the ontological turn, the knowledge that life – both human and more-than-human life[2] – is interconnected has been held by indigenous and racialized peoples, and discussed with great nuance for a long time (Alonso, 2008, pp. 264–265; Smith, 2012, pp. 16–17; Todd, 2015, pp. 244–249, 2016, pp. 7–8). And we have been missing these lessons, and these theoretical meals in academia for far too long. Instead of appropriating these ideas, it is important to engage seriously and directly with the organizations and movements led by indigenous and racialized peoples as colleagues not as subjects to be studied (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 453–458; Todd, 2015, pp. 249–250; Val et al., 2019).

Fortunately, there is a growing literature within social movement scholarship focusing on social movements as knowledge and theory creators in their own right, and I aim to add to this growing literature (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008; Choudry, 2009; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Cox, 2019; Cox & Fominaya, 2009; Daro, 2009; della Porta & Pavan, 2017; B. L. Hall, 2009; Lysack, 2009; Niesz et al., 2018; Niesz, 2019; Teasley & Butler, 2020). However, literature on social movements and knowledge creation have existed even longer within the literature on adult, or popular, education and, both directly and indirectly, in the literature on decolonial critiques of westernized epistemologies (Cox et al., 2017; Cox, 2019; Foley, 1999; B. L. Hall, 2009; Niesz et al., 2018; Teasley & Butler, 2020). Often this work ends up falling between the cracks of

[2] More-than-human life is a term I borrow from indigenous feminist scholar Zoe Todd (Todd, 2017). More-than-human life is a more specific way of referring to what we often call “nature”, while the term also avoids the pitfall of separating humans from nature. In this way, referring to more-than-human life is a way of challenging the Cartesian mind and body split while also being more precise.

disciplines and not sticking in the mainstream social movement discussions, and in the following I extrapolate the lessons on pedagogy, scaling and prefiguration that each of these four literatures contribute.

An interdisciplinary literature review

As mentioned above, research into the concepts, proposals or knowledge of social movements often focus on the how, when and who of knowledge and theory diffusion, and rarely do we as social movements scholars focus on the content of what is created. While we need to understand the mechanics of social movements to understand the knowledge and theories created, to truly take social movements seriously, we need to also engage with their values, with their ideas, with their strategy: we need to recognize their political theory as valuable (P. Rosset, 2020, pp. 50–51). This project aims to engage critically with the different and intersecting political theories created by the KPL, through a Participatory Action Research (PAR) project that intends to create teaching materials based on the knowledge and theory held by the KPL.

There is a growing literature on social movements as knowledge creators within the literature on social movements, while these thoughts have existed for longer in the other literatures touched on here. The aim of this literature review is not as much to show a gap in every single of these four literatures, as it is to show the overlaps between them and show how this project can help bridge these four literatures. The main contribution to this literature is the addition of a movement that is not an urban middle-class movement in the global north, as the KPL is a rural movement in the global South mainly consisting of low-income subsistence farmers. Moreover, being an interdisciplinary project, I am trying to position the thesis within several fields.

So, this thesis is based on decolonial thought, the literature on adult and popular education, the literature on agroecology, and the literature on social movements and prefiguration. This thesis highlights how these fields and literatures overlap and speak to one another. An example of the growing importance of these questions, is the first issue of the journal "*Interface: A Journal for and About Social Movements*", which had social movements creating knowledge and theory as the theme (Cox & Fominaya, 2009). In the introductory article, Cox and Fominaya assert that social movements create knowledge and theory through their praxis and that we need to stop assuming knowledge comes from "above", and instead look at *knowledge from below* (Cox, 2019, p. 13; Cox & Fominaya, 2009, p. 6). While much of this work is unfortunately not generally referenced by social movement scholars, there are some overlaps. Focusing on the knowledge creation within social movements, the authors that seem to be highly influential, particularly for those using social movement theory, are Griff Foley (Choudry, 2009, pp. 6–8; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, pp. 3–5; B. L. Hall, 2009, p. 72; Niesz et al., 2018, pp. 13–14; Novelli, 2010, p. 124) and Ron Eyerman & Andrew Jamison (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, pp. 46–47; Cox & Fominaya, 2009, p. 5; B. L. Hall, 2009, pp. 71–72; Niesz et al., 2018, pp. 2–3). Looking across fields Antonio Gramsci and Paulo Friere's pedagogical theories seem to resonate with almost all (Niesz et al., 2018, p. 24).

Moreover, as mentioned literature on social movements as knowledge and theory creators has existed within the literature on adult, or popular, education and, both directly and indirectly, in the literature on decolonial critiques of westernized epistemologies for a long time. Consequently, both the adult education and decolonial literatures are relevant to this project as they are relevant to the KPL's work, also because the movement exists and resists in a neo-colonial context, and the aim of this project is also to create teaching materials for adult or popular education. I briefly outline these different literatures, and their view on knowledge and theory creation within social movements.

Decolonial Scholarship

Decolonial thought is not one streamlined field or literature, but to simplify it, I am basing my understanding on the following strands: the Modernity/Coloniality approach that came out of interdisciplinary work in Latin America (Escobar & Pardo, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2018; Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018; Mignolo, 2011, 2017; Quijano, 2000), literature of indigenous scholars (Smith, 2012; Tallbear, 2014; Todd, 2015; Tuck, 2009; Tuck & Yang, 2012), feminist and ecofeminist thinkers (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992; hooks, 1991; Maathai, 2010; Mies & Shiva, 2014; Shiva, 2016) and decolonial scholars from Africa or in the African diaspora (Mbembe, 2015; Mkabela, 2005; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013; Thiong'o, 2012; White, 2018). Of course, these distinctions are mainly heuristic as many of these scholars fall into more than one category. It is a deliberate choice to centre decolonial and eco feminist theories, and scholars from the African continent and diaspora, that also address climate change and industrial agriculture, to once again show the importance of the context from which theories are made.

Decolonial literature centres on epistemologies and knowledge, both on how situated knowledges have been and are silenced or erased through epistemicides[3], and also on reclaiming those lost knowledges (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992; Grosfoguel, 2013; Shiva, 2014c; Smith, 2012). Grosfuguel outlines how four genocides - the colonization of the Americas, the enslavement and trade of black Africans, the conquest of Al-Andalus and the European, so called, witch trials – all led to epistemicides that fundamentally shaped westernized epistemology (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 76–78, 86–87). One of the central assumption of westernized modernity

[3] As epistemicide is a central concept in this thesis, Boaventura de Sousa Santos' work previously had a more central role in this thesis as he coined the term. In 2023 multiple allegations of sexual and moral harassment against Santos became public, which has led the Centre for Social Studies (CES) at the University of Coimbra to suspend all of Santos' academic positions and activities while they investigate the allegations (Constenla, 2023). I have decided to follow the lead of CES and refrain from using Santos' work in my work. I will only keep the term of epistemicide in this thesis, which I then refer to using secondary literature. Citation is the ways careers are built in academia, and I do not feel that it is appropriate that this decolonial feminist thesis, which covers a movement that fights violence against women, supports the career of an alleged serial abuser who is under investigation. Citational practices are inherently political (Ahmed, 2017, pp. 14–17, 148–153), and this is how I have chosen to engage in feminist citation. I do not claim to have a universal answer on how to handle these situations, or that I know for sure that this is the right way to handle this situation, but doing nothing was not an option. As Ahmed writes "*I think of feminism as a building project: if our texts are worlds, they need to be made out of feminist materials.*[…] *To be a feminist at work is or should be about how we challenge ordinary and everyday sexism, including academic sexism. This is not optional: it is what makes feminism feminist.*" (Ahmed, 2017, p. 14).

is that history is linear progression towards enlightenment which positions the erased and silenced knowledges of the colonized as backwards. Decolonial thought, consequently also challenges this very simplistic view of history and complicates the dichotomy between "progressive" and "traditional" (Bhambra, 2007, pp. 30–31; Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 5–6; Copeland, 2021, pp. 455–456). Westernized epistemologies are, thereby, very dichomatic, universalistic way of understanding knowledge best known in its classic positivist form. In its critique of the universalistic Cartesian or Kantian view of science, decolonial thought intersects with and is informed by feminist scholarship and its critique of this dichomatic universalist view of knowledge and the search for objectivity.

Inherent to feminist scholarship is a critique of patriarchal knowledge hierarchies, which have excluded knowledge traditionally held by women as too partial and as having little value or importance. Feminist scholarship often insists on rejecting ideals of "objectivity" and "distance" recognizing how all knowledge is situated and contextual (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, p. 96; Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992, pp. 217–221; Smith, 2012, pp. 138–139). This critique is deepened by the many more intersectional forms of feminism such as indigenous, decolonial and black feminists who also include questions of colonization, class, racialization, sexuality and other factors in their analysis of gendered oppression (Arvin et al., 2013, pp. 9–11, 14–18; hooks, 1994, pp. 111–116, 120–124; Shiva, 2014c, pp. 25–26; Smith, 2012, pp. 168–173; Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 20–21). Through these interventions decolonial thought takes a more holistic view on society Arvin et al., reference the famous quote from the black feminist poet Audre Lorde (Arvin et al., 2013, pp. 17–18): "*There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives. Malcolm knew this. Martin Luther King, Jr. knew this. Our struggles are particular, but we are not alone*." (Lorde, 2007, p. 138). In this Lorde is beautifully describing the intersectional approach by highlighting how it is a refusal to ignore the actual complexities of life by compartmentalizing gender struggles into one movement and anti-racist struggles into another (Arvin et al., 2013, p. 18). Moreover, she highlights the importance of context since our *struggles are particular*, while also insisting that this does not separate us from one another. It is a contextual, holistic approach to the world which recognizes that we are all connected in our particular struggles.

The focus of decolonial thought is work happening in the global south, or the part of the world that has been colonized. Here I just want to note that I understand that both *north* and *south* are not solely referring to geographical space, but rather distinguishing between spaces that face (neo)colonial repression and spaces that enact or benefit from this repression. While there are large areas facing such repression in the southern part of the globe, there are also areas of the global north within the geographical south, and areas of the global south within the geographical north. Cox et al. talks of *the south within the north* and *the north within the south*:

> "Empire and colonialism, slavery and diaspora, ethnic and racial domination and the oppression of indigenous and nomad populations, then, are relationships writ large across the world. If they mark

> out a global South and global North, they also mark out a "South within the North" and a "North within the South", or more exactly many different Souths within Northern states, and a variety of Norths within Southern ones." (Cox et al., 2017, p. 15)

Once again, context is key and it is important to understand the different power dynamics at play and the different nuances within a context regardless of whether it is in the geographical north or south.

Instead of the universalizing westernized approach to knowledge, decolonial thought proposes a humble pluriversal approach to knowledge. Knowledge is viewed as relational and communal, moving it away from a notion that knowledge comes from the isolated minds of individual geniuses, and, thereby, moving away from the Cartesian mind-body dichotomy, trying to create more democratic approaches to knowledge (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Cox et al., 2017; Grosfoguel, 2013; hooks, 1994; Maldonado-Torres, 2006; Mbembe, 2015; Niesz, 2019; Openjuru et al., 2015; Shiva, 2016). Such a democratic approach to knowledge is both important in terms of creating epistemic justice and social justice as the two are closely connected. Knowledge is power, and epistemic injustice and epistemicide affects how the people holding that knowledge is treated as we have seen for example with the close link between westernized science and colonization (Bhambra, 2007, p. 22; Cox et al., 2017, p. 11; Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 86–89; Hasan-Bounds et al., 2020, pp. 81–82; Smith, 2012, pp. 69–73; Thiong'o, 2012, pp. 32–33; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, p. 17).

Often the decolonial approaches to social movements are on the margins of social movement scholarship, and it does not always engage directly with social movement literature, instead it more often intersects with literature on adult or popular education and participatory or community focused research approaches, and Griff Foley and Paulo Freire are mentioned quite often. A guess as to why these connections are more prevalent, could be that these literatures are rooted in activism and/or movements, and that both have roots on the South American continent. Moreover, often the scholarship on adult and popular education is directly inspired by decolonial scholars and/or activists, or in the case of bell hooks she represents all of the above (Fals Borda, 1999; Freire, 2000; hooks, 1991, 1994, 2015; Horton & Freire, 1990). For example, the anthology "Learning from the Ground Up" (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010) focuses less on assimilating the knowledge and theories of social movements within academia, and more on engaging with what is being created by the movements and communities that the authors work with.

Case studies, such as this project, can often be a bridge between the decolonial perspectives and social movement theory, especially when it takes place outside of the usual contexts (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008; Teasley & Butler, 2020). Based on the work of decolonial scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith's, Choudry and Kapoor "[…]*caution against uncritically applying and overextending theories and concepts developed in Western contexts to third world and Indigenous communities, for example*." (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, pp. 2–3). It is therefore, not always given that academic social movement theories – who are almost exclusively based on studies of westernized, middle-class, urban movements – are relevant for specific case studies, even

though I believe that this literature is relevant for this particular project. Decolonizing our social movement theories, thereby, requires both new theories and not requiring that all social movement scholars apply what are considered classics to be considered part of the field.

Educational scholarship

Niesz, Korora, Walkuski and Foot (Niesz et al., 2018), conducted a review of educational scholarship that focuses on social movements, and gives a great introduction to the field. Niesz et al, point to their limitations in terms of only going through English language texts, and my review is similarly limited, which is not an insignificant limitation as much of the literature is from Latin America (Niesz et al., 2018, p. 5). They selected articles from 370 different publications from 1988-2012 and found that the literature produced by adult education scholars and social movement scholars rarely interact. Moreover, within the general scholarship on education, adult education scholars are the ones who focus the most on social movements, as adult education efforts have often been led by social movements and even the creation of the field is attributed to social movements (Niesz et al., 2018, pp. 8, 11–13). Niesz et al., point to two main focuses within the literature; one a focus on how learning takes place *within* social movements, and second, a focus on how social movements influence *educational systems* (Niesz et al., 2018, pp. 14–21). While the latter is important and speaks to classic social movement outcomes that might be overlooked, I will not focus on this strand of the literature, as the focus of this project is on the knowledge creation that happens within social movements, and what this means epistemologically for the research process. Therefore, I focus on the literature on learning within social movements and how learning and education ties into activism.

For Gramsci, Freire and Fals Borda education and knowledge are very much tied to revolutionary struggles and movements, and both believe that education can either maintain or challenge hegemony and oppression, or that education is inherently political (Freire, 2000; Kirylo, 2013; Mayo, 2014; Rodriguez & Smith, 2013; Teasley & Butler, 2020). Freire's seminal book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", has influenced countless movements and adult and popular education initiatives (Kirylo, 2013; Teasley & Butler, 2020). Freire describes two opposing models of teaching: A banking model and a dialogical, problem-posing model (Freire, 2000, pp. 72–85; Teasley & Butler, 2020, p. 11). The banking model is the dominant pedagogy in institutionalized formal education, and it both dehumanizes the students by seeing them as empty, uncritical vessels that knowledge can be deposited in, and upholds oppression by teaching the oppressed how to best submit to their oppressors (Freire, 2000, pp. 72–77). Through his pedagogy, Freire also highlights the complexities of oppression; the oppressed might actually fear their freedom because they have internalized the values of their oppressors. At the same time the oppressor is also being dehumanized by through their acts of oppression, and that is why only the oppressed will be able to break this cycle, by reclaiming their humanity (Freire, 2000, pp. 44–49). The pedagogy of the oppressed, therefore, "[…]must be forged *with* and not *for*, the oppressed (whether individuals or peoples) in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity."

(Freire, 2000, p. 48). And the dialogical and problem-posing model is aimed at exactly that – to dissolve the hard separation between teacher and student and engage everyone in critical dialogue, through a focus on specific problems, in an reflexive collaborative process (Freire, 2000, pp. 79–82). This process is a method which Freire calls conscientizaçáo, or a raising of critical consciousness, which cannot be given, but must be reached through collaboration and dialogue, affirming the humanity and agency of the oppressed (Freire, 2000, pp. 35–36, 66–68, 104–105). It is unsurprising that most participatory approaches to research are often inspired by Freire and his method of conscientizaçáo. Participatory approaches to research have of course also been informed also by feminist and decolonial critiques of research, which are again related to, but not always directly visible in Freire's work (hooks, 1994, pp. 47–51; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 20–22). While Freire has been criticized for missing perspectives on gender, and that the categories of oppressor/oppressed are so abstract that they erase the violence of colonial domination (Teasley & Butler, 2020, p. 11; Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 19–20), his work is still highly influential to both academic scholarship and social movements. Bell hooks has taken the lessons of Freire and expanded them with her black feminist outlook, which emphasizes gender, racialization, class, and other ways that affect how our bodies show up in learning spaces as both students and teachers (hooks, 1982, 1991, 1994, pp. 47–51, 134–139). Following Freire, hooks insists that teaching can only be transgressive if both curriculum and pedagogy is inspired by a problem-posing approach to teaching, and she adds considerations on how to deal with the (neo)colonial silencing and violence faced by marginalized bodies in the classroom (hooks, 1994, pp. 37–35, 2015, pp. 12–14). hooks combines black feminist decolonial critiques with critical pedagogy. Moreover, in her seminal text "Theory as Liberatory Practice", hooks exactly insists that we as humans create theory and knowledge, especially through struggle (hooks, 1991), and I return to this quote again below, because it is so influential to this thesis:

> "When our lived experience of theorizing is fundamentally linked to processes of self-recovery, of collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice. Indeed, what such experience makes more evident is the bond between the two-that ultimately reciprocal process wherein one enables the other." (hooks, 1991, p. 2).

This notion of learning and creation in movement is explored deeper by Griff Foley. When it comes to learning in movement, Foley's book "Learning in Social Action: A Contribution to Understanding Informal Education" is central (Choudry, 2009; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Foley, 1999). Foley looks at how, incidental learning, informal learning and non-formal education are a big part of social movements – this is learning that happens without us noticing, when we interact with our families and communities, and when we engage in education outside classic educational institutions, respectively (Foley, 1999, pp. 6–7). According to Foley, it is important to remember two things to keep in mind about these types of learning; first, informal, incidental, and non-formal learning does not only happen within social movements, but rather learning is inherent to all of social life, and second, all learning is not necessarily emancipatory. Like Freire

he believes education and learning can both be a source of disciplining people and a source of collective liberation through conscientizaçáo, depending on how it is utilized:

> "As we have seen in previous chapters, the notion of contestation can be linked to the observation that all social life has a learning dimension. That learning can be emancipatory, producing recognition, 'critical consciousness', a movement towards more equitable and just social relationship. Or the learning can be dominative, reproducing oppressive and exploitative relationships and ideologies. In most actual social situations there is probably a mixture of critical and reproductive learning. A vital analytical task for 'radical' adult educators is to sift the recognition from the reproduction. This requires an examination of the concrete situations." (Foley, 1999, pp. 74–75)

This learning dimension inherent to social life, is even more present within social movements where these interactions can be more intense than in everyday life. This learning in movements does not happen on its own, and is not necessarily positive or easy, even though conflicts are very educational according to Foley (Foley, 1999, pp. 48–51, 56–61). So, while all learning is not necessarily emancipatory, emancipatory learning is not necessarily pleasant, as it can be conflictual and uncomfortable to engage in consciousness raising. Foley argues that there is much to be gained for both activists and scholars by focusing more on this *learning in the struggle* as he shows how movements are often more successful when they are more mindful of supporting these learning opportunities (Foley, 1999, pp. 39–45, 133–137).

Some of this learning is about learning specific skills, but a large part of it is about the activists learning that they can change the world, that their actions matter (Foley, 1999, pp. 20–25, 63–65). Foley talks about how being in movements one of the main things you learn is that your actions matter: "*This is learning that enables people to make sense of, and act on, their environment, and to come to understand themselves as knowledge-creating, acting beings.*" (Foley, 1999, p. 64). Learning that your voice matters through activism, thereby, being more motivated to be more active, is a positive self-reinforcing cycle[4]. This quote also encompasses the perspective of analysing the world together and being able to explain why it looks the way it looks, or social movement activists theorizing and creating knowledge together. Here, I believe that Foley is an excellent bridge between the educational literature and the social movements literature, as his work shows how learning is crucial in all social movements, and how learning in social movements is inherently linked to knowledge creation in social movements.

There is however, a scholarship that combines the decolonial critique of a Cartesian approach to knowledge, the literature on adult and popular education and peasant feminist approaches to agriculture, it is important to cover before turning to the academic social movement literature (Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2014):
Literature on agroecology. Today the most used label is agroecology, which is just the latest name for peasant centred sustainable agriculture, and agroecology is itself a contested concept.

[4] This of course depends on some kind of impact being seen or felt by the activists, which also explains why defeats can become negative self-reinforcing cycles.

Agroecology, teaching and epistemology

Agroecology is often defined as a practice, as a research field and as a movement seeking social change (Gliessman, 2018a, p. 600; McCune & Rosset, 2021, pp. 438–443; Nicol, 2020, pp. 1–2). In its thinnest definition, agroecology is simply a set of principles for ecological and sustainable farming (Bruil et al., 2019, p. 3). However, for many farmers and movements, such as the KPL and LVC, such interpretations are seen as appropriations that are wilfully erasing the political strength of agroecology by removing the focus on a democratization of knowledge and ownership, the focus on the agency of farmers and their local knowledge, and a post-Cartesian approach to the world that does not believe in one-size-fits-all solutions (Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 8–10; McCune & Rosset, 2021, p. 446; Val et al., 2019, pp. 7–8). And it is this later interpretation of agroecology that also informs these movements' view on valuable knowledge and knowledge creation as something not reserved for academics, as farmers (with and without academic degrees) are contributing to the literature alongside academic researchers (Ferrando et al., 2019; LVC, 2017a; Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2014; P. Rosset, 2020; Shiva, 2016; Val et al., 2019; Yoxall, 2021). These movements often base their work towards social change on an intersectional analysis of their reality, as they are fighting multiple repressive systems, patriarchy, neo-colonialism, and capitalism. These analyses are also what gives them a more critical stance to the thinner definitions of agroecology that is seen as reproducing some of or all of these systems (Claeys et al., 2021, pp. 243–245; Nicol, 2020, pp. 2–3).

Agroecology, has been adopted by many food sovereignty and agricultural movements, and most of the literature on agroecology is, naturally, focused on the actual agricultural practices, but the literature also focuses a lot on learning processes, and on how knowledge is created, shared, and taught. Here decolonial, ecofeminist and adult education scholarships align within agroecological practice:

> "Feeding people is a knowledge question about whether we continue to think through a destructive, reductionist, mechanistic paradigm, viewing seed and soil as dead matter and mere machines to be manipulated and poisoned, or whether we think of seed and soil as living, self-organizing, self-renewing systems that can give us food without the use of chemicals and poisons. It is also a knowledge question about whether we see centuries of farming by peasants as based on knowledge, and farmers as intelligent, or whether we think of farmers as ignorant just because they may not have been to college." (Shiva, 2016, p. xx)

As Vandana Shiva highlights above, food production is very much a question of epistemic justice as the dominant industrial food production is based on a cartesian knowledge hierarchy, where indigenous and traditional knowledge is viewed as un-modern and backwards. And while prefiguration is a concept rarely used in the literature on agroecology, agroecology movements clearly prefigure both a different food production, a different knowledge production, and different organizational forms, as it is both a practice, a science, and a movement.

Two of the central teaching practices that challenge these knowledge hierarchies are: *campesino-a-campesino* (Bernal et al., 2023, pp. 2–4; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 4; P. Rosset & Martínez-Torres, 2012,

p. 17), or farmer-to-farmer exchanges (LVC, 2017a, pp. 36, 44, 50), and *diálogo de saberes*, or dialogues between different knowledges (Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2014, pp. 2–4). In the first, knowledge creation and sharing is seen as requiring practical application, and using the farm as the classroom in these farmer-to-farmer exchanges (Meek, 2014; Quiroz, 2016; P. Rosset & Martínez-Torres, 2012; Yoxall, 2021). This of course has taken place throughout history, but in its current form it was born in Chimaltenango, Guatemala, and takes it outset in Freirian pedagogy, Liberation theology and general popular teaching practices within Latin America (Bernal et al., 2023, p. 2; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 4; P. Rosset & Martínez-Torres, 2012, p. 17). Agroecology is considered a "[…]*knowledge-intensive rather than resource intensive*[…]" (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 533) way of farming, which is why learning and knowledge sharing is so central to agroecology. And in this spirit, agroecology schools and universities have been created by peasant and rural movements, sometimes consisting of decentralized workshops and in other cases being brick and mortar schools offering continual classes and certificates (Brem-Wilson & Nicholson, 2017, pp. 140–141).

The second practice, diálogo de saberes, is a method that creates dialogue between different knowledges, thereby, reframing knowledge as pluriversal rather than universal. While farmer-to-farmer exchanges speaks to larger epistemological questions it always deals with practical farm related issues, on the other hand, diálogo de saberes can relate to all kinds of knowledges and aims to re-remember erased or forgotten knowledges by focusing on what emerges through absences. Martínez-Torres and Rosset define it as:

> "A collective construction of emergent meaning based on dialog between people with different historically specific experiences, cosmovisions, and ways of knowing, particularly when faced with new collective challenges in a changing world. […] The new collective understandings, meaning and knowledges may form the basis for collective actions of resistance and construction of new processes" (Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2014, p. 4)

This very much relates to decolonial thought, as it is a decolonial analysis of how many epistemologies need to be re-remembered. Within the field of agroecology, social movements, communities, and activists are clearly considered knowledge and theory creators, as they are often highlighted as central authors in the literature. Rosset even underscores that "In terms of political theory, in terms of many rural issues, almost all of the new thinking is coming from social movements like the MST and the Zapatistas, rather than the academy." (P. Rosset, 2020, p. 50). Rosset presents diálogo de saberes as an example of how movements create knowledge and theory, supported by the work in their different schools.

Based on these non-Cartesian epistemologies participatory research, with or without academic researchers, is common in agroecology as it itself a practice aimed at challenging hierarchal knowledge creation (C. Anderson et al., 2014; Ferrando et al., 2019; Martínez-Torres & Rosset, 2014; Val et al., 2019, pp. 7–8). The literature is often penned by movements themselves or through scholar-movement collaborative work, and comes in different forms, also to challenge the monopoly of the academic form (C. Anderson et al., 2017; Borras Jr., 2023; Milgroom et al., 2016; Quiroz, 2016; P. Rosset, 2020). At the time of writing, the most

recent example is LVC's video on movement *formation* (LVC & Brigada De Audiovisual Eduardo Coutinho, 2021), which highlights how movement building is intimately tied to knowledge sharing. The KPL is very much informed by such practices and theories, both directly and indirectly through LVC and their many other collaborators and partners.

Mier y Terán et al. identify 8 factors, based on 5 paradigmatic cases, which support the scaling of agroecology in certain contexts: One, the presence of a crisis that makes a transition to agroecology seem urgent. Two, social movement organizing, in the sense of creating and strengthening informal farmer-to-farmer networks. Three, making agroecological methods easily accessible, and ensuring the benefits are tangible. Four, horizontal teaching practices, based around farmer-to-farmer dialogues, which transfer more than skill. Five, mobilizing discourses around the need for agroecology and a critique of industrial agriculture. Six, the support of external allies. Seven, the existence of markets that are favourable to agroecological farming. And finally, eight, favourable policies and political opportunities (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 8–18). The five cases are specific farmer-to-farmer movement based in Chiapas, India, Brazil, Cuba and one was based on different countries in Central America (mainly, Mexico, Nicaragua and Honduras) (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 4–8, 19), once again highlighting how cases on the African continent are missing from the literature, and still has an overweight of Caribbean and Latin American cases. While their conclusions are provisional, the main conclusion is that several drivers are needed for agroecological scaling to succeed and that the presence of a crises combined with strong organizational structure (formal or informal) is the most important (Ferguson et al., 2019; Gliessman, 2016, 2018b, p. 842; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 10, 19–23; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, pp. 70–71, 74; Nicol, 2020, p. 3). And the informal networks of organization and of horizontal teaching really seemed to be the backbone of many of these movements:

> "[…]*A fundamental tenet of CaC* [Campesino-a-Campesino, or farmer-to-farmer, ed.] *is that farmers are more likely to believe and emulate a fellow farmer who is successfully using a given alternative on their own farm than they are to take the word of an agronomist of possibly urban extraction…Whereas conventional extension can be demobilizing for farmers, CaC is mobilizing, as they become the protagonists in the process of generating and sharing technologies.*" (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 20)

Here they juxtapose the traditional banking learning model of the classic extension officer – often consultants attached to government or educational institutions who travel around teaching farmers – with the horizontal learning model of farmer-to-farmer training, which *mobilizes* the farmers. It mobilizes in the sense that it engages farmers interest, and in the sense that learners quickly become teachers themselves, as there is less of a hierarchy of learner/teacher. In this way, what is most horizontal and democratic way forward, is also the most efficient and sustainable, as (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 533–534, 539–541; Kansanga et al., 2021). This is where the literature on agroecology clearly speaks to the literature on prefiguration as a strategy, as agroecology is about creating a different world and believing that the best way to do that is

collapse means and ends (Maeckelbergh, 2011; Yates & Moor, 2022). However, besides brief mentions of prefiguration there is no systematic combination of the two literatures, even though it clearly links to both decolonial and educational literatures. I believe that there is valuable insight to be gained both for social movement literature and for the literature on agroecology by combining the two, which entails bringing capitalism and class into the analysis (della Porta, 2015, pp. 4–9, 2017, p. 468; Fernandes, 2019, pp. 392–395). Below I sketch out the ways in which social movement literature relates to social movements as knowledge and theory creators.

Social Movement Scholarship

One of the main texts within social movement literature on movements creating knowledge is Eyerman and Jamison's "Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach" (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; B. Hall, 2006, pp. 5–6; Walters, 2005, p. 55). The main take away from Eyerman and Jamison is their notion of *cognitive praxis* (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991). Cognitive praxis is the practice of knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, teaching and experimentation that happens in social movements, and Eyerman and Jamison argue that all social movements create a space that facilitates such cognitive praxis within the movement, and in interaction with both allies and enemies. This is in itself not new, what is different from other approaches is that the focus is on what knowledge and theory is being created, and not *only* the mechanics on how it is being created. It is important to note that cognitive praxis is not static, rather it is constantly in flux within social movement spaces (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 55–58). Eyerman and Jamison underline that the cognitive space within social movements is often more open to experimentation than other cognitive spaces, and it often leads to new knowledge, both formal and informal, through the interaction of movements' cosmologies, organization and use of technology (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 55, 66–68). Most scholars use Eyerman and Jamison to highlight the fact that social movements give space to knowledge creation, and are the harbingers of new ideas that often resonate long after movements are gone and regardless of their potential policy outcomes (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 454–455; Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, p. 22; Cox, 2019, pp. 6–7; Cox et al., 2017, pp. 9–11; B. Hall, 2006, pp. 3–5; B. L. Hall, 2009, p. 67; Niesz et al., 2018, pp. 2–4; Walters, 2005, pp. 54–55). However, I agree with Cassas-Cortés, Osterweil and Powell that Eyerman & Jamison do not explicitly talk about social movements as knowledge creators rather it is something we read from their text and elaborate on (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008).

Osterweil suggest that considering action and theory as too separate, is what keeps us from seeing the very obvious theoretical work happening within social movements (Osterweil, 2013), thereby mirroring the decolonial critique. Osterweil highlights how in a modernist Cartesian ontology, political action is understood as being in opposition to complexity is seen as a threat, because of a perceived dichotomy of analysis, or theory, and action. This leads to the notion that theory or complexity means inaction (Osterweil, 2013, pp. 610–612, 616–617). Consequently, it is assumed that a space of action, such as a social movement,

must therefore not be a space of theory and complexity, but Osterweil shows that is false through the example of the Italian alter-globalization movement (Italian MoM). The Italian MoM not only manages to hold complexities within its day-to-day activities, but its members actively sought out knowledges that questioned and complicated the world, rather than theoretical closure (Osterweil, 2013, pp. 603–609, 615–616). Schlosberg and Craven also look at the *political theory* of social movements, sketching out their theory of *sustainable materialism* by focusing on movements mobilizing to prefigure different systems when it comes to food, energy and fashion (Schlosberg, 2019; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019).

I believe that combining cognitive praxis with the literature on prefiguration as a strategy makes this more explicit. As argued by Maeckelbergh, social movements using prefiguration as a strategy believe that it is impossible to reach ones goals with means that are not compatible with the end goal: we might change the people sitting in the institutions but not the institutions themselves (della Porta, 2018, p. 15; Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 13–14; Yates, 2015, pp. 7–11). At its core, the prefigurative argument is a constructivist argument, based on the assumption that in all political action we are producing or reproducing certain power relations, values and forms of organizing. Carl Boggs', who coined the term, positioned *the prefigurative tradition*, inspired by anarchist practices, against the Leninist approach to social change and revolution (Boggs, 1977, pp. 100, 103–105). His argument is that the Leninist movements are prefiguring the wrong kind of future by associating too closely with state structures, illustrating his underlying constructivist argument (Boggs, 1977, pp. 102–104, 107–109). Prefiguration, as an academic term did not gain mainstream attention until the late 1990s, early 2000s, with the alter-globalization movements, and later with the square and occupy movements (Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 204–205; Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 181–182).

For De Vita and Vittori, prefiguration is inherently pedagogical, as trying to live a different world today, requires you to do quite a lot of re-learning and self-education. They point out how prefiguration is related to the thought of Freire and conscientization, as prefiguration aiming to build a less oppressive world, is focused on building consciousness collectively and finding solutions together (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 78–80, 84–85). Prefiguration, pedagogy, and education are clearly intimately linked. However, I would add that what they are describing is prefiguration as a leftist strategy, and as Yates and Moor point out, often prefiguration becomes synonymous with certain practices such as horizontal power structures, being seen *as* prefiguration rather than one way of expressing prefiguration as a strategy and that there is very little research into what prefiguration looks like in right-wing movements (Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 185–187).

Instead, I insist that all social movements – regardless of their politics – are inherently prefigurative, and thereby, pedagogical, or learning opportunities as Foley might say. Theory and knowledge creation, and prefiguration, are inescapable human activities that we perform both consciously and unconsciously, and in the *cognitive* space of social movements, activists prefigure a different world (hooks, 1991, pp. 1–3, 8; Wright, 2010, pp. 26–28, 274–279). In this sense, movements prefigure theory and knowledge through their

cognitive praxis. While Yates and Moor would most likely object to such a thin definition of prefiguration (Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 184–185), I distinguish between movements who use prefiguration as a conscious strategy and those who do not: so while all movements prefigure, not all movements are prefigurative movements.

An area that other scholars have pointed out deserves attention, when it comes to prefigurative movements is looking less at the spectacle of prefiguration to focus on the more mundane ways social movements use prefiguration. Casas-Cortés et al highlight that studying what they call *knowledge-practices*, within social movements means not always focusing on the spectacle of the protest or the happening, but looking at the mundane everyday activities of movements – the meetings, the day to day organizing, planning, banner making ect. (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, pp. 44–45). Maeckelbergh shows that focusing mainly on spectacle can make movements more fragile (Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 209–211). Maeckelbergh distinguishes between *process-time* and *event-time* in movements, where process-time speaks to the everyday activities that build up a movement, and event-time refers to the public events e.g.; an occupation, a protest or a combination of the two (Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 205–208). Looking at the alter-globalization movements and the occupy/square movements, she points to how some of the occupy movements limited themselves by collapsing process-time and event-time in the large-scale public occupations that *were* the movements. So as soon as those occupations ended it felt like the movements ended (Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 209–211).

Daro (Daro, 2009), is a great example of how focusing on the spectacle can make us lose sight of the day to day prefigurative practices. Looking at how new practices and knowledges are negotiated and created because of internal conflicts over strategies and tactics within the Global Justice Movement, Daro captivatingly describes the different protests and events that leads to new practices evolving and gives many different examples, highlighting the movements intellectual agency (Daro, 2009, pp. 44–45, 48, 50). However, because the focus is so firmly on the spectacle of protest, these new practices and knowledges seem to appear from almost nowhere. While knowledge for sure is also created on the spot during protests, the examples of pink, silver, clown and baby blocs being created as a way to organize around the fact that not everyone is comfortable in the classic violent ready black bloc (Daro, 2009, pp. 48–49), is something that requires organizing and planning and we miss this by only focusing on the spectacle of protest. The knowledge and practices seem to appear out of nowhere, as if by magic. While the knowledge coming from movements can seem magical in its reach and the creations processes can be exhilarating and liberating (hooks, 1991), only focusing on this glosses over the non-linear, sometimes mundane processes of knowledge creation, the failed attempts, the disagreements, the hours of reproductive labour and the long meetings and how they interact with the spontaneous momentous outbursts (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, pp. 44–45; B. L. Hall, 2009, pp. 66–68). In this sense, there is a gap to be filled by focusing more on the mundane prefiguration, and I believe this gap is due to the overweight of urban, middle-class global north

movements in the literature. In this thesis I show that, adding more rural, working class or low-income movements in the global south, will inherently shift the focus from lifestyle and spectacle to livelihoods and organizing to ensure survival.

The literature has focused mainly on urban protest movements, while generally skewing towards movements consisting of upper middle-class, white, global north citizens also when it ventures into rural or food related activism (Monticelli, 2022a, p. 6; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 13–18). I believe this limits our understanding of prefiguration. For example, prefigurative movements are often interpreted as post-material *lifestyle* politics, even though most prefigurative movements often also participate in different tactics and in work that would be considered *material* (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 83–85; Monticelli, 2022b, pp. 17–20; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 23–29, 36–39; Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 182–184). Moreover, the literature on prefiguration highlights how prefigurative movements often have a more holistic approach to society, using several tactics and rarely are they single-issue movements (Monticelli, 2022a, p. 27; Yates & Moor, 2022, p. 183). However, because of the limited focus on movements whose class and geographic backgrounds often means their basic needs are often not at the centre of discussion, this has been missed, and this thesis challenges this by expanding the literature with the KPL's notion of prefiguration. In this thesis I understand class as a socio-economic position within the national or global economy (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 53–54), and it is clear that there is a large gap, a gap that should be filled with more work on movements in in completely different contexts, and especially of different class backgrounds.

While the framework of scholars such as Schlosberg and Craven is very similar to this thesis their focus on majority white movements in the Australia, UK and US, does not expand the contexts of prefigurative movements within the literature (Schlosberg, 2019, pp. 4–5, 11–17, 167–169). Shirley Walters and Salma Ismael both look at learning within South African social movements and while Walters positions herself within both the social movement and adult and popular education literature, they mainly speak to the latter and aim to improve teaching in movements (Ismail, 2003; Walters, 2005, pp. 60–61). In this thesis I argue that class, gender and (neo)colonial positions also affect the movements' theory and practice of prefiguration, missed because of the large focus on majority white, middle-class global north based movements.

Overall, the above described literature and the literature on decolonial perspectives on knowledge creation views learning as an ongoing process and understands knowledge and theory creations as something that is always relational and always situated (Borg & Mayo, 2007; Casas-Cortés et al., 2008; Choudry, 2009; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Cox, 2019; Cox & Fominaya, 2009; Cubajevaite, 2011; Davis, 2009; D'Souza, 2009; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; B. L. Hall, 2009; Lysack, 2009; Mbembe, 2015; Mignolo, 2009, 2011; Niesz, 2019; Niesz et al., 2018). Moreover, many of the social movement scholars and especially education scholars, also touch on how this should affect the research relationship and the research process, as the focus

on what social movements creates moves social movements and activists from research objects to knowledge creating subjects in their own right. This in turn also leads to a direct concern with not only doing research that is relevant from an academic point of view but also from the point of view of the movements (Bevington & Dixon, 2005; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Cox & Fominaya, 2009; Cubajevaite, 2011; D'Souza, 2009). Participatory approaches to research developed out of adult and popular education, and has also been shaped by feminist and decolonial critiques of research (Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 20–22). In the decolonial literature the critique of the westernized research process and its epistemological problems is the starting point, and it is much more elaborated than in the previously mentioned literature (Grosfoguel, 2013; Mignolo, 1999, 2009, 2011; Shiva, 2008, 2016; Smith, 2012; Teasley & Butler, 2020). This thesis aims to combine all of the above literatures, and I am of course not the first one to attempt this. Lozano manages to both document the knowledge practices of different movement networks in Spain, while also highlighting the intellectual work of the activists and how it connects to their practical activism, exactly because he combines a cognitive approach with participatory methodologies (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 451–453, 455–457, 461–462). From a participatory methodology it becomes more crucial to recognize the contribution of the activists and consider them as equal contributors, and problematize decolonial knowledge hierarchies (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 452–453, 455–456). Lozano worked with ODS (Oficinas de Derechos Sociales, or the Network of the Offices for Social Rights), and the 15M movement researching how collective action was understood, how tactics were employed and why, within these movements, through evaluation of the ODSs work and impact through the prism of 15M. While Lozano's work is much more collaborative than what I managed to achieve with the impediment of the pandemic, this is exactly what I am aiming to do in this thesis: I am aiming to add a decolonial feminist class perspective to the literature on prefiguration in social movements, while also adding the concept of prefiguration to the literature on agroecology movements, and an example of how an East African agroecology movement practices agroecology and peasant feminism. Through this cross-disciplinary study I hope to let these different literatures cross-pollinate and enrich one another.

Structure of the thesis

The next two chapters will frame this thesis theoretically and contextually. In chapter 2, I present the theoretical assumptions underpinning the notion of *political theory* being prefigured by social movements, based in a decolonial take on the social movement literature on prefiguration and cognitive praxis. The aim of chapter 2 is to carve out theoretical space for this thesis to exist, not as my creation of theory about the KPL, but as my exploration of the theory the KPL has created. Something which is still not a mainstream approach to social movements. This chapter is published in a previous version in the anthology "The Power of Morality in Movements: Civic Engagement in Climate Justice, Human Rights, and Democracy" (Wathne, 2022). Chapter 3 presents the case of KPL and situates the movement in the political and economic context

of Kenya. Chapter 4 presents the methodological approach, the data and the analytical approach taken in chapter 5-9, which are the empirical chapters that present the analyses and results of this thesis.

Chapter 5 showcases how the KPL formally teaches, while chapter 6 summarizes the KPL's pedagogy from that, speaking mostly to the literatures on adult and popular education, decolonial feminist thought and agroecology. Chapter 7 and 8 focus on how the KPL scales agroecology and peasant feminism both deep and out, consequently, the chapters mainly speak to the literature on adult and popular education, the literature on prefiguration in social movements and the literature on scaling agroecology. Chapter 9 is a deeper exploration of the KPL's theory of prefiguration and speaks mainly to the literature on prefigurative social movements.

Chapter 5 and 6 show how the KPL's place-based, participatory peasant feminist pedagogy and teaching practice is very similar to other agroecology movements (Casado et al., 2022; McCune & Rosset, 2021, p. 446; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, pp. 603–605; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–252; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 900–903; Val et al., 2019, pp. 7–8). This is interesting considering that most of the literature does not cover African movements, and these chapters add such a case to the literature. It is clear that KPL's pedagogy is both inspired by LVC – which is evident in how their African Meditations are inspired by místicas – and inspired by their local context, as showcased by the experience with intergenerational farmer-to-farmer learning that most members had as children and which shaped their outlook on teaching. Moreover, the KPL focuses more on re-valuing indigenous knowledge than having it be in dialogue with other knowledges through a diálogo de saberes, even though that concept is crucial in the literature. In their communities, the KPL members are often met with negative views of indigenous knowledge as *analog* or *backwards,* combined with their prominent peasant feminist epistemology means that re-valuing knowledge is crucial for the KPL, which also informs their brand of critical pedagogy, the spiral learning model. The KPL's critical traditionalism encapsulates how they re-value indigenous knowledge through a peasant feminist perspective.

Chapter 7 and 8 is where I show how the KPL's pedagogy meets their prefiguration. Chapter 7, shows how the KPL uses a prefigurative pedagogy in order to scale deep inside the movement through leading by example, while chapter 8 focuses on how the KPL scales out on a micro-level through preaching what they practice. From these two chapters the major take away is how combining *leading by example,* or their use of prefiguration as a teaching tool for informal and incidental learning, with *preaching what you practice* and encouraging others to do experiments in their homes, are powerful tools when aiming to convince others to embrace agroecology and peasant feminism and join the movement. Moreover, this is all lessons for how to scale on the micro-level, and how to deal with the people in your community. This is based on, first their empathic critical pedagogy approach, where they trust that people will find the answers through a critical dialogue (Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 120–124, 128–130; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, pp. 603–605). And second, this strategy is also based on their more pessimistic intersectional analysis of neo-agro-colonialism

as a war between agroecology movements and industrial agriculture, which has the resources and are not afraid of fighting dirty. Consequently, the KPL cannot just sit back and expect social change to happen on its own. This highlights how crucial the movement and teaching aspects of agroecology is, exactly on the farmer-to-farmer micro-level, while also highlighting the potential of approaching scaling from a prefigurative pedagogy lens when scaling out and scaling deep. Moreover, the KPL's approach to scaling out is not only aimed at scaling farming techniques but also their peasant feminist practices which other agroecology movements struggle to combine (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 1–4; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 21; Vispo & Romero-Niño, 2021). It should be noted, that inside the movement the focus is also on scaling deep both agroecology and peasant feminism, so this outward focus is coupled with an acknowledgement of also still struggling on certain aspects with especially peasant feminism inside the movement. Adding this critique is, thereby, not "exposing" the KPL as much as it is taking part in the ongoing reflexive dialogue about the movement's practice, in line with the PAR approach of this thesis (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 460–461).

Finally, chapter 9, is a walkthrough of the KPL's overall theory of prefiguration, which is highly affected by their class position as low-income subsistence farmers in the global south. Prefiguration has often been framed as a strategy for middle-class movements (Monticelli, 2022b, p. 23), and this chapter disrupts this understanding. The KPL's theory of prefiguration challenges this understanding, as they practice and theorize prefiguration as a way to live the future they want *and need* today, which brings a much-needed class aspect, through their intersectional peasant feminist analysis, into the literature on prefiguration. Once again, the peasant feminism of the KPL is front and centre. The KPL shifts the focus from prefiguration of lifestyle and spectacle to prefiguration of livelihoods and organizing, and their prefiguration is motivated by a decolonial feminist ontology of life – both human and more-than-human – as fundamentally interconnected. The prefiguration of the KPL is mainly their everyday activism of trying to create a different food system, both because they want it and because they, and we, need a different food system.

This thesis does not claim that the KPL is the first, or only movement to approach prefiguration in this way, with the Green Belt Movement and the Black Panther Party being local and global examples (Brown, 2019; Hunt, 2014; Narayan, 2017a, 2020; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019). Rather the point is that not engaging with the theories of social movements and mainly focusing on white, urban, middle-class movement, has meant that the literature on prefiguration has missed this version of prefiguration. The KPL's theory and practice of prefiguration is intimately tied to their class position as low-income subsistence farmers in the global south, which directly challenges the notion of prefiguration as a strategy only for the middle-class.

Overall, the work of the KPL, thereby, both affirms and challenges existing literature, as they align with many other agroecology movements in their practices, of course with context specific differences. At the same time the KPL's theory is a much needed addition to the very homogenous literature on prefiguration,

while also adding a focus on prefiguration to the literature on agroecology that is rare (Monticelli, 2022a, p. 6; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 13–18), even though there are important lessons to be found about scaling agroecology in the concept of prefiguration. Moreover, most of the work on peasant pedagogy and teaching has naturally been done where most of the activity is – Latin America, and to some degree Europe and the US – and as others have pointed out, looking beyond these regions is crucial to show that the need for and use of agroecology stretches far, and to show how agroecology looks in different contexts (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 532, 534; Casado et al., 2022, p. 3). The movements on the African continent have been especially overlooked, both in the literature on agroecology and generally in the literature on social movements, so this thesis also adds a valuable voice to the pantheon of peasant movements.

2. Theoretical approach: Social movements prefigure political theory

The theoretical outset of this thesis is, not as much an analytical framework as it is way of showing how and why I consider what the KPL has taught me as *political theory*, while the analysis is more focused on placing the KPL's theory within the literature that I believe they are related to. This of course is a decision that is shaped by my training and background with the limits that entail. In order to do this, I need to first take a decolonial approach to theory and knowledge creation, before I show how the literature on prefiguration and cognitive praxis make room for the political theory made by social movements.

Overall, this chapter aims to set the stage for why I want you, dear reader, to acknowledge the theories presented below as being political theories authored by the KPL. Through her work with the Italian MoM, Osterweil insists that transformative (leftist) activists must inherently challenge the colonial Cartesian epistemology, as it is at the root of so many of the challenges they face:

> "I believe that a large part of why we find so much resonance between activist and academic practice is because transformative political practice today requires epistemological and ontological frameworks that are radically different from the Cartesian modernist ones that have been dominant, involving a different understanding of the relationship between how we know and how we act. It is no coincidence that both academics and activists are struggling to articulate new forms of knowing-being-doing; they are both products of the same episteme and are constantly coming up against its limits, whether in positivist methodologies or Marxist scientism." (Osterweil, 2013, p. 616)

As Osterweil outline here, academics and activists alike are facing the challenge of re-thinking how we connect knowledge and action in a non-Cartesian world, and that the work of the activists should be regarded as theoretical work on par with the academic theory (Osterweil, 2013, pp. 606–616). Osterweil, thereby, shows how challenging long held epistemic conventions is necessary to even be able to understand and interact with knowledge and theory created within social movements. The goal of this chapter is to carve out this space in order to allow me to then engage with the political theory of the KPL on pedagogy, feminism, scaling and prefiguration to even be considered to be political theory.

Mind and body: A colonial legacy

Throughout westernized political thought, one of the most important distinctions has been to separate man from animal in a hierarchy with man at the top. I specifically say man, and not humans, as women and non-binary people were often considered to be a part of nature, below man, along with animals (Shiva, 2014c, pp. 24–25). Often this distinction between man and "nature" is simply noted and then the reader moves on. However, Vandana Shiva argues that the subordination of more-than-human life is the basis for colonial exploitation of both human and more-than-human life (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, p. 26; Shiva, 2014c, p. 25). The Darwinian and Cartesian epistemologies create an idea of *bios nullius*: "This understanding of the world sees nature as composed of dead matter: a Lego set where immutable particles and pieces can be used, moved and substituted without any overarching consequences." (Shiva, 2016, p. 4). The notion of bios nullius is intimately tied to the notion of *terra nullius*, which thinkers such as John Locke used to defend

colonialism: It is the notion that mixing your capital, not just the simple labour of the *savage*, with the soil was what sealed ownership – all more-than-human life (and human life to close to more-than-human life) is dead matter until the right *mind* blows life into it (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 24–25; Shiva, 2014b, pp. 242–243, 2016, pp. 70–71). In this westernized view, the colonized might come up with some good ideas, but the analysis is best kept to experts, and ideas do not exist until an academic has put their name on it (Cahil, based on work with the Fed up Honeys, 2010, p. 182; Todd, 2015, pp. 245–246, 2016, pp. 17–18). Too close to more-than-human life, women in general and the colonized in particular are seen as being too much in their body to truly have control over their mind, and are often described in animalistic terms (Fanon, 2004, p. 7). Moreover, it is particularly telling that peasants are often seen as a group which is incapable of theorizing – they too are considered too close to more-than-human life to rise above it. Even grassroots thinkers such as Antonio Gramsci do not think the peasant can properly theorize (Feierman, 1990, p. 18; Gramsci, 1971, pp. 6, 14–15; Shiva, 2016, pp. 20–22). Like the earthworm or the bee, humanity could not live without peasants, but a mechanistic view of more-than-human life creates a notion that such services are easily replaceable and mechanistic – not something that creates or requires knowledge and care. In this way, insisting that peasants, in the global south, are theorizing through their earth-bound praxis thoroughly refutes the notion that theory equals mind, and mind needs to be separated from the body.

This Cartesian separation of mind and body still lingers in most of westernized science, especially in the positivist understanding of science where distance between the researcher and the subject is seen as necessary to create *objective* knowledge (Berger & Kellner, 1981, pp. 25–26; Mies, 2014, pp. 38–40; Steager, 2013, p. 174). When physical activity is so starkly separated from mental activity, practice and theory are also seen as dichotomous, – it prioritizes *knowing-that,* analytical knowledge, over *knowing-how*, or practical knowledge (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992, p. 221, 1992, pp. 220–221; Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 75–77; Shiva, 2014c, pp. 24–25). This suggests that the more abstract a theory is, the more *objective* it potentially is, as it rises above the particularities of subjectivity.

This divide has been the raison-dêtre of academia for a long time, as it assumes that academics are the only ones capable of creating (true) objective knowledge, as we are (supposedly) only engaging our minds, rising above our bodily experiences (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992, pp. 217–221; Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 74–78; hooks, 1994, pp. 137–139; Mignolo, 1999, p. 237). Even in post-foundational and critical theories it is hard to escape this dichotomy as academic theorists still attempt to “rise above” their context (Allen, 2017, pp. 12–19, 77–78, 204–206). Any project that attempts to go against this, and situate the knowledge created, will be viewed as partial in the double sense: both as incomplete and non-neutral. However, *all* theory is based on lived experience. The difference is that a lot of academic theory is based on the distanced observations of *others*’ lived experience, as this is seen to be appropriately objective, while theory that is based on observations of one’s *own* lived experience is often dismissed as too *partial* (E. Anderson, 2004, pp. 4–6;

hooks, 1991, p. 4, 2015, pp. 44–45). This is still present in the, often unspoken, division of labour between academic theorists and activists, each encouraged to stick to what they know best. Completely obfuscating the fact that activists create theory of their own, and that academics can be activists (Bevington & Dixon, 2005; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, pp. 3–6; hooks, 1991, pp. 8–10; Morell, 2009, pp. 25, 27–28, 35–37; Motta, 2011, pp. 181–183; Osterweil, 2013, pp. 599–600, 606–612, 615–617).

Most importantly, this rejection of the partial, the lived, the experienced also denies authorship to the very people who created the knowledge that scholars learned from them – instead of acknowledging movements for creating certain terms, we credit scholars with "discovering" them (Cahil, based on work with the Fed up Honeys, 2010, p. 182; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Tallbear, 2014, pp. 1–3; Todd, 2015, pp. 245–246, 2016, pp. 17–18). I return to this briefly in the final part of this chapter.

The main problem with this epistemological dichotomy is exactly it's colonial underpinnings, as it denies the validity of non-westernized forms of knowledge and results in epistemic injustice or epistemicide, by undervaluing, appropriating, silencing or eradicating certain kinds of knowledge (C. Anderson & McLachlan, 2016, p. 297; Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 76–78, 84–85). Consequently, this dichotomy upholds the myth that westernized academia is both value free and ahistorical and that any serious theory is the same – universal. This leads to epistemic injustice, which again often is used to justify dehumanization or marginalization of the groups holding this knowledge, which in turn leads to discrimination, violence, and oppression (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 84–85).

Feminist and decolonial scholarship and research has shown, that epistemic practices are always both historically situated and value based, and not being explicit about this is in fact the real problem (E. Anderson, 2004, pp. 19–21; Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992, pp. 238–239; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 56–57; Mies, 2014, p. 38; Wylie, 2003, p. 341). The decolonial critique of the universalistic Cartesian view of science, which intersects with and is informed by feminist scholarship, outlines an alternative pluriverse approach to knowledge and the university. Knowledge is seen as relational and communal, moving away from a notion that it comes from the isolated minds of individual geniuses (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Grosfoguel, 2013; hooks, 1994; Maldonado-Torres, 2006; Mbembe, 2015; Niesz, 2019; Shiva, 2016). It is about challenging whose knowledge creation we value and moving away from a Cartesian *gods eye view* of knowledge as something "[…]*monological, unsituated and asocial*[…]" (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 76) to an understanding that there exists a pluriverse of knowledges that are always already partial, relational and situated (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 89). Theory creation is a fundamental human praxis, not a practice limited to academics, and theory, as all other knowledge creation, is shaped by the context in which it is created. Social movements are thereby, not the only ways people create knowledge or theory collectively, but it is the focus of this thesis (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 55–56; Foley, 1999, pp. 1–3; hooks, 1991; Isaac et al., 2019).

To explain what decolonial thought centres on it can be helpful to hold it up against the better known postcolonial thought. Keeping in mind that the lines between these two strands are often blurry, and that this by no means suggest that postcolonial scholarship is useless (Teasley & Butler, 2020, p. 3), there are four reasons why this is a decolonial, rather than a postcolonial project; First, words do matter, and working within a *de*colonial framework rather than a *post*colonial, also connotes an ongoing deconstruction of *coloniality* (Mignolo, 2011, 2017; Teasley & Butler, 2020). While postcolonial scholars will note that the post does not refer to an end of all types of colonialism, it does erase the fact that settler colonialism did not end with the British Empire, and is still a reality for many indigenous peoples, i.e. in the Americas and Oceania (Smith, 2012, pp. 101–102; Teasley & Butler, 2020, p. 5). Second, decolonial scholarship goes back further in history to highlight the connections between westernized ideas of modernity and coloniality, especially within the Latin American modernity/coloniality project (Maldonado-Torres, 2018; Mignolo, 1999, 2011, 2017; Teasley & Butler, 2020). These dynamics are frequently at play when it comes to peasants in the global south and the relationship between more-than-human-life and society (Shiva, 2016, pp. 112–116), as I return to below. And I agree with Teasly and Butler that while decolonial thought believes we have to move past modernity, postcolonial scholarship critiques and aims to reform modernity from within, which again is not sufficient when researching the knowledge of peasants that has been marginalized or erased by a modernity that sees them as an evolutionary step behind (Maldonado-Torres, 2018; Quijano, 1993; Shiva, 2014c, 2014a, 2016; Teasley & Butler, 2020, p. 5).

Third, and as a consequence of the previous, there is a large focus on epistemologies and knowledge in decolonial thought, both on how situated knowledges has been and are silenced or erased through epistemicides, and also on reclaiming those lost knowledges (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992; Grosfoguel, 2013; Shiva, 2014c; Smith, 2012). Which leads me to the fourth and final point, that, despite its name, decolonial thought not only aims to deconstruct and function on an abstract academic level, but also to build, and is very focused on sketching out alternative epistemologies, practices, and institutions (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 89; hooks, 1991; Mbembe, 2015, pp. 18–20; Smith, 2012; Tallbear, 2014; Tuck, 2009). In this sense, it also lends itself more easily to study movements attempting to do just that. Moreover, among the new practices, highlighted by many decolonial scholars, are different ways of conducting research through more community centred projects, and participatory methods such as PAR. And using these methods without also applying decolonial and feminist perspectives, often means not truly challenging the power relationships inherent in the research situation (Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018).

At this point it is important to note that contextualizing theory does not mean that it cannot travel outside its context. Frantz Fanon's exploration of the particular colonial situation of Algeria in *Wretched of the Earth* has resonated with people in similar, but distinct situations across the globe. Not in spite of its closeness to its context, but because of it, as it allows the reader to easily identify what is familiar and what needs to be

translated (Thiong'o, 2012, pp. 23–25, 57–58). Moreover, when trying to understand the world we cannot solely rely on theories created in one part of the world. We need to provincialize westernized knowledges, and from a decolonial standpoint it is obvious that "[…]*any theory limited to the experience and world view of only five countries in the world are, to say the least, provincial.*" (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 74). Understanding that there exists multiple knowledges does not lead to moral relativism, rather it leads to an acknowledgement that no knowledge is complete and to approach the world from this humbling starting point (Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 88). This is also where critical pedagogy and decolonial literature meet, in the sense that knowledge is contextual and ever changing:

> "This is precise because knowledge always is becoming. That is, if the act of knowing has historicity, then today's knowledge about something is not necessarily the same tomorrow. Knowledge is changed to the extent that reality also moves and changes. Then theory also does the same. It's not something stabilized, immobilized." (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 101)

Both theory and knowledge creation are fundamental human acts for which a space is created within not just academia and social movements, but throughout our lives (della Porta, 2013, pp. 5–6; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 55–57; Foley, 1999; hooks, 1991, p. 8). The point of this chapter is not to flip the hierarchy and place practice on the top. As bell hooks eloquently explains it is the dichotomy that is the problem; we need both theory *and* practice. Moreover, it is important for hooks to underscore that theory is not a luxury item; it is crucial to our very existence (hooks, 1991, pp. 7–8). Instead of a dichotomy, practice and theory are in an iterative relationship, either informing or being informed by one another (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 49–50; hooks, 1991, pp. 5–6; Thiong'o, 2012, pp. 15, 19–21; Vincent, 2004, pp. 8–9).

So, when social movements prefigure their own political theory, they exactly walk this line of what is already created and what these creations holds in store for the future. The epistemological deconstruction of the Cartesian worldview, is therefore crucial to my argument, but will not be elaborated further here and it has been presented thoroughly elsewhere (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992; Dalmiya, 2016; Esteves, 2008; Grosfoguel, 2013; Harding, 2008; Maldonado-Torres, 2006; Shiva, 2014c, 2016).

There are already two concepts in social movement literature that encompasses this view of theory and highlights the iterative relationship between practice and theory: *prefiguration* and *cognitive praxis.* Below I show how these two literatures complement each other, and the decolonial literature, well and make room for political theory created by social movements within social movement literature.

Prefigurative social movements

Prefiguring, at its most basic, means to live the future in the present; living as if the world had already changed. Thereby, *every* action counts within social movements that use prefiguration as a strategy, as they all need to align with the future they seek. Prefiguration is here understood exactly as a strategic choice certain social movements make: they believe it is both the morally right way to act and the best way to

achieve their goals (Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 13–15). Consequently, most of the literature on prefigurative social movements have focused either on how the movements remain "pure" by equating means and goals, or on their experimentation of how they can build a new world within the old, or simply *living the future* (Boggs, 1977, p. 100; Day, 2005, pp. 34–36, 126; Leach, 2013; Maeckelbergh, 2011, p. 4; Wright, 2010, pp. 6–7; Yates, 2015, pp. 3–4).

All movements prefigure political theory

At the heart of the literature on prefigurative social movement is a belief that it is valuable to experiment with and build alternative social structures – whether those are to be expanded after a revolution or through a long-term reform process (Boggs, 1977, p. 104; Wright, 2010, pp. 5–6). When Carl Boggs originally coined the term, he positioned *the prefigurative tradition*, inspired by anarchist practices, against the Leninist approach to social change and revolution (Boggs, 1977, pp. 100, 103–105).

According to Boggs, the problem with the Leninist approach is its elitist vanguardism, its reliance on existing state structures and its lack of blueprint for after the revolution, which leads to the new regime being too tied to the institutions of the old regime (Boggs, 1977, pp. 102–103, 108–109). So, for example, even if we can find evidence that Lenin himself would not have approved of the bureaucratization that escalated after his death, the movement had no other blueprint to follow. On the other hand, for Boggs, the strength of prefiguration is its trust in the grassroots, which leads to many locally based experiments that might start sketching a blue print for a different society and rally support among people for these new structures (Boggs, 1977, pp. 103–104). However, the advantages of prefiguration are also seen as its downfall: According to Boggs most local movements fail to spread as they are too rooted in their own context, and the prefigurative attempt of equating goals and means often results in inaction and a lack of leadership (Boggs, 1977, pp. 113–114; Wright, 2010, pp. 334–336, 370–371). The current critique of prefigurative strategies mirrors Boggs critique: that prefiguration is often hard to scale up, and that its emphasis on doing everything "correctly" can leave it defenceless by not being strategic enough (focusing on spontaneity) or result in nothing getting done (Yates, 2015, pp. 8–9). However, Marianne Maeckelbergh challenges this notion that prefiguration and strategy are mutually exclusive, rather she argues that prefiguration *is* a conscious strategy, and that social movements who use prefiguration as a strategy do get stuff done (Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 4–6). The social movements using prefiguration as a strategy believe that it is impossible to reach ones goals with means that are not compatible with the end goal: we might change the people sitting in the institutions but not the institutions themselves, which is exactly Boggs critique of Lenin (Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 13–14; Yates, 2015, pp. 7–11). Boggs original argument is that the Leninist movements are prefiguring the wrong kind of future by associating too closely with existing state structures, that do not align with their values (Boggs, 1977, pp. 102–104, 107–109). Moreover, if we look beyond the discussion of vanguards vs. prefiguration, and focus more on what the different prefigurative movements actually are creating or trying to create, we

will not only be able to chronicle many creative ways of changing the world, we are also able to support or criticize the movements on their own terms.

At its core, the prefigurative argument is a constructivist argument, based on the assumption that in all political action we are producing or reproducing certain power relations, values and forms of organizing (Foley, 1999, pp. 3–5). Theory creation, and prefiguration, are inescapable human activities that we perform both consciously and unconsciously, and the *cognitive* space that prefigurative social movements create facilitate these processes (hooks, 1991, pp. 1–3, 8; Wright, 2010, pp. 26–28, 274–279). Isaac et al., show how active learning within social movements create the perfect circumstances for knowledge creation within social movements, through what they call social movement schools mixed with the prefigurative practices of these movements, where members learns by doing (Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 177–178).

To some degree all social movements prefigure a different society, while prefigurative movements are actively aiming for it. Whether the world they are aiming for looks a lot like what we already have, or a far cry from it, does not change that. It is important to note that there of course are significant differences amongst the social movements that use prefiguration as a strategy – they have different historical circumstances, different goals, different participants, and different takes on what a prefiguration strategy looks like. However, the overarching point is that their prefigurative praxis *is* their theory. They are basing their activities on morals and values, and letting their experiences and experiments inform their morals and values – it is a continual, iterative, theory making process. Theory is here defined as a more or less abstract, and purposeful, explanations of the connection of concepts, while practice is defined as both speech acts and physical acts, or discourses and actions, and it is *political* theory, due to its orientation towards shaping society. This political theory has been ignored and undervalued as it does not fit into westernized epistemologies (Cox et al., 2017, pp. 4–5, 9–12; P. Rosset, 2020, p. 50; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 15–18). The concept of theory here leans on a more classical conceptions of theory, quite literally, in terms of the original Greek meaning of theory as observation, which connects theory to lived experience.

bell hooks elegantly describes the kind of communal deliberations that take place in for example social movements as theory making:

> "When our lived experience of theorizing is fundamentally linked to processes of self-recovery, of collective liberation, no gap exists between theory and practice. Indeed, what such experience makes more evident is the bond between the two-that ultimately reciprocal process wherein one enables the other." (hooks, 1991, p. 2).

When the clusters of the KPL are having meetings discussing organic pest control, and how and why to avoid chemical pesticides and GMO seeds, they are creating and sharing knowledge, and sketching out a political theory. They are explaining their world and prescribing action. Sara C. Motta, also looks at how prefiguration is exactly how social movements can create theoretical knowledge collectively, challenging the

ideas that knowledge is created by individuals far removed from the context they are theorizing about (Motta, 2011, pp. 180–182).

There is of course a significant difference between movements that use prefiguration as a strategy and those who do not, but we cannot speak of non-prefigurative movements as social movements are always already prefiguring a specific kind of world through their praxis. Whether that world looks a lot like what we already have, or a far cry from it, does not change that. It is important to note that there of course is *also* a significant difference between the theories of social movements that use prefiguration as a strategy – they have different historical circumstances, different goals, different participants, and different takes on what a prefiguration strategy looks like. However, the overarching point is that prefiguration always happens within social movements, and that this *is* their theory, and in order to better understand what movements create and are at the cusp of creating we need to understand their cognitive praxis.

Cognitive Praxis

Cognitive praxis is the practice of knowledge creation, knowledge sharing, teaching and experimentation, and Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison argue that all social movements create a space that facilitates such cognitive praxis within the movement, and in interaction with both allies and enemies. This is in itself not new as many social movement scholars have shown that social movements are great places for, especially democratic, experimentation (Dalmiya, 2016, p. 262; della Porta, 2013; della Porta & Diani, 2006; della Porta & Pavan, 2017; Smith, 2012, pp. 150–151, 159–161; Wright, 2010, pp. 26–29). What is different from other approaches is that the focus is on what knowledge and theory is being created, and how it affects society, and not *only* the mechanics of how it is being created. Again, in order to move focus from being solely on the mechanics to the content. It is often hard, if not impossible, to measure the exact effect of the movement, but it is possible to see how a movement has been part of opening certain cognitive space or introduce certain concepts (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 64). While the literature on diffusion between social movements and within transnational movements has broached this from the perspective of how far these ideas travel, again I suggest we also focus on the ideas themselves (Tarrow & McAdam, 2004).

Cognitive praxis is constantly in flux within social movement spaces (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 55–58). Cognitive spaces exists in all different context, not only in social movements, but Eyerman and Jamison underline that the cognitive space within social movements is often more open to experimentation than other cognitive spaces, and it often leads to new knowledge, both formal and informal (Choudry, 2009, p. 8; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, p. 2; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 66–68). Knowledge is not simply created within academia, but "[…] *is rather the broader cognitive praxis that informs all social activity. It is thus both formal and informal, objective and subjective, moral and immoral, and most importantly, professional and popular.*" (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 49). Both theory and knowledge creation are fundamental human acts for which a space is created within not just academia and social movements, but throughout our

lives (della Porta, 2013, pp. 5–6; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 55–57; hooks, 1991, p. 8). Cognitive praxis is of course only *one* aspect of social movements; however, it is what makes them unique according to Eyerman and Jamison, and an important feature that should be recognized. Moreover, focusing on cognitive praxis does not mean leaving organization or mobilization behind, as all the practices of social movements are informed by and inform their cognitive praxis, through an iterative relationship – the how is still important, it is simply not the focus of the analysis (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 55). This is evident in the three dimensions that cognitive praxis consists of according to Eyerman and Jamison: Cosmology, organization and technology (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 66–68).

Cosmology, organization and technology

Inspired by Habermas, Eyerman and Jamison outline three dimensions of social movements cognitive praxis; the cosmological dimension, the technological dimension and the organizational dimension. (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 68–69). At the basis of any movement is the cosmological dimension – this is the movements ontology, it's values and it's goals – which can be *"read"* from the movements own texts and this is where the normative aspirations of the movement can be found (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 70). The technological and organizational revolve around which technologies and organizational structures the movements use, but also which they distance themselves from. The organizational dimension includes both internal organization and external communication and alliances, while both the technological and organizational dimensions relate to dissemination of knowledge (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 68–69, 75–76).

It is mainly within the technological and organizational dimension that there is space for practical experimentation with new ways of being. This knowledge creation happens internally in the movements, when movements interact with other movements, or governments, or the public at large – it is in their strategy, in their internal practices, their values, their goals, their identities, their protests, their projects, their conflicts and their alliances (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 57–59). The technological and organizational dimensions both inform and are informed by the cosmological dimension. Therefore, to understand a social movement's political theory we must investigate all three and how they interact (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 71–74). Additionally, the notion of different *cosmologies* being present in the world, also fits well with the decolonial outset of this project, which is at its core an attempt to provincialize the knowledge production of westernized science (Mbembe, 2015, pp. 9–10, 13–14). Moreover, Eyerman and Jamison wants to present the cognitive praxis of the movements, on its own terms, rather than trying to "prove" they are part of a certain ideology (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 46–47). Such an approach, which I myself have been guilty of doing, not only assumes there to be a limited number of acceptable ideas in the world, it also undermines the agency of the activists by assuming that it is up to the academic expert, or a vanguard, to "diagnose" their

ideas for them. Therefore, focusing on the political theory created by social movements cannot be solely focused on any kind of vanguard whether inside or outside the movement.

Movement Intellectuals

Eyerman and Jamison distinguish between intellectual-in-movement and movement intellectuals – the first are often the classic *partisan intellectual,* with a vanguardist approach to the movement, while the latter are intellectuals whose intellectual practice is born within the movement (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 108–109, 113–119). However, they make it clear that cognitive practice is not something left to the so-called organic intellectuals or the (un)official leaders of a movement. Moreover, they insist that intellectuals of all kinds grow from the movement, and are continually shaped by the movement (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 94–95, 110–113):

> "Movement intellectuals draw on established intellectual contexts, but the established tradition must always be reinterpreted and adapted to the needs of the movement. It is not, as Lenin insisted, the intellectual who brings consciousness to the movement: that was the central fallacy of Stalinism. It is rather the case, as the young Lukács insisted, that intellectuals become conscious within the context of a social movement." (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 166).

This is crucial, as the notion of the philosopher kings – however watered down it may be – goes against the ontological belief that knowledge is co-created, as it is then up to these special individuals to discover nuggets of golden philosophical insight and then pass it on to the rest of us (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 57; Vincent, 2004, p. 27). For Gramsci the organic intellectual is defined by their *functional* role, and while it is very interesting and important to look into the power dynamics and different functions within social movements, of (un)official leaders and organic intellectuals, talking about the elites is not automatically the same as talking about the ideas (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 5–13; Rodriguez & Smith, 2013, p. 70). Moreover, focusing only on the so-called organic intellectuals within movements – who often are the ones doing work that would be recognized by academia – erases the *intellectual* aspects of the technical and organizational work: we need to look at the whole picture and broaden our notion of valuable knowledge and theory (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, p. 113). We need to recognize social movements as knowledge and theory creators in their own right. Casas-Cortés et al highlight that studying what they call *knowledge-practices*, within social movements means not always focusing on the spectacle of the protest or the external discourses, but looking at the mundane everyday activities of movements – the meetings, the day to day organizing, planning, banner making ect. (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, pp. 44–45).

The Political Theory of Social Movements

When social movement activists are evaluating their experiences based on their shared – or negotiated – value system they are making political theory (E. Anderson, 2004, p. 5; Osterweil, 2013, pp. 606–609; Vincent, 2004, p. 9). When social movements are building alternative infrastructure, e.g., in agriculture, care work or markets, they are creating political theory (P. Rosset, 2020, pp. 50–51). Sometimes movements

create new concepts – like the international peasants' movement La Vía Campesina (LVC) who coined the now widely used term food sovereignty, based on both the practices and the aspirations of their members (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 532; Desmarais, 2007, pp. 34–36). Below in table 1 I have tried to visualize the example of LVC and food sovereignty.

Table 1 Overview of the connection between practices, political theory of social movements and how it can intervene into academic literature, self-made

The work of social movements	**Practice** (Example: La Via Campesina practicing democratic agroecological farming) ⟺	**Political Theory** (Example: La Via Campesina coining the term Food Sovereignty)
Interventions into academic literature	**Academic literature** (Example: Food sovereignty offers a more holistic and democratic approach to food systems than food security)	

So, as explained above practices (such as prefiguring agroecology) and theoretical discussion (such as how to describe or understand those practices) are in a constant iterative process of shaping one another. This is what Eyerman and Jamison describe in the interaction of a movements cosmology, organization and technology (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 71–74). Instead, I label the organization and technology *practice* and the cosmology *political theory*. And in this constant iterative process between the internal discussions of the movement of values and goals being shaped by and shaping the practices of the movement theory is born. In the example of the LVC coining food sovereignty, the movement obviously based this concept on both the practices of the movement and the aspirations and goals of the movement as food sovereignty has not been achieved globally. Moreover, the theory and practices of food sovereignty was and is a powerful intervention into academic literature, and my point is that there are many other similarly powerful interventions that we are missing by ignoring the political theory of social movements.

However, most of the time social movements, like academic theorists, redefine or repurpose already existing concepts or theories, and as we do not expect all academics to come up with generation defining concepts we should not expect this of movements either (Brones, 2018; della Porta, 2013, pp. 6–9; Desmarais, 2007, pp. 100–101; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 71–72; LVC, 2018b, p. 16). And there can of course be more than one theory within a movement. These political theories are created through the discussions, the activism, the alliances, the campaigns and the organization of a social movement, or their *cognitive praxis* (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991), which prefigure a different world. Some movements explicitly share the political theory they create, while others only share it internally through their praxis. The leaders presenting the theory to the public, of course influence how it is framed, but they are not the creators – the movements are. The point of

research into the political theory of social movements is both to critically engage with it and mobilize it to new contexts by documenting it. Moreover, as Isaac et al., show a cognitive approach is well suited for studying the practical learning that takes place within social movements (Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 163–164).

What this theory chapter has aimed to accomplish is, thereby, to carve out a space for the political theory created by social movements in general, and peasant movements in particular, rather than present the theoretical framework through which they will be analysed. This thesis exists in the intersections between social movement and political theory research, and so the theory of the movement is the theoretical basis of this thesis.

Why political theory?

So, if we have both prefiguration and cognitive praxis as concepts why talk of *social movement theory?* While both prefigurative politics and cognitive praxis are useful terms, they don't fully express the same as social movement *theory* does. As shown below while only some social movements use prefiguration as a strategy *all* social movements prefigure. However, their theory is more than what they prefigure, it is also their discourses that might clash with their practices, and more importantly, their history. Prefiguration has tendency to be temporally more focused on the future in the present, and not as much the past in the present, which is crucial within a decolonial approach, as I return to below. While cognitive praxis is a great concept to describe the processes of theorization within social movements, it is both a very academic term and a term that does not centre the potential cohesiveness of social movement theories. Even though it is quite radical that Eyerman and Jamison considers both physical and mental praxis part of *cognitive* praxis, thereby surpassing the dichotomy of mind and body, the concept of what is *cognitive*, is still very loaded. Moreover, labelling it theory rather than cognitive praxis underscores that something has been created, and equates it to what is created within academia. This is, thereby, not so much a disagreement as it is a matter of presentation – I would say that through their cognitive praxis social movements create theory encompassing of a cosmological, a technical and an organizational dimension.

Classic social movement concepts such as frames or discourse captures some of what political theory does, but not all of it. Frames are a communicative expression of that political theory, while the movement's discourses make up part of the movement's political theory (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 68–69). Using frame or discourse would, therefore, only be telling part of the story leaving out the technological and organizational dimensions. Second, political theory is chosen rather than ideology, as ideology comes plagued with misconceptions and prejudices, and has often been seen as an object of study rather than thought to be engaged in dialogue (Vincent, 2004, pp. 66–67, 71; Walder, 2009, p. 406). Using political theory instead is thereby a way of rehabilitating the cognitive praxis of social movements within academia, as something that is both normative and to be taken seriously. To be clear, choosing political theory over ideology does not mean moving away from normativity, quite the opposite. I assume that all theory is

normative and that creating theory is a universal human practice, but unlike classical western normative theory, I do not assume that reality can be explained *as a whole* (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 76–77, 88; hooks, 1991, pp. 7–8; Vincent, 2004, pp. 3, 19–21). Third, *political* theory rather than the broader *theory* or *philosophy,* underscores that these theories are grounded in the political; in actively thinking about how we can shape our world to our ideals. I consider Freire's pedagogy political theory about how and why to change the world, and for the same reasons I consider the KPL's pedagogical theory to be political theory. All of the theories presented in chapter 5-9 focus on why the world is how it is, how the world should look, and what the KPL needs to do to achieve this – that is political theory.

Political theory is thereby somewhere between the completely abstract theory, and the strict confines and expectations associated with ideology. Of course, political theory is not an unproblematic term. Many will associate it with ivory tower-esque academia and with more sinister ways of controlling human life. However, by challenging the classic westernized Cartesian notion of (political) theory hopefully this concept can be opened up and expanded. As Andrew Vincent argues, not only the "object" of theory but also the *process* of theorization should be opened up to critical scrutiny (Vincent, 2004, p. 2).

This project leans on more classical conceptions of theory, quite literally, in terms of the original Greek meaning of theory as observation, however, in section 2.3 it will be outlined in which ways it differs. I do not take an institutional or historical approach to political theory, as the former applies a very narrow perspective on what political theory entails, while the latter tends to compartmentalize historical periods rather than acknowledging that history is ever present (Vincent, 2004, p. 21). This compartmentalizing of history, both in time and space, is problematic as it has allowed social scientists to overlook the different ways history in general, and colonialism specifically, still impacts people today (Bhambra, 2007, pp. 21–22). Any project that attempts to go against this, and situate the knowledge produced, will be viewed as partial in the double sense: both as incomplete and non-neutral, something I return to below (E. Anderson, 2004, pp. 4–6). Instead, this project adopts Gurminder K. Bhambra's view of history as fundamentally connected. Therefore, when I refer to situating social movements or theories historically, it means to highlight the historical context in which they exist, in order to understand the origins of the power relations of this context, and think *with* that past (Bhambra, 2007, pp. 30–31; Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018, pp. 72–73; Turner, 2016, pp. 2–4; Vincent, 2004, p. 21). This is crucial as it allows for knowledge that has been silenced or delegitimized in the past to be taken seriously in the present, and for social movements to be recontextualized.

However, this begs the central and final question: Does this knowledge need to be "rehabilitated" in the eyes of academia in the first place?

First, I believe that we have an ethical responsibility to create space for indigenous and other marginalized knowledges within academia: when we take the theories and scholarship of indigenous, racialized and other marginalized people seriously, it counteracts the dehumanization that western science has helped justify for

centuries through epistemic justice (Mbembe, 2015, pp. 13–17; Smith, 2012, pp. 214–215, 222–223; Todd, 2015, p. 251, 2016, pp. 9–10). However, as I return to below, the format of a PhD thesis only allows for my voice to come through on top of the fact that mobilizing this knowledge in academia still privileges academia as a knowledge arbiter, which is a constant dilemma within Academic participatory Action Research projects (Janes, 2016, pp. 76–78). Second, I do not believe that such a translation process is necessary for the movements to exist, thrive or even for movements to conduct and disseminate their own research, but I do believe it is necessary for academia to continue to be relevant. In a time where we are frantically searching for solutions and answers to global crises and dilemmas it is harmful to continue erasing, ignoring or distorting the voices that are trying to show us the way forward. It is important that we, not "give" a voice to the voiceless, and instead start listening to what they have been saying all along, and go from a westernized monoculture of knowledge to an pluriversal approach to knowledge, where different knowledges interact and enrich each other (Arvin et al., 2013, p. 14; Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 89; Mbembe, 2015, pp. 18–19). Lastly, the point of engaging with social movement theory is not to assimilate it with academic theory, nor to hold it to the same standards (Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018, pp. 81–82; Wright, 2010, pp. 20–21). But it is to make sure that it is taken seriously, which is why this thesis will treat the theories of the KPL as seriously as I am expected to take theories of other academic authors seriously.

3. Case context and selection: Kenya and the Kenyan Peasants League

As context is crucial for my decolonial feminist epistemology, I want to introduce the reader briefly to the Kenyan context before I introduce the KPL. Setting up the context for the KPL I need to explain the current political system and the Kenyan governments' attitudes towards industrial agriculture, which are highly related to the struggles around independence and the country's place in the neo-liberal, neo-colonial economy. This chapter also briefly introduces the reader to the principles of industrial agriculture, the green revolutions and the neo-agro-colonialist economy that is built around it, in order to then situate industrial agriculture in Kenya.

Retelling the history of any of the formerly colonized countries in Africa always risks telling the story through the eyes of the colonizer, as much of the written material we have are colonial documents, or histories written by people from the colonial centre. It is a difficult tight rope to walk, between highlighting how devasting the impact of the varying colonial regimes was, while also not reducing all of the complex history of these countries down to the actions of the colonizing countries. This is definitely also the case for Kenya, and I will do my best to, briefly, tell the recent history of Kenya through the lens of resistance and social movements.

Squatters and schools

It is common knowledge that the borders of Africa are completely random and were drawn with rulers in European state rooms with no sense of who were actually living on the ground (Meredith, 2005, pp. 1–2, 464–465). As such, existing within the borders drawn up in Europe for Kenya, there are around 42 ethnic groups and a comparable number of languages (Githiora, 2008, pp. 235–239; Owuor, 2007, p. 23; UN, 2014, p. 7). The more famous ethnic groups are the Luo, Kamba, Kalenjin and of course the largest ethnic group, the Kikuyu which account for about 22 % of the population (UN, 2014, p. 7). The British rulers would treat these different ethnic groups very differently depending on the size of the groups and their proximity to resources, and while many of these ethnic groups lived together in their own territories prior to colonization, the British upheld an even sharper segregation of the different ethnic groups (Mati, 2020, pp. 6–7).

Many of Kenya's Kikuyus lived as so called squatters during colonial rule, on land owned by British settlers, as subsistence farmers and day laborers for the British settlers (Kanogo, 1987, pp. 14–22, 35–38). After WW2, 8.000 white settlers arrived in Kenya, and they expected land which meant many squatters lost their land and grazing rights. Moreover, many Kenyans had fought in WW2 for Britain and returned with war experience and high expectations that were quickly crushed by the reality of the colonial regime. This is in short what sparked the Mau Mau uprising in the 1950s (Kanogo, 1987, pp. 114–120, 126–131; Meredith, 2005, pp. 11–12, 80–85). Leading up to this moment was a lot of institutional mobilizing for independence,

with prominent figures such as Jomo Kenyatta and Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, and grassroots mobilizing, and a big part of that was the Kikuyu Independent School movement.

The first official schools in Kenya were missionary schools, many of which still exist, and education was meant to create a small elite within the indigenous Kenyan population. The school system was modelled after the British school system with a primary, secondary and high school, and while it has been reformed since the school system maintains the same overall structure (Githiora, 2008, pp. 236–237). All educational systems are political, as Freire reminds us (Foley, 1999, pp. 74–75, 85–89; Freire, 2000, pp. 54, 72–75; Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 202–206), and the purpose of the colonial era schools was also to uphold the status quo: "*The purpose of education during the colonial period was mainly for religious conversion, economic exploitation, and the assimilation of Africans into the western cultures, values, and practices.*" (Owuor, 2007, p. 25).

However, the demand for education was far higher than the missionary schools could provide. Especially the Kikuyu squatters felt that their children were not getting the education they needed, both because there were not enough schools and that the few schools available mainly taught vocational training and often did not teach English, which was seen as the tool to achieve success in the colonial regime (Kanogo, 1987, pp. 78–79; Natsoulas, 1997). The final straw came when the missionary schools banned female circumcision, now referred to as female genital mutilation (FGM), which meant many Kikuyu parents boycotted the missionary schools, and from this boycott the Kikuyu Independent School movement was born in 1929 (Kanogo, 1987, pp. 77–81; Natsoulas, 1997; Stanfield, 2005). Against the racist expectations of the colonial government the Kikuyu Independent Schools grew, and supported the growing demand for education, while also acting as a mobilizing platform. Jomo Kenyatta, the country's first president after independence, for example became a principal of such a school and was a strong supporter of the movement (Natsoulas, 1997).

In the colonial government's paranoia over the Mau Mau uprising, all the Kikuyu Independent Schools were taken over or closed by the colonial government in 1952 (Natsoulas, 1997; Stanfield, 2005). In his book "Decolonizing the Mind", Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o describes his experience as a child of going to school after 1952:

> "It was after the declaration of a state of emergency over Kenya in 1952 that all the schools run by patriotic nationalist were taken over by the colonial regime and were placed under District Education Boards chaired by Englishmen. English became the language of my formal education. In Kenya, English became more than a language: it was *the* language, and all others had to bow before it in deference. Thus one of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gĩkũyũ in the vicinity of the school. The culprit was given corporal punishment – three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks – or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY. Sometimes the culprits were fined money they could hardly afford. […] The attitude to English was the exact opposite: any achievement in spoken or written English was highly rewarded; prizes, prestige, applause; the ticket to higher realms. English became *the* main determinant of a child's progress up the ladder of formal education." (Thiong'o, 1986, pp. 11–12)

This has, in an entire generation, instilled the idea that English is the language of success while local languages, and African languages in general, are backwards and embarrassing. It would be naïve to assume that this assumption is not still alive and well in some parts of Kenya, and English is still the national language alongside KiSwahili, and English is still considered a prestigious language (Githiora, 2008, pp. 236, 245–252).

Kenya was the British East African colony with the largest number of white settlers, which meant that the resistance to independence from the British Empire was that much harder, as they wanted to protect both their economic interests and the white settler minority. The British were not going to give up their colony, and throughout the 1950s the war raged on.

Independence and the Mau Mau

It is important to note that Mau Mau is not the name of the fighters, but one given to them by the British, and Mau Mau quickly became synonymous with savage rituals and cults (Meredith, 2005, pp. 78–79, 83):

> "The rebels called themselves the Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA). Their aim was to end colonial rule. It was the British who called them "the Mau Mau", a term whose origins and meaning is still being discussed today." (Calatayud & Moore, 2016)

A big part of the Mau Mau uprising was taking oaths, swearing to serve the Kikuyu people faithfully, but what exactly happened during these oaths quickly became myth and a propaganda tool in the hands of the British (Kanogo, 1987, pp. 125–128). It is, however, undeniable that this was a big challenge to the British rule in Kenya. While this uprising resulted in a guerrilla war lasting from 1952-1960, that saw the intervention of the British military, and the internment, torture and murder of thousands of Kenyans, the British simply called it an "emergency", and tried to downplay the seriousness of the situation (Meredith, 2005, pp. 78–79).

The Mau Mau War, was thereby highly related to the division and use of land, as it was motivated by the squatters losing land access, and it was a war of independence. However, as many scholars have shown, the legacy of the Mau Mau War has been highly contested within Kenya (Githuku, 2017; Hughes, 2017; Kanogo, 1987; Lonsdale, 1990; Mutunga et al., 2017; Mwangi, 2010). While the aim of the KLFA was to end colonial rule, attacks more often targeted Kenyans supporting the British, known as loyalists, rather than the British, which explains some of the mixed feelings of Kenyans about the Mau Mau (Hughes, 2017, pp. 343–346; Meredith, 2005, pp. 85–86). While Kenya did not gain independence until 1963, it is undeniable that the Mau Mau War, alongside political shifts in Rhodesia, changed the British Colonial regime's attitude towards granting independence, perhaps in all of East Africa, as their time frame suddenly went from a decade to a few months in some cases (Meredith, 2005, pp. 79–80, 87–90). The image of the happy multiracial, mutually beneficial colonies was cracking in thanks to the resistance of KLFA.

While Kenya's first president after independence Jomo Kenyatta, a prominent Kikuyu independence activist at the time, was jailed for being one of the leaders behind the Mau Mau uprising this was never the case, and he opposed the use of violence to gain independence before and after the war (Meredith, 2005, pp. 84–85, 87–90). The newly independent Kenya's economy mainly favoured the new ruling elite, and those previously loyal to the colonial regime, including the white British settlers whose land ownership was protected in the new constitution (Mati, 2020, pp. 8–10, 13–14; Meredith, 2005, pp. 91–93, 116–117). Kenyatta also he upheld the colonial ban against the Mau Mau during his reign and the ban was not lifted until 2003 by the Kibaki government, which then resulted in the Mau Mau veterans finally being able to organize and bring a lawsuit against the British government for the torture and abuse they suffered (Calatayud & Moore, 2016; Hughes, 2017, pp. 345–354; Reinl, 2013).

The rhetoric of post WW2 Europe, on human rights and fighting Nazism, is in stark contrast to how the British cracked down on the Kenyans during the Mau Mau War. Arrests were widespread, random and violent and it is estimated that somewhere around 80-160.000 Kenyans were detained in camps where they were subjected to horrible living conditions and tortured (Meredith, 2005, pp. 85–86; Reinl, 2013). In 2013 the UK government settled out of court with some of the surviving Mau Mau fighters, apologizing and acknowledging the violence they were subjected to (Githuku, 2017, pp. 284–285; Reinl, 2013). The following quote has descriptions of sexual violence and torture.

> "[…]the colonial government also conducted a campaign of mass arrests. Almost anybody even slightly suspected of belonging to the Mau Mau was arrested and taken to a detention camp or prison where they were then interrogated and often tortured and abused. Many women, like Naomi, were raped with glass bottles. Many men, like Kimweli, were castrated with pliers. Few prisoners were brought before a court of law. They were classified according to how dangerous they were perceived to be, and they were continually moved from one camp or prison to another until they were considered safe to be sent to a reserve. As the war dragged on, the administration started relocating a large part of the native population into what it dubbed "protected villages". These were surrounded by barbed wire, guarded by soldiers and resembled the detention camps in everything but name. The "villages" also served the purpose of cutting off the locals' support to the guerrillas. Conditions in both the camps and villages were harsh; violence, sickness and hunger were rife." (Calatayud & Moore, 2016)

It is important to remember how brutal the colonial regime was, also in the 20th century, to not sanitize or romanticize the history of colonialism, and remember how recently these crimes were committed. Moreover, remembering the physical violence of the colonial power underscores the threat that lay behind the other colonial institutions such as the schools, described above.

However, as independence was not gained until 1963, the Mau Mau War was framed as a spat of ethnic violence that threatened rather than supported the struggle for independence, and post-independence Kenya remained on good terms with the United Kingdom (Meredith, 2005, p. 92).

Post-independence politics

Post-independence Kenya, unlike many of its neighbours, adopted a fully capitalist economy with Kenyatta at the helm (Mati, 2020, pp. 8–10), which still shapes Kenya to this day. Moreover, Kenyatta's government also oversaw the compensation of the white settlers for the land they colonized, which meant only those who could afford to buy land had access and a small elite of landowners grew. This angered many, also Kenyatta's fellow Kikuyus, many of who thought the Mau Mau fighters should be compensated with land (Kanogo, 1987, pp. 169–173; Meredith, 2005, pp. 264–268).

Kenya continued its role as a coffee and tea exporter after independence which for many years resulted in steady economic growth, but also growth in wealth disparities as the newly minted national elite got richer, while conditions for the rural poor worsened (Mati, 2020, pp. 13–14; Meredith, 2005, pp. 265–267). Kenyatta started the unfortunate trend of presidents enriching themselves and their inner circle, through corruption and bribes, which often meant others of their ethnic group, when in power. Kenyatta's vice president and successor, Daniel Arap Moi, did the same for his ethnic group the Kalenjin. While the Kalenjin is relatively small ethnic group, they aligned themselves with others smaller ethnic groups (Adar & Munyae, 2001, p. 5; Meredith, 2005, pp. 402–404).

In this light elections become more about survival than political ideologies for voters, and politicians alike, and voting often fell along ethnic lines (Ahere, 2012, pp. 27–28). Consequently political posts became more about ethnic patronage, which is part of the story when it comes to the ethnic violence in Kenya that has plagued it throughout independence, and infamously erupted around the election in 2007 and 2017 (Ahere, 2012, pp. 27–28, 33-; Meredith, 2005, pp. 169–170, 175, 267–268, 702–704).

Activism under Moi

Despite the harsh repression, activism did exist during Moi's reign and this resistance, both locally and internationally, is the reason he first agreed to multiparty elections and that Kenya eventually got a new constitution. Wangari Maathai (1940-2011) is probably the most prominent example of an ecofeminist activist in Kenya, perhaps even in Africa, where she was active since the 1970s. Maathai was the first women in East Africa to hold both a master's and doctoral degree, and she was also the first women in Africa to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in the Green Belt Movement and her tireless activism against deforestation and the brutality of the Moi regime (Hunt, 2014, pp. 235–236; Muthuki, 2006, pp. 84–86).

The Green Belt Movement fought against deforestation in Kenya and the human rights violations happening under Moi, for which Maathai faced severe repression, police violence, and threats of death and sexual violence (Hunt, 2014, pp. 235–236, 243–244, 246–247; Merton & Dater, 2008; Muthuki, 2006, pp. 84–85, 88). The Green Belt Movement was born out of the needs of rural women and aimed at creating green belts

of forestation that would provide protection against soil erosion and provide more easily accessible firewood, while also improving the local environment (Hunt, 2014, pp. 240–246; Maathai, 2010, pp. 21–24). As a young researcher Maathai realized that an accessible and concrete way to support the rural women she met during her field work, was to teach them to both preserve and collect seeds of local trees, and how to plant them (Merton & Dater, 2008). In her ecofeminist approach, she then looked to not only treating the symptoms but also fighting the causes that lead to deforestation in the first place (Maathai, 2010, pp. 20–22, 132–133). The ecofeminism of Maathai was, as I later show the KPL's to be, focusing on the practical needs and tying it to a larger analysis of how global patriarchal neo-colonial capitalism is causing both repression and climate change. Due to her anti-colonial ecofeminist thinking Maathai and the Green Belt Movement were already in the 1970s acutely aware that social justice is linked to environmental justice, and that we need to protect the earth to protect ourselves challenging this nature-culture divide (Maathai, 2010, pp. 115–118; Merton & Dater, 2008).

While Maathai was an ecofeminist trailblazer, the road ahead for women in Kenya is still rough. Gender-based violence is still a big problem in Kenya, and unfortunately the KPL is fighting many of the same battles that Maathai fought. And like in the rest of the world the pandemic has only exacerbated this problem (Amnesty International, 2022). The push back against Maathai was often gendered, playing up the prejudices against divorced women (Muthuki, 2006, pp. 85–89). However, Maathai's environmental activism, and fight for the political prisoners of Kenya, exactly inspired many others to join the fight against Moi, because a women achieving political results seemed to prove that the impossible was possible (Merton & Dater, 2008).

While Kenya was an unofficial one-party system during Kenyatta's reign, because of the repression of any strong opposition, Moi made Kenya an official one-party system, while also eroding many of the democratic rights and institutions previously in place (Adar & Munyae, 2001, pp. 1–2; Meredith, 2005, pp. 166, 266, 383–385). The most visible example was the so called "Mlolongo voting system", which required voters to que behind the candidate of their choice, which effectively meant voting was no longer anonymous. This was so egregiously undemocratic that it helped fuel the pro-democracy movements of the 1990s, of which Maathai was a prominent figure (Mati, 2020, pp. 17–18). From 1978 until 1992 Moi was a de facto dictator, cracking down on any descent, critique and potential oppositional politicians (Adar & Munyae, 2001, pp. 6–8). In 1990 Moi reluctantly agreed to have multiparty elections pushed by strong national mobilizations of the international community of donors, as the international donors threatened to cut off aid on the request of Kenyan activists living in exile (Mati, 2020, pp. 33, 36–37). However, Moi did skew electoral rules in his favour and he won the election in 1992 by a small margin (Adar & Munyae, 2001, pp. 9–11; Ahere, 2012, pp. 30–31).

Moi claimed to be reluctant about a multiparty system because he feared it would lead to ethnic tensions, while he at the same time was fuelling such ethnic tensions as part of his electoral campaign, as other

political leaders would do for years to come (Adar & Munyae, 2001, pp. 6–9; Mati, 2020, pp. 41–42; Meredith, 2005, pp. 402–403). Moi was finally ousted in 2002, when his vice-president Mwai Kibaki won the election. While Kibaki campaigned against the unpopularity of Moi's government and the astounding corruption, which is estimated to have totalled $3 billion of public funds, Kibaki quickly continued the practice of corruption then favouring his own ethnic group, the Kikuyu (Meredith, 2005, pp. 701–702).

From Moi to the present

Movements campaigning for electoral reform and constitutional change have existed since the birth of independent Kenya, and during Moi's reign they continued despite the intense repression (Adar & Munyae, 2001, pp. 6–8; Merton & Dater, 2008). The struggle for a new constitution was finally successful in 2010 after the 2008 election violence highlighted the need for reform and forced elite comprise. The new constitution was consequently highly shaped by the social movements who pushed for it (Mati, 2020, pp. 16–22, 136-138,150-162). Public participation at various levels of government is enshrined in the new constitution, as well as ambitions on gender equity and protection of minorities such as people with disabilities. The new constitution and government from 2010 on, provided a more open climate for activism and protest than there had previously been in independent Kenya.

However, activism can still be risky in Kenya. In 2021 Amnesty International documented that Kenyan Police forces unlawfully killed 167 people and disappeared 33 (Amnesty International, 2022). During the pandemic, covid restrictions have been an excuse for repression and bribe demands from police officers, and it can still be dangerous to critique the government. In the global south in general, environmental activism, and especially activism against land grabbing and industrial agriculture, is dangerous (Global Witness, 2022b, 2022a), and that is also the case in Kenya. In July 2021 Joannah Stutchbury who protested development in Kiambu forest in Kenya, was shot outside her home in Nairobi after receiving death threats. No one has been arrested in connection with her death (Amnesty International, 2022; Burke, 2021; Global Witness, 2022b). However, political protests do take place in Kenya and movements like the KPL can exist, with the ever-present threat of sudden repression – arrests, violence or threat of violence – if they are deemed to go too far.

In the story of Kenya's politics before and after independence another prominent politician, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, from another prominent ethnic group the Luo, played a vital role and was the first vice president of Kenya. However, after being critical of Kenyatta he was first ousted from politics and later placed under house arrest under Moi. So when Kibaki tampered with the election in 2007 and reneged on his deal on power sharing with Odinga's son Raila Odinga in 2007, long held ethnic resentments were exploited by politicians into the violence that erupted in 2008 (Klopp, 2001, p. 477; Meredith, 2005, pp. 266–267, 703–704). The violence was stopped after a compromise was made where Odinga would serve as Kibaki's vice president. A similar dynamic played out during the 2017 election, where Uhuru Kenyatta, son of Jomo

Kenyatta, went up against Raila Odinga. The first round of the election was declared void by the supreme court, and Kenyatta won the re-run election, which Odinga boycott. This again resulted in ethnically charged violence mobilized by both sides, until Odinga and Kenyatta reached a power sharing agreement known as the *handshake* in spring 2018 (Mati, 2020, pp. 160–161, 181–182).

In the most recent election Odinga lost to Kenyatta's former vice-president William Ruto. Ruto, Kalenjin himself, managed to mobilize beyond ethnic lines perhaps because there for the first time were no Kikuyu candidate, which is still the largest ethnic group in Kenya. Moreover, the situation was complicated by the fact that Kenyatta had first endorsed Ruto until he switched to backing Odinga after the handshake, perhaps leaving many Kenyatta supporters confused (Egbejule, 2022). Despite Odinga initially contesting the results, large scale violence was avoided this time around.

Sadly, police repression against protesters has been on the increase in 2023. The recent tax hikes, implemented by the Ruto government to pay of international debt, has been met with strong opposition and protests from Raila Odinga and his supporters as it has exacerbated the cost of living crisis. The protests have been nicknamed *Azimo* after Odinga's political coalition Azimo La Umoja, and these protests have been met with severe police repression. The UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner estimates that around 23 people have been killed by the police, as of the time of writing and that the police are using live ammunition (OHCHR, 2023; Rukanga & Irungu, 2023; Wandera, 2023). Unfortunately, this illustrates how fragile the conditions for peaceful protesting can be in Kenya, and at the time of writing the situation is still developing with no sign of neither Ruto nor Odinga being willing to meet. While it is still early days of Ruto's government it seems that when it comes to the global economy and agriculture Ruto is on par with his predecessors, prioritizing industrial agriculture and export to pay back international debt. In the following I give a short overview of the Kenyan economy and the important role still played by agriculture.

The economy and farming

Since Kenya gained its independence, it has improved its economy and the lives and livelihoods of its population, which is currently of around 52,5 million people. Measured by GDP and GNI Kenya is the fourth largest economy in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) (World Bank, 2022c, 2022d). Foreign aid peaked in the middle of the 1990s under Moi, and since then the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA), or foreign aid, has been falling while Kenya's External Debt of Long Term Stock, or foreign debt, has exploded from 7 billion in 2010 to a shocking 34,5 billion in 2020 (World Bank, 2022b, 2022g). This means that exports have become increasingly important to bring in the foreign currency required to pay back the growing international debt, and restructuring the economy to be export based has often also been part of the requirements for receiving these loans (Meredith, 2005, pp. 370–375; Walton, 2022). Moreover, these loans also put Kenya on the course for more industrial agriculture:

> "In 1980, Kenya was one of the first countries to receive a structural adjustment loan from the World Bank. It was conditional on reducing essential subsidies for farmer inputs, such as fertilisers. This process instigated a shift towards farming cash crops for export, such as tea, coffee and tobacco, instead of farming key staples for the local population, such as maize, wheat and rice." (Walton, 2022)

Kenya is very much a peripheral economy in the global economy, still performing the same (neo-)colonial role of providing the centre of the global economy with quality raw materials, and importing cheap low-quality products in return (Shiva, 2016, pp. 88–89). Kenya is even still providing the core with some of the exact same products as during colonialism: tea, coffee and sugar (Fibaek & Green, 2019, pp. 3–4, 29–30; Wamalwa & Were, 2021, pp. 3–4).

On other, more quality of life oriented, indicators Kenya is also generally doing better than most of SSA: in terms of people living in extreme poverty, defined as living on $1,90 a day or less, Kenya was in 2015 at 37% while the average for SSA was 42% (World Bank, 2022h). In terms of literacy of the adult population over 15 years, Kenya had achieved 81,5% in 2018, better than the SSA average of 65% the same year, while life expectancy in Kenya in 2018 was 66 years compared to the SSA average of 61 years (World Bank, 2022f, 2022e).

After independence Kenyan governments made universal primary education a goal, and it has largely been a success, as Kenya now has a comparable high literacy rate in the region and a high enrolment in primary education, at least before the Covid-19 pandemic (Buchmann, 1999; UNESCO, 2014; UNICEF, 2022; World Bank, 2022f). However, enrolment in secondary school remains low, and unemployment for university graduates remain high (Buchmann, 1999, pp. 97–99, 109–112). While primary education in government schools was free after independence, the school system was gradually overtaken by private schools – often due to the high demand that the government could not keep up with – and eventually fees were also introduced in government schools (Buchmann, 1999, pp. 103–105). Earning enough income to pay for school fees remained one of the primary concerns for KPL members with children that I encountered, as I return to below.

Agriculture is still the main economic sector in Kenya, not only being the second largest export sector, but also employing about 54,5% of the population in 2019 (World Bank, 2022a; World Integrated Trade Solutions, 2022). Any agricultural model chosen, will therefore not only affect the economy but directly affect large parts of the Kenyan population. In the following I briefly outline the industrial agricultural model in general before outlining how it takes form in Kenya. Below I show how the industrial agricultural model use of technology is an *engine of inequality* that affect peasants negatively (Pianta, 2020, p. 14).

Seeds, Chemicals and Green Revolutions

The approach to farming most would consider the "normal" way of doing agriculture is quite a new way of doing things. After WW2 many of the companies who produced chemicals for weapons, realized they

needed to produce other products to survive, and started producing chemical fertilizers. Later came the so called "Green Revolutions" linking manufactured seeds, known as hybrid or GMO seeds, together with fertilizers and the notion that this technology would fix the backwards field of agriculture, specifically in India where it was first introduced (LVC, 2015, pp. 7–9; Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 7–8; Shiva, 2005, pp. 35–37, 2016, pp. 7–8). The introduction of chemical fertilizer was justified through a very westernized view of technology, where it is always seen as positive to replace physical labour. The approach aims to let the chemicals and fossil fuels of the fertilizers and the GMO seeds replace the physical labour of for example weeding, and not thinking of the long term consequences of that replacement (Shiva, 2016, pp. xii–xiii).

Vandana Shiva argues that this current agri-technological paradigm is rooted in the Cartesian knowledge paradigm, that assumes the need for subordination of more-than-human life, which brings us back to *bios nullius* which is this mechanistic view of "nature", as basically dead (Shiva, 2014c, pp. 4–7). In this paradigm, more-than-human-life is considered to be alive to the extent that it serves our needs and is considered dead beyond that. And as shown above, the notion of bios nullius and the colonial principle of *terra nullius* are very closely linked, which we see play out in the patenting of seeds as I return to below (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 24–25; Shiva, 2014b, pp. 242–243, 2016, pp. 70–71).

The reality is that more-than-human life provides services that are crucial to our survival that we do not necessarily notice until they are gone – like pollinators and earthworms (Shiva, 2016, pp. 20–22). When more-than-human life does not (visibly) serve our needs it is not considered alive, and can therefore justifiably be killed: "*After all, if nature is already dead, how can you kill her?*" (Shiva, 2016, p. 7). If "nature" is dead, what does it matter how many chemicals we use? And why is it a problem to commodify it? It is thereby, labelled industrial farming because the approach to food production is mechanistic and the soil is seen as a factory – input goes in, output comes out, combined with the constant thinking of economy of scale, and homogenization of the final product, as profit is the guiding principle (Mkindi et al., 2020, p. 5). It is fascinating that the same people who tout the benefits of economies being fundamentally interconnected manage to ignore how all life on this planet is fundamentally interconnected.

Seeds have for centuries been accessible, shared and refined by farmers the world over (LVC, 2015, p. 4), and traditional seeds are still more productive and climate resilient than GMO or hybrid or hybrid seeds (LVC, 2015, pp. 42–45; Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 19–25, 28–33; Shiva, 2016, pp. 60–63) – but they do not create a profit in themselves, as they do not adhere to ownership, or to yearly replacement through the market. This was seen as a problem to be solved by industrial seed companies (Shiva, 2016, pp. 70–72). Seed patenting is justified by the notion that scientists have added invaluable labour to the seed, erasing the work farmers have done for generations saving and preserving the best seed, and not recognizing that patenting seeds is patenting life (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 17–20, 24–26; Shiva, 2014c, pp. 24–26, 2016, pp. 70–77).

Patenting of seeds began in the US and Europe, and was cemented on a global scale in the WTO TRIPS agreement, and presented as a natural progression of protection of intellectual property rights (LVC, 2015, p. 11; Shiva, 2016, pp. 70–73). TRIPS requires countries to put a system in place to protect these patents, and European countries have pushed membership of the Union for the Protection of New Plant Varieties (UPOV) as the only acceptable way to live up to these requirements (Grain, 1999; LVC, 2015, pp. 10–11). The revisions to UPOV in 1991 tightened the regulations to also:

> "[…]prohibit the agricultural production of the protected variety, including harvesting and the post-harvest produce. […] If farmers infringe the regulation or are suspected of infringement, they can have their houses searched without warrant, their crops, harvests and processed products seized and destroyed, and they could be sent to jail for years. UPOV 91 also makes it much easier for seed companies to privatise farmers' own farm-produced seeds and to ban the use of local varieties." (LVC, 2015, p. 11).

These new seed laws and treaties require seeds to be *stable, unique* and *uniform*, which are criteria only GMO or hybrid seeds can really live up to as traditional seeds naturally change from season to season (Grain, 1999; LVC, 2015, pp. 9–12). In this sense, GMO or hybrids are altered mainly to be able to claim that they are *unique* or *uniform* and enable patenting (Shiva, 2016, pp. 70–71). Moreover, developments in biotechnology now allows companies to not just patent a specific seed, but a *particular genetic trait,* which often leads to bio-piracy, with companies patenting local seed varieties that have been saved and preserved by farmers for decades, thereby making it inaccessible to the very communities it originated in (LVC, 2015, p. 13). Moreover, GMO or hybrid seeds are created with a different timespan than traditional seeds, a time span that fits global capital: yields are not only to be harvested faster, the seeds are also only usable for a single-season (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 20–24). Consequently, the patenting of seeds has meant that farmers are now forced to buy new seeds every year as it is considered patent infringement to engage in the age old practice of seed saving for next year's harvest (Shiva, 2016, pp. 72–76, 2019).

> "It's seed freedom for the corporations but seed slavery for the peasants. Monsanto is selling seeds in India at the same price as in the US. Cost of production have increased tenfold, while prices of agricultural products have plummeted 50% because of trade liberalization. […] The poor who were supposed to be made rich are actually finding themselves deeper in poverty." (Shiva, 2005, p. 30)

And the pesticides are equally important, because not only do the farmers have to buy new seeds every year, but they also must buy the accompanying chemical fertilizers – it has become a package deal. So, today one cannot talk about GMO or hybrid seeds without also talking about chemical fertilizer. Monsanto, now Bayer, famously have produced Roundup resistant crops, a glyphosate-based pesticide, with the intention of increasing yields and minimizing weeds – promising to make life both easier and more effective for farmers. However, the only thing this model has increased is the bottom line for the chemical and seed companies and debt for the farmers, as the yields of the GMO or hybrid are so low that farmers cannot afford to pay for the

high prices of the fertilizers and GMO or hybrid seeds every year (Bunge, 2016; Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 25–25; Shiva, 2016, pp. xvi–xvii, 5). In the even darker cases, these specific "solutions" have led to disease and death as glyphosate is a carcinogenic (ABC Australia, 2018; Baum et al., 2019; Siese, 2019), and unfortunately, debt also leads to death, as it in many cases leads to suicides, especially among farmers in India (Shiva, 2016, pp. 64–65).

Neo-agro colonialism

Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017) argue that industrial agriculture is a neo-liberal, neo-colonial economic structure they call *neo-agro-colonialism*. Neo-agro-colonialism, unlike classic colonialism, is not about out right domination of a territory, but a neo-liberal structure which exploits the global south through land-grabbing and biotechnology (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 14–17). Direct land-grabbing is defined as companies or governments owning land in another country then the one they are based in, while indirect land-grabbing happens through the globalization and homogenization of agriculture globally: Even though the giant plantations of, e.g. soy or palm oil might be owned locally, they are only growing these crops at the behest of transnational corporations (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 13–14). Biotechnology and land-grabbing are, thereby, intrinsically linked through neo-agro-colonialism. The combination of biotechnology and the TRIPS agreements make it possible for only four companies to profit from, and control most of seed sales on the planet today. Since 2016 the global seed market has gone from having six major players to having four: ChemChina, Corveta (DowDuPont), Bayer and BASF collectively now control 60 % of global seed sales. ChemChina bought Syngenta, Dow and DuPont merged and renamed their agricultural division Corveta, and Bayer bought the infamous Monsanto while at the same time selling off other parts of the company to BASF (Howard, 2018). The seed industry has definite neo-colonial aspects, as it creates dependency of the periphery on the centre (Arrighi, 2010, p. 26), and protecting seed patenting has become another of the many requirements by the core economies for signing trade deals with peripheral countries (LVC, 2015, pp. 9–12, 15, 2021b). While neo-agro-colonialism complicates the notions of who colonizes who from previous historical iterations of colonialism (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 16–17), it is still clear that colonialism is the foundation of the capitalist model and through that a racial division of labor (Robinson, 2000). This is why it is crucial to note that the KPL members are low-income subsistence farmers *in the global south* as they face different challenges to their white European peers. Moreover, because of the Marxist tradition's disregard of the peasant as a political figure, despite their historical significance (Feierman, 1990, p. 18; Gramsci, 1971, pp. 6, 14–15; Robinson, 2000, pp. 209, 234), the class position of peasants, especially in today's neo-agro-colonial economy, is heavily under-theorized. Better defining such a class position could take up a thesis on its own, and I hope to be able to do further work on this in the future.

Most of the above-mentioned downsides to industrial agriculture are the economic ones, specifically for peasants. The more tangible and known ecological consequences include erosion of soil quality, contamination of drinking water, pesticide poisoning of farm workers, destruction of biodiversity (both flora and fauna), loss of climate resilient crops, food insecurity and threats to pollinators. Moreover, all of the inputs causing all of this harm are made with, and transported using, fossil fuels, which is one of the reason industrial agriculture contributes so heavily to climate change (Aga & de Wit, 2021; Baum et al., 2019; Greenpeace International, 2007; LVC, 2015, 2017a; Mkindi et al., 2020; Shiva, 2008, 2016). The simple fact that industrial agriculture fails to actually feed the world while it traps its farmers in debt spirals should be reason enough to doubt whether it is sustainable. Adding all the other environmental problems the model simply seems less and less realistic in the long term.

Through the language of development and modernization to eradicate hunger and save the third world, agro-chemical companies obfuscate how these practices do nothing to solve any of these problems. After many a green revolution hunger and poverty is still a global issue (Shiva, 2016, pp. 45–47, 2019), also in Kenya.

Kenya and the Green Revolution

In 2006 the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation partnered with the Rockefeller foundation to create the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), which was supposed to eradicate hunger and poverty by bringing industrial agriculture to the African continent, all to be accomplished by 2020. Selling solutions that have never worked, now on a new continent, AGRA also worked closely with Bayer, Corveta and BASF (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 7–9). However, despite all the lofty goals, claimed accomplishments, millions of taxpayer dollar funding, and continued lobbying for industrial agriculture, AGRA has not published any evaluations of its 14 years of work. Researchers from Tufts University in the US has done an evaluation of the impact of AGRA's projects in Mali, Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya, however, AGRA refused to participate (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 3–6). In the report *False Promises: The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)* (Mkindi et al., 2020), leading researchers from several organizations go through the findings of Tufts, and the results are not overwhelming. As the researchers from Tufts did not receive cooperation from AGRA they solely relied on interviews with farmers on the ground and looked at national data for the period of AGRA's engagement to assess the impact of the project (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 4–11).

In Kenya AGRA focused on getting chemical fertilizers to local distributors, and "*According to our interviews with farmers, many of them cannot afford to do soil testing to ascertain the right kind of crops and soil enhancements for their fields. As a consequence, the push for a Green Revolution has led to reduced soil fertility due to excessive use of inappropriate fertilizers.*" (Mkindi et al., 2020, p. 14). So, while AGRA was successful in bringing fertilizers and GMOs to more farmers, they did not provide any equipment for soil testing, which meant that farmers ended up using seeds and chemicals not suitable for their soil, which has

led to reduced soil fertility. These one-size-fits-all solutions, which assume all inputs work in all soils, is a classic assumption of industrial agriculture, as it again sees farming as just another mechanistic process to be streamlined. This often leads to both environmental damage and economic problems if the crops do not perform as well as expected. In Kenya "[…]*during the AGRA period, the number of hungry people increased by 4.2 million and proportionately remained at about the same level*." (Mkindi et al., 2020, p. 15). Moreover, according to the report there are no signs of an increase of productivity or yields and on top of that there are signs that food became less nutritious due to the decrease of farmers growing local stables like sorghum and cassava, while being locked into growing *one* crop (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 19–22). Moreover, comparing the period before AGRA entered the market to the period of AGRA's existence, AGRA cannot be said to have lowered the level of poverty in *any* of the above mentioned countries (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 24–26).

Unlike, some of the other countries chosen for the study, AGRA's initiatives were welcomed in Kenya and the Kenyan government has itself had different *kilimo biashara (farming as a business)* projects, where farmers who participated are forced to only grow a certain crop or raise a certain breed, regardless of their local soil conditions, rain patterns ect. (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 14–15). Since independence, Kenya has aimed to fall in line with global capitalist markets, and that has consistently been the attitude of Kenyan Governments. When I visited Kenya, the proposed ban on the use of "raw" manure in the Kenyan Parliament was the latest sign of this attitude (Welimo, 2019). This ban would in effect make farming without pesticides illegal.

Studies keep showing how agroecological farming is actually more nutrient efficient, more climate friendly, and able to actually feed the world (Bruil et al., 2019; LVC, 2017a; Mkindi et al., 2020; Shiva, 2016). However, industrial farming keeps being promoted and valued as we are conditioned to see technology heavy agriculture as inherently better and more modern (almost regardless of the results), and agroecological farming as backwards and slow, due to the ubiquity of the westernized Cartesian view of the world. Moreover, there are huge profits to be made for the chemical companies (Aga & de Wit, 2021; Shiva, 2016, pp. 56–63).

However, the Green Revolution has not taken a hold of the African continent in the same way it has in for example Asia, the US and Europe where it began (Shiva, 2016, pp. xv–xvii; Walton, 2022), and Africa has been seen as the last frontier for the expansion of the industrial agricultural model. Which for example was the motivation for AGRA. But as described above the Kenyan case is slightly different, as the country has been more friendly to cash-crop agriculture. In Kenya it is hard to find data on exactly how many farmers are using which agricultural models, but it is safe to assume that not all farmers use industrial inputs, although it could be at a higher rate than other African countries due to the governments support and encouragement of it.

The context for the KPL is, thereby, both one of opportunity, as there is a rich history of activism and resistance which was strengthened after the new constitution in 2010, and a strong history of indigenous agriculture which has not been completely overtaken by industrial agriculture the way it has on other continents. But the KPL also exists with a real threat of repression as they are often flying in the face of government policies and are often met with resistance from other peasants who believe the narratives of industrial agriculture.

Kenyan Peasants League – case selection

The Kenyan Peasants League was founded in 2016, by a group of peasant activists who had previously not organized as peasants, after they met LVC activists in the protests against the 10th ministerial WTO meeting in Nairobi in December 2015. The KPL's founding thereby mirrors the founding of LVC, which was formed in 1993 in response to the creation of WTO (Desmarais, 2007, pp. 74–76, 92–93; Sandoval & Wathne, 2022). KPL, as LVC, advocates for food sovereignty, agroecology, peasant feminism and climate justice, while fighting industrial farming and neo-liberal institutions such as the WTO and the IMF (KPL, 2018). Since its inception the KPL has been quite active within the larger movement, and has for example completed a summer school on Agroecology for local farmers in 2019 (LVC, 2019), and is quite active within their regional part of LVC, LVC Southern and Eastern Africa (LVC SEAF).

KPL being a part of LVC means it is both part of an underrepresented geographical area, while at the same time it is part of the largest and probably most researched peasant movement in the world. The global organization of LVC is structured through an international coordinating commission, an international operative secretariat, regional and topic focused conferences and finally international conferences which are the highest decision making body (Desmarais, 2007, pp. 30–31; LVC, 2018a). The international conferences are held every four years and the last was held in 2017 (LVC, 2016, 2018a). At the time of writing the current LVC secretariat is in France, hosted by Confederation Paysanne in France, who hosts on behalf of the European Coordination Via Campesina, but from 2013-2021 it was located in Harare, Zimbabwe, hosted by the Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum (ZIMSOFF) (LVC, 2016, 2021). The International Operative Secretariat was located in Africa to try and create more focus on the continent, as it was underrepresented in the movement. This focus on Africa was already prescient in Annette Aurelie Desmarais' book on the movement from 2007: then LVC was hardly present on the African continent, and this was something the movement was aiming to change (Desmarais, 2007, p. 29). Today the movement is comprised of 182 organizations in 81 different countries, and is very visible in Africa at large (LVC, 2018a, p. 4). The KPL is one of the movements that have sprung from this focus on Africa.

Adding the work of the KPL to the literature on both LVC and peasant movements in general, thereby reinforces this focus on Africa. Moreover, being a young movement, many of these discussions of how and why to teach are still fresh, especially when it comes to scaling the movement as the movement is still

growing quite rapidly. When I was there in 2019 there was 11 clusters, with one being inactive, and there are currently 11-15 active clusters. Therefore, participating in an academic research project might be useful and interesting for the movement, which is important in a participatory action research approach.

As highlighted above, the literatures on both prefiguration in social movements and agroecology barely covers African movements, if at all, which leaves an enormous gap. The choice of the KPL as a collaborator is thereby aimed at contributing to filling this gap, while hopefully also being useful for the movement, both KPL and LVC.

The movement

As most other LVC members, the KPL is organized in a cluster structure, where local clusters select delegates for regional and national clusters of the organization, and decisions are made closest to the ground. Organizations vary in size, ZIMSOFF for example has around 190.000 individual members, with each cluster comprised of organizations not individuals (ZIMSOFF, 2019). In the KPL, each cluster consist of 10-20 farmers, and there are currently in 2023 around 11-15 clusters in 5 counties: Baringo, Migori, Machakos, Nairobi and Siaya which means there are around 130-260 members of the KPL. Therefore, with the resources and time available for this project it was feasible to focus on the micro-foundations of the KPL through a single case study, as I was able to engage with many of the clusters when I visited Kenya, when there were only 11 active clusters, see chapter 4.

Coordinating between the clusters is a secretariat, which until recently did not have a physical space, but in 2022 is sharing an office in Nairobi with other movements. The secretariat worked as both a conduit between the clusters but also between the KPL and LVC, and it has been run since the start of the KPL by one of the founders of the KPL. The secretariat, alongside a coordinating group of cluster and collective conveners, would often spear head lobbying initiatives and protest campaigns, for example against the proposed ban on manure in the Kenyan Parliament in 2019 (KPL, 2019; Omboki, 2019), their collaboration with other movements to demand a “Citizen’s Debt Audit” of Kenya’s international debt (Otieno, 2021), and currently the campaign against the proposed lifting of the Kenyan ban on GMO Maize (LVC SEAF, 2022). While these campaigns are also an important and impressive part of the work of the KPL, the focus of this project is on the everyday practices of members in their homes, communities and fields, as I explain in chapter 4, and not on their lobby work.

Each cluster has several official roles that are divided amongst its members. There is the secretary who takes notes in meetings and makes sure to schedule and call for meetings, and it is encouraged that this position is held by a young member (below the age of 35), even though it is not always the case. Then there is a treasurer, who keeps the books over the contributions and spending of the cluster, as each member contributes to the clusters, the clusters contribute to the KPL and the KPL contributes to LVC. The KPL

encourages clusters to assign the role of treasurer to a woman, and it was in all the clusters I visited. Then there is a convener, often the person who started the cluster, who is in charge of coordinating with the secretariat and the larger movement. Lastly there are the conveners for the different local collectives, such as the women's, youth's, and men's collectives. These collectives both exists locally in each cluster and across the clusters for all the women, youth and men of the movement, and there are both local and movement wide conveners for these collectives. These conveners are often the ones in charge of sharing news, events and opportunities from LVC and other partners and movements that are relevant for the clusters or collectives, and to make sure that opportunities are passed on.

The day-to-day work is coordinated in cluster meetings, for some clusters it is every week for others it is biweekly. Here they discuss future plans, future local events, future movement wide events and who should go as representatives. They exchange knowledge and seeds, go on field visits to check up on each other's farms, and sometimes they have outside speakers or visitors. The collectives have similar meetings, and the frequency also differs from cluster to cluster. Most of the work of the movement is decided in the cluster and collective meetings, and often shared in different WhatsApp groups with the rest of the movement. Clusters and collectives are free to organize the events they want, while all are encouraged to mark the different days that LVC marks such as the International Day of Peasant struggle and the international Day Against Violence Against Women, but they can decide for themselves whether and how they chose to mark it. The secretariat mainly coordinates movement wide events, such as the summer schools or the national workshop held in 2021, while the local events are only organized by the clusters or collectives. So, most decisions are made closets to the ground, while there also is a level of common coordination across the clusters that are very geographically dispersed, see picture 2 in the appendix.

Through the WhatsApp groups all the different people with roles – i.e., conveners, secretaries, treasurers – all try to maintain a high level of transparency, which builds trust within the movement. The groups also work as a way that people can ask for more transparency if they feel it is lacking, and for people to keep up to date across the large distances.

My visit to Kenya is a good example of the KPL's structure. I first made contact with the secretariat, who then communicated my interest in working with the KPL out to all the clusters. Then the clusters discussed if they thought it was a good idea to work with me. When the clusters had all discussed it and agreed to collaborating with me, then each cluster decided how many focus group discussions they wanted me to host, and the secretariat collected all this information, and drafted a plan for my trip that we then discussed when I arrived. The secretariat thereby did play a large coordinating role, but it was the clusters who decided whether and how to work with me. This raises the question, is the KPL a social movement or a social movement organization?

Movement or movement organization?

I am sure there will be many different answers to whether the KPL, and LVC, are a social movement or a social movement organization. In general peasant movements in the global south challenge many assumptions about social movement, as they are rural, progressive and conservative at the same time, as I return to in chapter 6. Peasant movements seem to break with the idea of modernity as a constant linear progression "forward" as they are seeking to go back to earlier and traditional models of agriculture, while at the same time often fighting for leftists and feminist ideas (Pichardo, 1997, p. 413). This is what I term critical traditionalism in chapter 6.

Often it is hard to fit peasant movements in the global south neatly into the boxes we often place other movements (Accornero & Gravante, 2022, pp. 196–197; Copeland, 2021, pp. 455–456, 458–461; Cox et al., 2017, pp. 24–25): Are they "every day" activists? Are they protest movements? Are they political movements who engage in lobby work? Are they prefigurative movements? And the answer, for the KPL, is yes to all of the above. In this thesis I understand "peasant" to be referring to people basing, at least part of, their livelihoods on farming, pastoralism, fishing, either on their own land or as wage labour, and as an identity marker claimed by movements such as LVC (Edelman, 2013).

Moreover, drawing a hard line between *social movements* and *social movement organizations* makes the most sense when talking about movements that primarily are protest movements, who might be more or less continually organized or solely organized around certain protest cycles. It does not necessarily make sense to make this distinction for movements that are continually organized and less cyclical. Especially prefigurative movements that aim to build different structures, such as peasant movements who prefigure a different food system, will always be a bit of both movement and movement organization, as they aim for longevity of organizing rather than outbursts of large scale protest. Often these movements also engage in protests, and even when they do not they are still also social movements in the sense that they comprise of *dense networks*, often including the immediate local community, organized around *conflictual collective action*, with a sense of *collective identity* (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 21–22). They are also more continually organized, with some degree of formal structures and membership, often taking decisions through assemblies and aiming at reaching consensus through *diálogo de saberes*. In della Porta and Diani's terms the KPL would resemble a *participatory social movement organization*, while being more organized than a *grassroots organization* and not mainly focused on protest like a *mass protest organization* (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 147–149).

Della Porta has shown how eventfulness plays a big role in understanding protest movements (della Porta, 2018, pp. 4–8), however, less work has been done on the "uneventful" work done in movements in the global south, to try to create a different world every day, through small changes and prefigurative work. The prefigurative movements who have received the most attention are the *prefigurative protest movements*

(della Porta, 2018, pp. 14–15) such as the Occupy movement, rather than for example peasant movements in the global south, who engage in protest but does not use it as their only tool (Accornero & Gravante, 2022, p. 196). While the KPL and other peasant movements often also engage in protests and lobby work, the backbone of their work is their prefiguration of a different food system, or their everyday activism – it is the *practice* side of agroecology (Gliessman, 2018a).

So, is the KPL a social movement or a social movement organization? That all seems to come down the formalization of the KPL. The KPL members identifies the KPL and LVC as *movements* and think this to a large extent fits with the more shared academic definitions. In the day to day the KPL is very decentralized and consists of people working together in *dense networks* (della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 21). Clusters had free reign to work on which ever cause or issue they wanted within the values of the KPL and LVC. Some focused on fighting FGM or the land-grabbing of widows' land, while others focused on fighting the full army worm plaguing maize growers, and others still focused on learning more about specific crops such as pumpkins or mushrooms. While LVC is much more formalized – with its regional and global conferences and its rotating International Operative Secretariat – as LVC is a movement of movements, the KPL is more of a mix. KPL members pay dues to KPL and LVC, that are used for common events, and you have to be a certain number of people to be able to start a cluster and join (KPL, 2022a). Moreover, each cluster would have a similar structure, and the secretariat, would coordinate between the clusters. This suggests the structure of a social movement organization (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 137–140).

However, there is something to be said for the members themselves viewing the KPL and LVC as *movements*. While not underplaying the organizational structures of the KPL, what many valued were the movement aspects – the networks members would be able to be a part of, the collective identity and fighting a common cause or common enemy, as I return to in chapter 6, 8 and 9. Here the experience of the KPL falls between the definitions already existing in academia. Moreover, whether it is a movement, or a movement organization is not crucial to the work within the movement – critiquing power imbalances, inside and outside KPL, is not contingent on whether the KPL is either.

Therefore, the question of whether the KPL is a social movement will not take up more space in this thesis, as it would require an entire thesis on its own to develop a new concept of social movements fitting for peasant movements. I hope that this work can help inspire more work on the definitions of social movements and movement organization in the global south (Accornero & Gravante, 2022; Cox et al., 2017).

4. Methodological and analytical approach: Participatory Action Research

Recognizing that social movements create theory and knowledge is not enough - it must also have an impact on the role of the researcher. As Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang write in their seminal text "Decolonization is not a metaphor", colonization is a material process, and therefore, decolonization requires a redistribution of power and resources, not simply changing the way we talk (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 19). At its core, the decolonization of academia requires a participatory approach to the entire research process, to secure that the project does not only benefit the researcher, and to co-create stronger data that will benefit all the involved parties (Manzo & Brightbill, 2007, p. 34; Mkabela, 2005, p. 184; Owusu-Ansah & Mji, 2013, p. 4; Smith, 2012, pp. 10–11, 187–189), which is why this project is built as a participatory action research (PAR) project. The name PAR is often credited to the Colombian activist scholar Orlando Fals Borda, and the methodology is highly inspired by Freire and other critical pedagogy scholars (Fals Borda, 1999) highlighting the connections with movements using critical pedagogy in their practices as well as their research, such as LVC and KPL.

Using PAR is not an aim in and of it-self, but motivated by an ethical stance that the movements should be part of shaping and benefitting from the research on their work, and taking them seriously as co-creators: "*Collaboration means shifting from working **on** social movements to working and thinking together **with** social movement activists as co-researchers.*"[5] (Arribas Lozano, 2018, p. 455). And taking this seriously going in, means also being open to the project not being PAR, if that is not what your co-researchers think is the most suitable or useful methodology for the questions at hand (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 455–457) – PAR is just an approach that can be used for these kinds of collaborations, and the methods chosen are the ones we discussed would be the best for the questions and issues at hand. It is a big misunderstanding that PAR equals field work and interviews, or qualitative methods in general – PAR means recognizing that the choice of methods is not neutral and shapes the project, while also wanting to find the best methods which might be quantitative methods depending on the questions needing answered (Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019, p. 560; Dimmons, 2018, pp. 8–9, 15–18).

For the KPL, approaching research as PAR was their default and their expectation, and in this sense, I was a good match for the movement as I already had this mindset of not only having the project be informed by the needs of academia but also the needs of the movement. Moreover, their preferred method of FGDs is something I have experience with facilitating, and they also agreed that individual interviews were beneficial as I return to below. More importantly, we had an agreement of wanting to highlight the work within the KPL – their motivation being to document knowledge and create teaching materials, and my motivation was,

[5] Original *italics* replaced with **bold.**

and is, to document that there already are solutions to our problems being lived, and critically engage with them. Tuck highlights how decolonizing academia is not only about methods but also questions, and implicit theory of change. She juxtaposes *damage-based research* with *desire-based research*, where the first focuses on documenting grievances and issues, while the latter is focused on exactly emergences, of how people resist and what they create (Tuck, 2009, pp. 412–413, 416-416–418, 422). Tuck's main point is that marginalized communities, for her specifically indigenous communities, have long been focused on documenting damage to then be used to request accountability. While accountability is important, and damage-centred research definitely has value for Tuck, *only* doing damage-centred research in marginalized communities has mainly led to these communities being viewed as *damaged* or *broken*, and for action to be taken after the fact rather than address the structural issues causing the damage in the first place (Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 413–415). While we of course have to address the damage to talk about why something different than the current is desired, the implicit theory of change, of *desire-based research,* is that the communities themselves can do something about it, and are more than damaged (Tuck, 2009, pp. 417, 422–424). In this sense, for me, researching the KPL's praxis as something to learn from, rather than framing them as helpless victims of global economic and neo-colonial forces.

Research into social movements is a relational practice at its core, and a PAR or decolonial approach is focused on making sure that this process is reciprocal (Levkoe et al., 2018, p. 1398; Manzo & Brightbill, 2007, pp. 39–40; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 23–25). Instead of treating social movements as objects to be studied they should be treated as colleagues to interact with (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 455–458, 461). This does not mean that we should only engage with these ideas in a de-contextual normative debate – as if such a thing was possible – we should always situate all ideas within their context regardless of whether they were created inside or outside of academia (Wright, 2010, pp. 20–21). Instead, it means moving away from a notion that we as researchers are a necessary component for knowledge or theory creation to happen within social movements. We can mobilize this knowledge, chronicle this knowledge and critically engage with it (C. Anderson & McLachlan, 2016; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010), which are important tasks, but we did not *discover* this knowledge the same way that Columbus did not *discover* the Americas. I briefly demonstrate why the notion of *discovery* is problematic.

First, when knowledge is always co-created, it is not something that is just waiting to be unearthed by a researcher – it can be new to us and re-created with us, but it will always already be known to the people we are interviewing, observing or participating with (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 58–59, 62–63). Second, the notion of discovery is intensely linked with colonialism, and the notion that mountains, rivers, lakes and certain species did not exists until a white person *discovered* them and wrote it down (Shiva, 2008, pp. 272–274). This goes back to the dichotomy of mind over matter, and the notion of terra nullius, where just as the land is considered empty, so are the people living there: they are savages who have no culture, no history and

no religion; an empty canvas on which the colonizer can paint (Fanon, 2004, pp. 6–7; Shiva, 2014b, pp. 242–243, 2016, pp. 70–71; Simpson, 2014, p. 200; Thiong'o, 2012, pp. 66–69). Which in turn, brings us back to the unspoken, division of labor between academics and activists, where activists are all action and academics all thought. Consequently, moving away from the dichotomy and the notion of the scholar as a discoverer, means moving away from a notion that we as researchers are a necessary component for knowledge or theory creation to happen within social movements. We can facilitate knowledge or theory creation processes, as we often have more time and resources to devote than the activists in the movement, but this can easily happen without us (Morell, 2009). Social movements do not always *need* or *want* researchers to carry out this work, and it is important to respect that as well (Tuck, 2009, p. 423). Instead, we should view social movement activists as colleagues that have a lot to teach us about the work that they do (Arribas Lozano, 2018, p. 461).

While we are definitely learning things that are new to us personally as researchers, we are exactly learners of already existing knowledge not discoverers unearthing never before seen knowledge. When we interview or observe activists, we are *learning* about their practices that we then engage with and present through our subjective lens. What we do as researchers is therefore, more akin to being translators or mobilizers of knowledge (C. Anderson & McLachlan, 2016; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010), than discoverers. This is not to minimize the positive, and frankly also negative, impact that researchers can have on a social movement. Of course, we as researchers add something new to a social movement context, knowledge or theory, just as we do to any other context, with or without our researcher identity (Arribas Lozano, 2018, p. 456). Just as any translation will always also be shaped by the translator. The goal is to encourage a re-examination of the power dynamics inherent in the way we are positioning ourselves in our research, and whether we are taking credit for what they are creating. Holding on to this version of "discovery" upholds the dichotomy of mind and body and creates a distance between researcher and researched. Moreover, it has an extractivist view of research rather than a relational one (Shiva, 2008, pp. 273–274). I believe social movement research is already moving away from this, and that many descriptive studies have been doing this for a long time, and this should be read as a simple reminder that words matter when we are describing our relationships with movements. In this thesis, I therefore, describe what the KPL is doing, and what they *taught* me rather than things I *discovered*.

Being translators mean, that you need to have a good sense of the context, and as a translator you inextricably become part of the process of creation. However, it also means that we are (only) intermediaries – we are not the originators of these theories; they originate in the collectives, while our job is to make the accessible in other contexts as well. This fits well with the constructivist outset of this project. As mentioned above "objective" research is not possible, and seen as a deceiving label, as the researcher will always affect the research. Instead the aim is to produce trustworthy research that is transparent, empathic, critical and

non-dogmatic in its process (E. Anderson, 2004, pp. 20–21). This requires the researcher to be open with their university and the participants, and be self-critical about their own role and portrayal of the participants (Cerwonka, 2007, pp. 29–31; Lather, 1995, p. 54; Pain et al., 2007, pp. 28–29; Smith, 2012, p. 139; Steager, 2013, pp. 172–174). Moreover, such an approach not only refutes the positivist idea of distance, it actively values closeness and sees as a prerequisite to co-creating trustworthy knowledge (Beitin, 2012, p. 248; Cerwonka, 2007, pp. 30–31; della Porta & Rucht, 2013, pp. 11–13).

Being an outsider to this particular movement I am studying, I am constantly aware that I need to be humble and open to learning. On the other hand, my experience from being an activist in similar movements in other context has familiarized me with many of the more technical terms with regards to farming, which also means I need to be extra vigilant in making sure I check whether concepts have a different meaning than I am used to (Weiss, 1995, pp. 137–138). Overall, my previous experience is without a doubt an advantage, not just for me, but also the KPL as it means they do not need to explain everything to me – I understand how composting works and why you would prune a tree. Moreover, I recognize that being a researcher based in Europe, and being a mixed-black light-skin cis-gendered woman, and born and raised in Europe within the African Diaspora, creates a very different dynamic than if I was part of the different local communities featured in this project (Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1400–1401; Smith, 2012, pp. 70–71, 138–141), I return to this below.

Participatory Action Research

Participatory action research (PAR) is research that strives to show, *respect* for the people involved, not just avoid harm but create *benefits* for those involved, and to be *just* (Manzo & Brightbill, 2007, p. 34). This means that research should not only add to academic debates but should also be directly accountable to and benefit those that are participating in the research which corresponds to the decolonial aims of this project. PAR requires the researcher to go beyond simple participation – e.g., in interviews or field work – as it is a framework to engage in collaborative work with organizations, communities or movements. The later are seen as co-researchers who have an equal influence on the direction, methods and focus of the project to ensure that the project benefits them as well (Manzo & Brightbill, 2007, pp. 39–40; Redman-MacLaren & Mills, 2015, pp. 5–6; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 23–25). Specifically, this means engaging the co-researchers and participants in every part of the process, from data co-creation to the analysis, in the degree that they are interested in doing so (Cahil & Torre, 2010, pp. 198–199; Redman-MacLaren & Mills, 2015, p. 5; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 37–39).

PAR, thereby, requires a high degree of participation from the co-researchers – who may not have the time or resources necessary (Redman-MacLaren & Mills, 2015, pp. 7–8). Currently, (April 2020) many of our plans have been postponed as the KPL is busy trying to prepare their members and their communities for the Covid-19 crisis. As anyone who has been part of collaborative work knows, it is an ongoing negotiation of

needs and resources, and each PAR process will look different, with different degrees of participation in each part of the process (Cahil, based on work with the Fed up Honeys, 2010, pp. 181–182; Morell, 2009). It is my job to constantly stay vigilant about bearing the brunt of the work as I am getting paid to do it, without monopolizing the work. As an approach PAR implies an inductive and iterative approach to research, and I strive to remain open to the ideas and knowledges of the co-researchers and participants throughout the whole process.

At the same time, it is also misleading to assume that any participatory approach will automatically be democratic, challenge power hierarchies or lead to a decolonization of academia. Despite efforts to create more horizontal power relations, in the world we are currently living in, coming from an academic institution inherently creates power dynamics whether they are symbolic, monetary or time based, or expressed in other ways (Hasan-Bounds et al., 2020, pp. 58–62, 85; Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1406–1408; Mkabela, 2005, p. 183; Smith, 2012, pp. 44–45). Moreover, as scholars point out, the PAR process can reinforce knowledge hierarchies by having the academic researcher as the one who is coming to "save" or "build up" the broken community (Guishard, 2009, p. 94,98-100; Janes, 2016, pp. 86–90; Smith, 2012, pp. 128–130, 139–142, 174–176). Especially as a PhD student, where the final academic product is required to only be written by me, I am required to write a *monologue* from what is supposed to be a dialogical project (Janes, 2016, pp. 76–78). This requires me to be even more vigilant about reflecting on my own positionality and how my translation of the movements knowledge is challenging or supporting the power hierarchies I set out to challenge. Moreover, while I was in Kenya this made me constantly insist that I was there to learn from the KPL, and at best we would exchange knowledge I was not there to tell them what to do, which was quite easy as I am not a farmer.

As I return to below, unfortunately, much of this work was thwarted by the pandemic, and for this main reason the participatory part of this project was largely a failure, however, that does not change that the ethical considerations of PAR continue to inform this project. Another pitfall to PAR is to focus too much on whether it was *participatory* and not on whether it created the *action* intended, thereby losing sight of why participation is seen as necessary: to ensure the project creates the change needed (Janes, 2016, pp. 94–97; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 23–24).

Field visits/work

Field work, or participant observation, is a great method to achieve both deep knowledge while also enabling collaboration with the participants in the project (Balsiger & Lambelet, 2014, pp. 145–146; Cerwonka, 2007, p. 14; della Porta & Rucht, 2013, p. 16). Spending time within the KPL, and truly establishing connections and trust with the people I meet was crucial in terms of the quality of the data co-produced and in remaining accountable to the movement, and the plan was to return and spend more time building those relationships (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, p. 96; Small, 2009, p. 13). Even though a perfect objective understanding is not attainable, spending time with the people in the KPL, gave give me a deeper understanding of their practices

and discourses (Beitin, 2012, p. 248; Cerwonka, 2007, pp. 30–31; della Porta & Rucht, 2013, pp. 11–13). This method is the most demanding as it requires the researcher to be both transparent, empathic and self-reflexive throughout the entire period, while also being open and adaptive to new fields that open up (Balsiger & Lambelet, 2014, pp. 146–147, 153–154, 161). Being open, means including people that the researcher did not expect, and respecting that not everyone that the researcher encounters wishes to participate in the project or participate in the same way throughout the study (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 42). However, being open does not mean being unprepared, and the researcher should be aware of the context of the field(s). Before going to Kenya, I read up on the country's history through textbooks and personal accounts. Having family in Tanzania, and being part of the East-African diaspora, helped prepare me in a very practical sense, even though there are significant differences between Tanzania and Kenya.

What happened?

If the rains allowed, after each FGD we would all go on a field visit to as many of the participants' farms as possible. Sometimes, separate days were allocated for field visits due to rains. After each field visit and each FGD, pictures would be posted from these in a common WhatsApp group, always with a group picture, accompanied by a rapport on what was discussed and what was taught. It was also made explicit by the secretariat that this was an opportunity for members of the clusters to practice their note taking and reporting skills, which they have used a lot in the last two years, as KPL has conducted several case studies during the pandemic. This is general practice within the KPL, and helped introduce me to clusters I had not yet met, and of course increased transparency of the project as well (Milan, 2014, pp. 449–450; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, p. 21). Especially the pictures from the field visits seemed to be helpful as agroecological solutions to pest control and other common problems were shared in the group, which is a classic farmer-to-farmer exchange method that the KPL already employs (Val et al., 2019).

Embodied field work

As a researcher my physical presence has to be accounted for as well – bodies do matter, not only but especially, when we do field work (Cerwonka, 2007, pp. 33–34; Kawulich, 2005, p. 5; Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1400–1401; Mara & Thompson, 2022, pp. 381–382; Singh, 2017). Being born and raised in Denmark, with a Danish father and a Tanzanian mother, I am read as a light-skinned, sometimes white passing, woman of colour in Northern Europe. However, in Kenya I am read as white or *mzungu*, a European. Being part of the African Diaspora I am used to it as I have the same experience when I am visiting family in neighbouring Tanzania. In many situations, this means that I will be expected to be an expert and that people will take me more seriously than my dark-skinned peers (Mara & Thompson, 2022, p. 381). Personally, I see it as my responsibility to challenge such expectations – which is again easy as I am not an expert on agriculture. Of course, these privileges give me several blind-spots, and make people react to me in a particular way. Moreover, the complexities of my African diasporic identity is both something that created connections and

alienation between me and the people I met (Thapar-Björkert & Henry, 2004, pp. 369–371). One example is that before leaving one of my main concerns was finding appropriate gifts to bring to the people who would host me in their homes, as I know this is traditionally done when you visit from abroad and it was a kind and respectful way to show my appreciation while giving them something tangible to remember me by. I wanted to bring something that was grounded in Italy where I was based, and preferably something food related. Had I been in contact with local Italian farmers at that point, I would have brough seeds, but instead I ended up buying wooden salat tongs with ceramic handles made in Italy. The gifts took up half the room in my backpack, but it was more than worth it seeing the appreciation of my hosts when I would surprise them with the gift. However, this was also something sensitive as I knew I could not bring gifts for every single member I met, so I tried to do it when I was alone with my hosts in the evening, to not create resentment with the other members. I did my best to be open and encourage questions and critiques to counterbalance any potential unease around my presence and build trust.

Moreover, knowing that ethnic affiliations are more prescient in Kenyan society than in Tanzanian, and affect the political landscape to a high degree, one of the things I did to prepare for this, was of course read up on the history of Kenya, but also on my own. I asked my mother what our ethnic affiliation is, just because I predicted that I might be asked. In Tanzania, and especially on the coast where my family is from, ethnic affiliations are not really identity markers in the same way as in Kenya, and I have gone most of my life without even knowing exactly what ethnic group we belong to, because it never came up. As my family lineage also stretches to Oman and India, like many other families on the coast, it is not completely clear where we belong, but Bondei is what my mother remembers being recognized as. Bondei is a small Bantu ethnic group based in Tanga which is near the border with Kenya, and where my mother grew up. Fortunately, it is small enough for no one to truly have a conflict with this community, unlike the larger well known Luo and Kikuyo ethnic groups, which are highly influential in Kenyan politics. Not many people asked, but those who did had rarely even heard of Bondei and were pleased that I could answer the question.

As a white passing young woman, this of course also affected my security as *mzungus* are thought of as being wealthy, moreover as a woman travelling alone, in any country, security is always an issue. Security was a frequent discussion between me and my different hosts in terms of what would be safe, and I appreciated their concern, even though I often was more capable and comfortable in my settings than they assumed. People were very welcoming, and this trip gave me a lot of energy, and I feel very privileged to be allowed to gain not only access to the KPL but have them do so much organizing on my behalf. This was in many ways an uplifting trip. It felt like such a privilege to be allowed to stay in people's homes in some of the most beautiful areas I have ever been in. Spending my days walking through fields and beautiful landscapes, eating fresh fruits and vegetables from farms, and talking with interesting people gave me energy to get through the tight schedule. My previous experience volunteering on farms and as a food activist helped

me feel at home and of course also to gain the trusts of the KPL members as my approach to food align with theirs, while also being helpful in creating the interview guides and prompts for the FGDs (Cerwonka, 2007, pp. 32–33). I was of course very aware of also asking "stupid questions" someone unfamiliar with these issues might ask, to make sure I was not wrongly assuming that I understood what they meant by certain concepts (Weiss, 1995, pp. 137–138).

Even though I felt at home in many ways, the researcher role still created some distance between me and the people I met, as I am technically always on the job, whether I am sharing a meal or interviewing (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, pp. 94–99). Moreover, conflicts or disagreements could be difficult to discuss with others as I did not want to create bigger problems, and I was dependent on my relationships with people especially in rural areas (Malthaner, 2014, pp. 180–181). Luckily, I had hosts who I could talk quite candidly with about worries or issues, but often I would journal about conflicts before addressing them just to think it through and not go into it hot headed (Cerwonka, 2007, p. 2; Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, p. 102; Thapar-Björkert & Henry, 2004, pp. 370–373).

Standing with Social Movements

Ethical considerations are crucial in PAR (Milan, 2014, pp. 447–448). As mentioned above, it is important that the researcher is accountable to co-researchers and participants by being transparent throughout the research process and collaborating honestly. Thereby, making sure that the knowledge produced is relevant not just for the researcher but for the movement as well (Milan, 2014, pp. 449–450; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, p. 21). Trust is key, and requires creating and maintaining relationships, as trust "[…]*is not a binary condition—a matter of "having" trust or not having it— nor is trust some magical element that somehow "is" there.*" (Malthaner, 2014, p. 183). Both a PAR and a decolonial approach is therefore, at heart a relational approach to research. And part of this relationship is going beyond transparency and creating a reciprocal process that is open to the input of co-researchers and participants, both before and after we start co-creating data and centres the voices of the participants (Hasan-Bounds et al., 2020, pp. 81–83; Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1396–1401). Moreover, we need to recognize the collaborative and relational process that research into social movements inherently is – we need people to consent to be interviewed, meetings to be open to observers, internal documents shared, etc. (Cox & Fominaya, 2009, p. 6). And without this collaboration we could not do our job, so we need to make sure that we are not the only ones benefitting from this inherently unequal power dynamic. As Kim Tallbear phrases it we should not *give back*, as that connotes a strong separation, but instead *stand with* the movements, or communities, we are working with (Tallbear, 2014, pp. 4–5). Part of taking a decolonial or participatory approach is building relationships that go beyond transparency, creating processes that are open and listening to the input of co-researchers and participants, both before and after we start co-creating data (Hasan-Bounds et al., 2020, pp. 81–83; Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1396–1401; Martens, 2017, pp. 5–6; Mkabela, 2005, pp. 183–186; Morell, 2009, pp. 21–22;

Tallbear, 2014, pp. 2–4). Again, a PAR project does not inevitably bring about these goals, nor does a high level of participation, rather it is more about this reciprocity.

The reciprocity in a PAR project does not necessarily have to be one to one with the academic side of the project, as academic requirements can be hard to align with community or activists needs. Instead it is more about creating relationships of reciprocity where all parties have a say and respect each other's needs (Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1396, 1403–1406).

Moreover, as mentioned the portrayal of the social movement is crucial, and so are the forms of presentation – e.g. journal article, book, photo exhibition, graphics, pamphlets – the choice of which should not only be up to the academic researcher, and this will be part of an ongoing discussion with the KPL (Cahil & Torre, 2010, pp. 197–198). And of course, the researcher has an added responsibility when conducting research with social movements or communities that have been repressed, marginalized or exist in dangerous situations. Both in terms of not sharing details that can put people in physical danger, but also in terms of the presentation of the people and how it plays into or challenges previous representations (Malthaner, 2014, pp. 22–24; Simpson, 2014, p. 97; Smith, 2012, pp. 205–209). As a PhD student I do not have the option of writing this thesis with the KPL, which is in tension with the ambitions of any PAR project, and I do not claim to be the true chronicler of the KPL. I hope that I am transparent enough for the reader to be able to critically assess whether I have lived up to the goals of this thesis.

Consequently, this project is built to work on two strands – a more activist oriented one, with a focus on creating teaching materials, but also supporting the general work of KPL by sharing my skills and resources. And secondly, a more academic strand, describing the praxis of the KPL. While the two of course are linked – the more the KPL and I collaborate the more I learn about their praxis – because of the pandemic, the two quickly became more separated than was the plan, as I return to below.

In this particular project, the FGD's and interviews revolved around KPL's activism and praxis, which all of the members are open about with their community. A few of the interviews we touched on more personal issues, but this was also people who themselves brought it up and something they talked freely with everyone about. So, while there were no tabus covered, the very fact that I was talking to black, African, peasant farmers still means I need to be careful not to reproduce all the stereotypes that come with that background. It is impossible to tell the story of others the way they would tell it, however, it is the ethical responsibility of the researcher to portray the participants in their research as fairly and honestly as possible (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 211–214; Simpson, 2014, pp. 104–105). And to that I add the responsibility to care for the representation of marginalized peoples. Audra Simpson, studying the sovereignty of the Kahnawà:ke Mohawk community, works with a notion of sovereignty of research to highlight the importance of the community's sovereignty, through her understanding of sovereignty in the research

situation as the right to speak *and* the right not to speak on certain things (Simpson, 2014, pp. 104–105). A right I also claim in this thesis.

In terms of both field work and interviews anonymization and informed consent are important concerns. Before arriving in Kenya, I was in contact with the KPL, and they discussed internally, at cluster meetings, the project and approved of me coming. In order to qualify for a research permit in Kenya, I set up clear ethical guidelines for myself to ensure the rights of the participants. I am continually keeping the KPL updated on the project and encouraged any questions on my research during my time in Kenya, and made it clear that any participation in the project is completely voluntary (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 154–155). This means that any individual participant can reject to participate, regardless of their affiliation with the KPL and without having to justify their refusal to participate. Moreover, a consent form is required to be signed by each interview participant. The above-mentioned procedures received ethical clearance from the ethical committee at Strathmore University, Nairobi, and I received a research permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation in Nairobi.

While I always made sure that people read, understood and signed the formal consent forms, what I always tried to make clear was that consent is a continual process, and that – exactly as it says in the form – they were free to withdraw that consent at any time. Both the individual participants and the movement. In that regard the paper does not ensure that I behave correctly, rather it gives the people I interacted with a way of dealing with it if I let them down and contact information to reach me or the institutions I work for and was approved by.

In terms of anonymization the outset of this project is to anonymize everyone. In my last few meetings with the KPL there have been mixed feelings around anonymization and going forward in the materials produced by the KPL, names will no longer be anonymized, but for the purpose of this thesis, they will remain so. All interviews are anonymized and have been given names corresponding with their ethnic group to try and preserve an accurate picture of the ethnic and religious backgrounds of the participants. The letter after their "name" represents the FGD they participated in. When quoting from different interviews or FGDs I use this sign" ▬" to mark that the following quote is from a different interview or FGD.

Methods

In a skype meeting with the KPL on 1st of July 2019 we tentatively agreed upon me visiting Kenya from October – December 2019 and visiting all four counties that the KPL is present in, staying in the members' homes. Furthermore, we agreed that we will begin my visit with a meeting discussing and planning my stay more in detail. In a subsequent Skype meeting the KPL expressed that they were interested in documenting the local knowledge of their members, which enabled me to understand how the local members of the KPL create and share knowledge. This was, therefore, the focus of the interviews.

PAR can be coupled with many different methods as mentioned above, and can really be both quantitative and qualitative, but often qualitative methods are easier to deconstruct and include more people in (Kindon et al., 2010; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018). In keeping with PAR principles, such decisions can only be made provisionally before the research starts, as it is crucial to remain open as mentioned above (Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 23–25), and we agreed on (literal) field visits to members' farms, focus group discussions and individual interviews. The KPL suggested focus group discussions, as they use and are familiar with this method, and I suggested individual interviews as a supplement to the group discussions, to allow people to expand on their knowledge in a way that is not possible in a time limited group setting. This was mainly aimed at the elders of the KPL, both as a sign of respect, and as a way of documenting the knowledge that the movement knows they hold. This is reflected below, where I go through who participated. Lastly, we all agreed that field visits were necessary to learning about their practices. Field work, individual interviews and group interviews are classic methods within social movements research that are well equipped to highlight discourses and actions within social movements (della Porta, 2014b, p. 229, 2014a, pp. 290–291; MacDonald, 2012, p. 41; Yin, 2003, pp. 85–87). Furthermore, using several methods allows for the triangulation of the co-produced data, increasing the internal validity of the study (Yin, 2003, p. 18).

On top of these methods, the participatory element of this project, especially the creation of teaching materials, also adds a small element of autoethnography in the analysis. Autoethnography "[…]*involves both personal experience and research that connects the personal (auto) to the cultural (ethno) by examining in writing (graphy) the role of the self in a cultural context.*" (Mara & Thompson, 2022, p. 376). Often the focus is on researchers who are a part of the movement or community being researched, which is of course not the case for me, and many autoethnographic studies use interviews and external data sources as supplemental material (Chang, 2016; Masta, 2018; Pham & Gothberg, 2020). Instead, in this thesis the autoethnographic element are supplemental to the other methods, as a consequence of the decolonial feminist epistemology, which calls for a self-reflective inclusion of my own embodied experience with the KPL (Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1400–1401; Mara & Thompson, 2022, pp. 377–381). These elements are therefore not the primary data, rather they add context to how I affected and interpret the primary data. In the following, I present the three different methods, interviews, FGDs and field visits, and walk you through what happened when I visited Kenya in 2019.

Individual and focus group interviews

Interviews are extremely useful as they function as more or less formal conversations allowing the researcher to set the topic (della Porta, 2014a, pp. 293–294; Wang & Yan, 2012, p. 236; Weiss, 1995, p. 65). For this particular project, I drafted the interview guides, that I then discussed with the KPL, and went over at the beginning of every initial cluster meeting, as described below. While, anonymized individual interviews

allows for the interviewee to speak freely about their activism and relation to their group, group interviews gives the researcher a peak into group dynamics while also respecting the collective process of theory creation at play in social movements (della Porta, 2014a, pp. 289–290). A combination of both individual and focus group interviews is, therefore, well suited in a social movement setting, as it allows for both group identity to be represented, while also respecting that personal accounts might differ from the group interviews.

As mentioned above, the focus was local knowledge: the focus group interviews focused on how the activists share and create knowledge using visual prompts (see interview guides), while the individual interviews focused more on documenting individual knowledge and their views on food sovereignty. Lastly, these interviews were semi-structured or unstructured as this made it possible for the participant to take the interview in unforeseen directions that I had not thought of. Such interviews are better equipped for the needs of an iterative research approach (della Porta, 2014b, pp. 231–235).

What happened?

Before arriving, there were several coordinating meetings via Skype, and the different clusters of the KPL had meetings where they discussed whether they wanted me to visit, whether they could physically host me and how many focus group discussions they wanted and were able to find participants for. As most other LVC members, the KPL is organized in a cluster structure, where local clusters select delegates for regional and national clusters of the organization, and decisions are made closest to the ground. In the KPL, each cluster consist of 10-30 farmers, and they have around 11-15 clusters in Baringo, Machakos, Migori and Nairobi County at the time of writing (2023). Each cluster proposed between 2-5 FGD's, and assembled the people in each FGD based mainly on physical proximity to the place where the FGD would take place. Moreover, we agreed that I could conduct individual interviews with willing members. During this period, I facilitated 15 FGDs, with a total of 92 participants, and 15 individual interviews with participants of the FGDs (one individual interview had two people in it), as summarized below in table 2.

Table 2 Overview of the no. of FGDs and individual interviews pr. County

	Focus Group Discussions	Individual Interviews	Number of Clusters visited
Baringo County	0	0	0
Machakos County	3	1 (1 interview with 2 people)	1 (+ 1 cluster visited me)
Migori County	9	12	3
Nairobi County	3	2	3
Total	**15**	**15**	**7**

Below I go into who participated, and for an overview of the age, gender and geographical location of the participants see table 8-10 in the appendix.

The distinction between individual and group interviews is in the structure of the interview guides. All the interviews were recorded, and I have transcribed and anonymized them all. Unfortunately, I had to cancel my visit to Baringo County, as the unseasonal rains made the roads to the county inaccessible due to mudslides.

When I arrived, I had a meeting with the secretariat where we discussed the schedule, and we agreed that in each county and cluster my visit should start with an introductory county and introductory cluster meeting, and we also aimed to have a final cluster and final county meeting. In the county meetings two or three representatives from each cluster would be present, and in the cluster meetings either representatives from each FGD would be present or the whole cluster depending on the size of the cluster. This ideal process, illustrated in figure 1 below, only happened in one cluster as illustrated in figure 5 in the appendix.

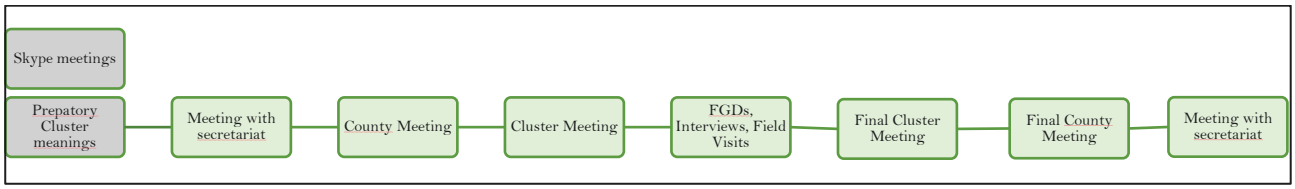


Figure 1 Illustration of the ideal process for each cluster, self-made

The secretariat was not a physical place but rather an organizational support for the clusters and counties. In Nairobi I was hosted by the person running the secretariat which made it easy for me to also have a final meeting with them, giving an overview of the entire process and the themes, problems and requests that came up during my trip before I left.

The introductory meetings were opportunities to align our expectations to the coming days, while the final meetings were opportunities for me to share what I had seen and heard and for the members to evaluate the process on both a cluster and county level. In Machakos county I did not manage to have either cluster meetings or a final county meeting due to ill health. In Nairobi, the cluster meetings were not possible due to traffic concerns and people's tight schedules, which also made individual interviews difficult. Going from one end of Nairobi to the other – for example from Kangemi to Utawala – can take up to 2-4 hours depending on traffic which can be unpredictable. Therefore, we only had county meetings in Nairobi. In Kurutyange the cluster meetings were also not feasible, as I was not staying in the cluster due to safety concerns and commuting to the cluster each day. In Mulo the first cluster meeting was delayed until the middle of my stay due to misunderstandings, however, a final cluster meeting was held. Only in Rabolo was the ideal process followed, even though it was the first cluster I stayed in after Nairobi. Perhaps the size of the cluster – both in terms of landmass and in terms of members – was small enough for it to be feasible to have several meetings over the course of 4-5 days.

In terms of individual interviews, in the countryside it was easier to access people before or after a group interview, or to simply go by their house at a time that suited them if they were nearby. Therefore, there is a larger representation of rurally based people in the individual interviews, see table 8 in the appendix, which to some extent does reflect the membership makeup of the KPL, which is mainly rural. However, in the countryside we were affected by the heavy unseasonal rains that would start up between 14:00-16:00 almost every day and would go on for anywhere between 2-6 hours. Being forced to walk home in the rain was not only annoying, in some places it could potentially mean being stuck away from home, as roads or bridges would be flooded. This highly affected the schedule; we tried to start as early in the morning as possible to allow for either the participants or me (depending on where the FGD was hosted) to return before the rain started. The tight schedule mixed with the fact that the ideal process was not followed in all the cluster's – due to practical constraints or plain misunderstandings – also meant that there was less time in some places to conduct individual interviews. This is evident by the simple fact that the only cluster where the ideal process was followed, Rabolo, has a high percentage of individual interviews compared to the number of members in the cluster at that time (5 individual interviews, and they had 12 members), see table 7 in the appendix. This of course means that the individual interviews skew heavily towards the places I spent the most time and were often with the people who hosted me as they were the ones who often had the time to sit down and be interviewed. The people who had the energy, and were trusted by their cluster to host me, were all very active members within the KPL, so there is a sense of selection bias in the individual interviews. However, it could be argued that this would be the case regardless, especially since they were meant to highlight the knowledge of members.

The final meetings in each county were arranged in a way so that it also coincided with local concerns or events. For example, the Migori county meeting was held on November 25th which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, a day the KPL marks with events every year. In this way, my resources could facilitate general meetings between clusters which, due to lack of resources, do not happen often. This was just one of the small ways I tried to be mindful of creating reciprocity throughout my stay in Kenya.

Translation

In each FGD an interpreter and a rapporteur were chosen by the cluster. In terms of the latter, the KPL rapporteur was designated with the task of taking notes for the KPL to make sure that the organization had its own documentation of what happened. I would record all the FGDs and interviews and take my own physical notes to help me stay focused on the topics being brought up during the interview and to assist with my transcription down the line. For example, in interviews with translation and several people it could be tricky to hear on the transcription who it was originally speaking, so I would note the speaking order in my notes, and add who for example laughed at certain moments, or exited the FGD. Moreover, it was several

times mentioned as a possibility for especially the young members to train their researching and documenting skills, as farm-based research is crucial in not just the KPL but LVC.

As there are many different local languages in Kenya having an interpreter was not foreign in meetings with guests. While it is my ambition to improve my Swahili enough for me to have more fluid conversations, I think having a translator present would have been necessary and beneficial regardless for three reasons. First, many people were not comfortable in neither Swahili nor English, even if they were able to speak it, and giving people the opportunity to express themselves fully in their local language made it possible for more people to participate. During my brief time in Kenya, I visited communities speaking Kamba, Kuria and Luo respectively, while in Nairobi there was a larger mix of ethnic backgrounds and languages, however, there both English and Swahili was more used. Second, the translators were from the particular community that they were interpreting in, which means they were not only equipped to do linguistic translation, but also the translation of meaning and culture which is part of the translation process (Doerr, 2018, pp. 52–54, 75–77; Temple & Young, 2016, pp. 170–171, 173). Third, as this thesis is written in English the data had to be translated at some point, and my experience was that even though one person was designated with the task of translation, in many instances most participants had enough of a familiarity with English to act as a check on this person's translation, and in some instances the group corrected the translations mid-sentence. This makes the translation process explicit in the transcripts and highlights the translator as an active meaning creator. Perhaps, sometimes too active?

An interesting trend, was that most of the translators decided to translate in the third person, saying "he thinks" or "she believes", rather than translating directly and saying, "I think" or "I believe". Only two translators translated directly, although not consistently, and one of them also had experience as a translator in his local church. Translating as an art/practice, the goal is often for the translator to be as invisible as possible. But many of these informal translators did not have this kind of experience with translation, while at the same time being part of the community and often part of the FGD, so seeing themselves as part of the conversation rather than an invisible translator, could be why this was the case. In a way it can make it clear, for the translator, or anyone listening, who is speaking to a certain point – the translator or the person they are translating for. Sometimes, some of the translators would slip in to translating directly for parts of the interview, but this happened most often in the individual interviews, where confusion about who is talking could not happen, as it would often be me, the interviewee and the translator sitting in a remote location. In the quotes, however, I have chosen to change the language back into first person. When translators use third person pronouns in a face to face setting it might make it clearer who is speaking, however, in writing it raises confusion to who is speaking, which is why I have chosen to change the language when quoting.

As mentioned, having the translation in the interview meant that their words were translated in the light of day rather than in the dark confines of which ever room I am transcribing in. However, there are of course

downsides to this approach: First, being able to communicate with people in their native language creates a different kind of openness and dialogue, and having translation, in particularly in the FGDs, of course restrained the flow of the dialogue (Temple & Young, 2016, pp. 168–169). Second, while the translators were all from the same communities as the people they were translating, they all embodied various positions within the KPL. Often these were young men, which for example begs the question of whether this has especially gendered implications for the translation of women. Moreover, personal relationships between translators and the translated could also both ease or complicate translation processes, for example if someone's adult child or spouse was the translator (Temple & Young, 2016, p. 172). Third, of course not everyone was able to or felt comfortable with correcting the translator, and having translation in the interview re-creates hierarchies between English and other languages. As Temple and Young highlight, delaying the translation process is a way to fight "[…]*the invisibility of some languages and their users.*" (Temple & Young, 2016, p. 174). Quoting in both the original language and the translation is something I am not currently able to do, but something I aspire to in my future career, in order to counter act this.

The coloniality of English

Just as in the rest of the country there are many different languages being used within the KPL (there are currently 68 languages in use in Kenya (Eberhard et al., 2022)), so, often English is used as a common language and Swahili to a lesser extent serves the same purpose. While the national language of Kenya is Swahili, the official languages are KiSwahili and English (Kenya Law, 2022). Literacy in Kenya is quite high compared to the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2014; World Bank, 2022f), which might explain why English proficiency is so high, but it does not explain why English proficiency is often better than KiSwahili, which most likely comes down to practice and what carries cultural value. Which leads me back to why it is such a failure of this project not to be mainly in Swahili.

English did not come to hold this position in Kenyan society at random, it has a brutal colonial history of cultural and linguistic erasure, as I highlight in chapter 3. While in many non-English speaking westernized countries, English proficiency can be a class marker and a barrier to accessing academia, in many countries previously colonized by the United Kingdom in particular, English also carries a heavy colonial burden and the erasure of local languages and culture. Moreover, more multilingual African nations are adopting KiSwahili as their national language instead of their respective colonial languages, so with more time and skill this project could have contributed to that development. Moreover, more nuance and context is inevitably lost when I mobilize this knowledge into an academic space through this thesis. This is not to say that this project has no value, or is pointless, because it is not able to challenge the dominance of English, rather this is simply an acknowledgement that this is a major flaw that should not be minimized.

Who participated?

Before every FGD began we would often start with a prayer and a presentation round. I would then explain the project, the format of the FGD and the consent form, as explained above. In Kenya it is required that foreign researchers obtain a research permit, which requires ethical approval which in turn requires preparing a consent form that all participants must sign. We took enough time for people to either read the form or have it translated and ask questions before we started the FGD. After people had signed the form, I would sign it and take a picture of the form and leave each person with the signed paper which includes my contact details. This process was not necessary for most of the individual interviews, as 15 of the people I interviewed already had participated in an FGD, and only 1 interviewee had not previously been part of an FGD, and I of course took time to explain it to them and have them ask questions.

For the FGDs it was the clusters themselves that chose the participants in each FGD, which meant that it was only members who were asked to participate. However, in one of the FGDs a friend of a member became part of the FGD halfway through as they passed by, and they are the only non-member to have participated. As mentioned, my impression was that the groups were assembled in terms of how close people lived to the places picked to host each of the FGDs, and I did not have a sense that anyone was excluded because of their views. 13 of the FGDs were hosted in people's homes, while two of the Nairobi FGDs were held in rented halls as people were not able to accommodate the sizes of the groups. In the countryside the FGDs were often hosted outside on people's land, often in the shade of a tree, though sometimes hosted inside due to rains.

The FGDs were often a mix of age and of genders. This is evident in table 8-10 in the appendix. The KPL is very conscious of maintaining an age and gender balance, as youth[6] and women are two groups the KPL focuses on, and they have their own collectives within the KPL, as mentioned above. Moreover, gender balance is also a general concern in many public institutions in Kenya, for example the 2010 Kenyan constitution states in article 27.8 "[…]*the State shall take legislative and other measures to implement the principle that not more than two-thirds of the members of elective or appointive bodies shall be of the same gender."* (Kenya Law, 2022). This made my work easier, as I could comment on a skewed age or gender balance from a research perspective, and people would be responsive to keeping it in mind, and encouraging, often more women, to participate. It should be mentioned that one cluster was based on an already existing women's group, which of course affects the overall gender balance, as is seen when comparing table 8 and table 9 in the appendix.

Travelling to different counties and clusters also created a geographical diversity that is important when dealing with peasants' issues. In table 8-10 in the appendix there is only a distinction between rural and

[6] Youth in the KPL is defined as people between the ages of 18-35

urban, with a majority of rurally based people, as the largest difference is between urban and rural farming. However, among the rural areas there was also diversity: I visited clusters in hilly regions, flat regions, dry regions and wet regions. These conditions of course result in different problems; it affects whether members are fighting soil erosion, floods or droughts, and such differences could potentially lead to different outlooks on the issues. Moreover, there is also a diversity of urban settings.

While all of the members in urban areas had problems with finding and accessing parcels of land, some urban areas had more access than others, with one cluster in Nairobi for example being able to access small parcels of land next to the train tracks. Lastly, a few of the participants in rural areas were living in semi-urban areas as well, but for the sake of an overview they are counted as rural in table 8-10.

The FGDs usually lasted between 1,5-2,5 hours, and we would also have a lunch or snack break halfway through or after. Consequently, because of the rains it was only possible to do one FGD a day. I suggested 5-7 participants in each group, to make it possible for everyone in the group to participate (della Porta, 2014a, p. 299) – however this was not always possible to accommodate, sometimes there were only 3-4 participants while there were also occasions with as many as 10 participants.

In terms of the individual interviews, I made it explicit as an option for anyone interested after every FGD, but in most cases I approached certain people that represented different groups or who had made comments in the FGD I wanted them to elaborate on – people from different age groups, people who had been active for years and new members, and people of different genders. This was not an attempt at achieving a representative sample, instead it was a theoretical selection where I attempted to get as broad sample as possible of people from the different segments of the KPL (Beitin, 2012, pp. 248–249), see table 8-10 in the appendix. Moreover, as mentioned above, the individual interviews were an opportunity to show respect to certain elders within the KPL by giving them an opportunity to elaborate on their thinking in a way they could not in the FGDs. This is evident in table 10 in the appendix as the majority of the individual interviews are with “adults”, which the KPL defined as anyone over the age of 35. There were several people – both in the countryside and especially in Nairobi – that I wanted to interview but did not get a chance to. One of the aims of returning would have been to conduct both FGDs and individual interviews with the people I did not get to include which of course due to the Covid-19 pandemic has not been possible. However, in the last month of my trip I did feel there was a level of theoretical saturation as many of the same points and phrases were repeated again and again (Beitin, 2012, p. 244; della Porta, 2014b, pp. 241–242). Of course, it would be interesting to see if this is the case especially in a relatively new clusters in a county with less physical proximity to others, as Baringo, and it would also be interesting to discuss new issues with the people who already participated in the FGDs and individual interviews. Not being able to return was a large setback for this project.

On one hand, it can be argued that my selection of participants was heavily restricted by the KPL, however, these restrictions were the prerequisite for people feeling comfortable participating and me gaining access to these communities in the first place (Malthaner, 2014, p. 174). Moreover, having the KPL put the groups together for me assured some level of familiarity between the participants, which is important in an FGD (della Porta, 2014a, pp. 296–298). Of course, as I mentioned, the FGDs seemed to be put together based on geographical proximity which meant that people did not always have close personal relationships, but as a minimum they shared a common identity as members of the KPL.

What was discussed?

At the outset of the project, the aim was to co-create new teaching material for the KPL summer school on agroecology, and to document the different needs and knowledges of the clusters. The focus in the interviews were, therefore, on how people had learnt or taught about these issues, which issues they were knowledgeable about, how one should teach about these issues and lastly the needs and dreams of the group. Each session ended with the group prioritizing their needs or dreams together, to ensure that the sessions also became supportive of each cluster's actual work and was an opportunity for them to find or reaffirm common goals. After the first FGD the interview guides were altered after a conversation between me and the participants of that FGD (Weiss, 1995, p. 52), and it was especially important to them that we do the last exercise of prioritizing goals, as a way to bond the clusters and allow them to plan for the future and hold each other accountable for that future. Practically, each person would pick a card representing something they wanted to access, work with or learn about, and then the group would prioritize their choices from most to least important. If we had time in the final cluster meeting this process would be repeated – I would present the conclusion of each FGD, with their orders of prioritization, and then the cluster would discuss these priorities all together.

In the FGD's I had made prompt cards, see picture 1 in the appendix. The prompts turned out to be very useful as they gave everyone the opportunity to speak, and in some cases even facilitated discussions that led to new projects, as in one cluster that now wanted to focus on beekeeping, which some of them had considered for a while but never brought up during cluster meetings. In all the evaluations people mentioned the cards as a positive experience, and I left the cards with the KPL for them to use in future FGDs.

The schedule

The schedule was tight as it aimed to have me visit all the clusters of the KPL that were willing and able to have me – out of the 11 possible, I only managed to visit 7 due to bad weather and health issues. The second day of my trip I was in a minor car accident, which meant that I had to cancel several days of programming. Then at the end of my trip I got so sick that I had to spend a full day in a local clinic to rehydrate and received different medical treatments for the remaining two weeks of my trip. This has of course affected the scope of especially the individual interviews, as I did not have the energy to move around a lot.

Having me visit as many clusters as possible was a priority of the KPL, and I could sense that each community felt pride in having a foreign visitor, and they wanted to share this "privilege" equally. Moreover, documenting knowledge in each of the clusters would benefit the KPL. The few clusters I did not manage to visit, also expressed deep disappointment in my failure to visit them. Moreover, the lack of time was also the main critique in all the evaluations; they all wanted me to spend more time and visit all the farms of all the members of the cluster. The choice to only spend two months in Kenya was mine, based on the SNS calendar and the KPL's calendar. After the trip, I thought that I should have attempted to have more time in Kenya as this would have allowed me both to visit more clusters and have a less tight schedule. However, in hindsight leaving in December 2019 meant I narrowly escaped travelling during the pandemic.

On the one hand, the tight schedule was a huge privilege and a researcher's dream as I was given an opportunity to conduct as many interviews as possible. On the other hand, however, this meant that every time I had fallen into the rhythm of a place, learnt everyone's names and started to get to know people I had to leave (Cerwonka, 2007, p. 59). For example, religion was very important to most of the people I met, but due to my tight schedule I was only able to attend one church service, even though I was invited to many churches, and I sensed that this could have been meaningful shared experiences for my hosts and myself. This also meant that people were often more comfortable around me after the FGDs or interviews were over, and one can wonder if they would have gone differently had I had the time to be more grounded in each community (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, pp. 54, 98–100). The WhatsApp groups and personal chats allowed me to keep up personal relations while moving around but is of course not the same.

And while it was a great trip, it was also a difficult trip which took me a while to recover from. The tight schedule with few breaks made the accident and my illness even harder to cope with as I had little time to recover and had to keep working while sick. During my final two weeks I was in and out of clinics and had a tough time adjusting to my extremely limited doctor prescribed diet. My hosts were exceedingly kind and accommodating but there is only so much you can do within the prescribed limitations. When I returned to Italy, I had lost 8 kgs in two weeks and was extremely weak and tired. It took me about six months to recover and find out what happened. There is no getting around that this experience wore me down physically, however, mentally it left me feeling inspired and motivated. This was a strange mixed feeling to return with and it took me some time to disentangle the illness from the rest of the trip. Moving forward I would have wanted to make sure that I both had more time to spend in the communities to feel more grounded (Cerwonka, 2007, p. 36), while also having "air" in the schedule in case something unforeseen happened again.

Participation

PAR is about having planned moments of evaluation and action (Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, p. 11), and while I was in Kenya, we had the plan mentioned above, which had the evaluative cluster and regional

meetings to make sure everyone had a chance to be heard and briefed on what had happened during my visit. These meetings acted as both evaluation and presentation of the preliminary results, and a presentation of the representation of members in the FGD's which the KPL was concerned with, as described above. It is with regret that I say this part of the project failed overall due to a lack of physical meeting, and the overall time constraints of the PhD.

Ideally, I would have returned to Kenya several times, and this participation was supposed to be the cornerstone of the project. It was planned that I returned in August 2020 to participate in the seed exchange festival and regional LVC meeting in Nairobi, and potentially facilitate more FGD discussions. From there we would plan when I would visit next, and for how long. However, the pandemic meant that my traveling was not possible, and meant that these events have been postponed, and not yet held at the time of writing.

In the context of this project, me not returning has created distance between me and the members of the KPL, in terms of being able to discuss the everyday issues they experience as farmers. Being in the different WhatsApp groups allows me to stay up to date with the issues that people face, as these are reports coming from the farms, anchored in that reality. But I am no longer anchored in that reality. Moreover, not being there in person meant that it was harder for me to maintain the relationships I had already built with people, and of course even harder building new ones. I could, understandably so, sense more of a hesitancy about the project from members who had not met me in person during Skype and Zoom meetings, but the KPL is a quite open and collaborative organization so mostly people would trust me quite quickly and I never experienced explicit mistrust. However, there was a tendency of people I had not interacted with to treat me as an expert, where I had been able to at least address this assumption explicitly with most of the people I met. All this is simply to say that the human-to-human relationships that is required to collaborate on anything have been hard to maintain and create online especially as the movement grew.

The (successful) collaborative elements of the project were, therefore, mainly when I was in Kenya in 2019, as the online meetings and discussions we have had since most have had a limited number of participants (because of time concerns or limited internet access) and have been limited in terms of time to talk things through because of other commitments of the KPL members participating. So, there has been participatory elements since I left in 2019, but it was not as inclusive in terms of cluster or member representation.

Lozano outlines Joanne Rappaport's three conditions for collaborative research: 1) Creating or having a relationships characterized by mutual respect, 2) commitment to seeing the project as a *long-term dialogue*, and 3) having a group of collaborators who are willing and able to be actively participating in the analytical part of the work (Arribas Lozano, 2018, p. 456). Both the KPL and I tried to foster the first two points through our meetings, and with my trip to Kenya, however, for me to view this as a long-term dialogue, it has to potentially go beyond my connection to academia. While I am not sure to be able to have funding for future academic collaboration, my collaboration with the KPL might have to change, rather than end, in the

future. Although, it is truly the last point – the analytical part – that has been the challenge of this project. Since, I was not able to return and because of the extra community organizing work the pandemic created for the KPL, I have not felt comfortable seeking out specific individuals and asking them to work on this project's analysis. This is something that reflects more on me than the movement: I have both been afraid of over burdening people, who were already very busy, and burdening them with work that would ultimately mainly benefit me. I was also afraid of not being transparent enough in terms of how to ask, and who would want to participate. I am sure it would not have been easier, while of course not easy, to deal with these issues with people face to face as it was planned. Face to face I would also have been able to be more inclusive, also of members with lacking internet access.

In the summer of 2021, the KPL held a national training with representatives from each cluster (1 woman and 1 man) and spend one of the days evaluating the teaching materials that we co-created in groups. I participated over Zoom when the groups presented their evaluations, but I was not part of the process otherwise. However, this highlights one of the interesting dynamics that the pandemic created for PAR projects – because my inability to be in Kenya did not just decentre me from the work, it took me out of completely. In a way this can be seen as a more successful participatory model, as it did not include me at all and was lead and executed by the movement itself, with representatives from each cluster, however, it does mean it is harder to let those discussions inform the writing of this thesis as I am only privy to the conclusions. Being able to be there in person would for sure have helped inform this thesis more by the thoughts of the KPL, while on the other hand me being there could risk me taking up too much space.

While the KPL did allot a large amount of time to evaluate and restructure the teaching materials at their national meeting in 2021 in Nairobi, in their 2022 youth fellowships and subsequent summer school, they mainly used teaching materials created by LVC – which are shorter and focused on the larger debates, and rights – and as far as I know did not utilize the teaching materials from this project. The only thing that was reused from this project, were the prompt cards that I used during the FGD's which I left with Kangemi cluster, and they were used to open the discussion each day during the youth fellowship and were still very popular. This also goes to show, that the more "abstract" teaching materials from LVC about the general condition of peasant farmers were actually more useful in these situations then the ones talking specifically about anchored knowledge, as that anchored knowledge could be harder to translate to the context of the current learning experience. That is something, we could have gotten to through trials and evaluations of the teaching materials, rather than creating them, evaluating them, and then expecting them to be useful. So, while the writing of my thesis is not truly shaped by participation at all in terms of the analysis – aside from the early work in Kenya, the teaching materials are now almost solely a project run by the KPL, which questions whether it failed, and why if so.

On the one hand, it could be a failure of not aligning expectations. Not being there in person made me reluctant to step into the expert role and create teaching materials on my own without any collaboration. Perhaps being *too* scared of reinforcing hierarchies made me fail to do the work I was expected, and perhaps trusted, to do. I did in periods of writing experience strange overlaps in the subjects I was reading, with what the KPL would then share readings on or decide to work on, which did suggest some kind of connection that I perhaps should have trusted more.

On the other hand, while the KPL were the ones suggesting creating teaching materials, which was a need in 2019, before the pandemic, and needs change. In the face-to-face evaluations we were meant to have in 2020, perhaps a new need would have surfaced. At the 2021 workshop many were expressing desires for more structured teaching programs that could provide, particularly young members, with certificates in the same way that some agroecology schools in Latin America do, which is something that goes beyond the scope of my abilities and requires the work of the entire movement. Perhaps the KPL no longer needed *teaching materials* based on their own experiences but rather a *database* of their experiences that could be accessed by all their members. This is something I have discussed with several of the members and been trying to find people with the right programming skills to try out.

What should have happened

It would have been ideal to return, not only to include cluster's that had not already been included, but mainly to strengthen the participatory side of the project, in terms of developing, implementing and evaluating the teaching materials. I knew going into a PAR project with the four year time frame of the PhD was a bit overly ambitious, especially when you consider similar projects taking many more years, some taking up to 17 years, with several cycles of implementation and evaluation (Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019). But I had hoped that being able to return often – and thereby, having many instances of evaluation – could compensate for the comprised time horizon. However, when the pandemic removed this option in the two crucial years where it made sense to go back 2020 and 2021, before finishing in 2022, this meant that the project was both too short and with too few moments of evaluation. It was not truly until the spring/early summer of 2022 that the pandemic situation calmed to the degree that I would be able to travel. However, being so close to the national elections in Kenya, which tend to create dangerous and violent situation, and so close to the end of my scholarship, it was not practically feasible to try and rush a participatory process that should have taken 2 years, in a couple of months.

Other projects have confirmed the importance of being there in person, especially when doing work that is territorially anchored like peasant work is, as much is more easily explained by showing it in the field (Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019, pp. 554–555).

> "While there has been considerable exchange and preparation before the face-to-face meeting, there was little forward progress or common understanding between the diverse perspectives until everyone

> was 'in the field' and able to discuss and reflect together in Malawi. This finding speaks to the importance of experiential learning – even in the curriculum development itself." (Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019, p. 554)

This lesson – how communication online and offline are quite different – was something I encountered a few times during the field work, with misunderstandings happening from people reading WhatsApp messages in a way they were not intended, leading to practical confusions. And these confusions would often be solved after *one* face-to-face talk. Moreover, often people would try to explain something in the FGDs but then instead mention that I should see it for myself, hoping we would have time to visit their farm on the day of the field visits,

> Jaramogi G.: Even now as we speak, if you go to my corn plot now that I planted using that ash if you compare to, maybe, some other farmers who have used the chemical fertilizer known as DiaP, it is quite admirable and even the neighbouring farms are wondering. And I keeps that to myself, and I am sure you'll visit that plot tomorrow during the plot visits. So, I am a corn farmer, that's where I get the school fees for my children. It's from the surplus that I also used to build the pit latrine down there. If there is no corn maybe you would not even visit the toilet [all laugh].

Talking about a food festival at the University of Nairobi that the KPL was invited to, John H. also touches on how separating a farmer from their environment makes it harder for the farmer to express their territorially anchored concerns;

> John H.: And in fact one of the organizers [of a food festival the University of Nairobi, ed] noted, next time we need to have the farmers, and I told them, I remind them that we don't need to have this here in the university, we need to have them in the farms, because when you remove a farmer from [place] and bring him to Nairobi, they see it different, culture shock, to them it become like a tourism [laughs]
> […] Yeah, but it's different when we organize these things on farms, so when a farmer is talking about how I am managing full army worm, then they can take you practically
>
> SW: And show you
>
> John H.: And show you, this is how we are doing it, or my beans, they can tell you this problem my beans how can I help it? But there is no way a farmer can describe a problem facing beans while bean itself is in [place] and you have come to Nairobi[…]

Here John H. is describing how having food-based events in the farms will be better allow farmers to explain the issues they are facing, rather than having them talk about the full army worm or other problems they are facing, sitting in a conference room in Nairobi. As I return to below, the nature of *place-based learning* means that being in the *place* is crucial for learning.

Disembodied collaboration

Since my first trip to Kenya, I maintained contact with the KPL mainly through WhatsApp and sporadic Skype and Zoom meetings. Moreover, I tried to attend as many online events where the KPL was present as

possible. This was an expected shift when I returned to Italy, but it was only meant to be a place holder until I could return to Kenya, with the first return originally planned in August 2020. However, the pandemic removed that possibility, first because of the situation in Italy and the Scuola travel restrictions, and then when the pandemic reached Kenya the unstable situation that of course created.

During these past two years, I have tried not only to stay up to date, but also to actively trying to create the links and connections I had promised to pursue and keeping a look out for other opportunities (e.g. scholarships, trainings, organizations, funding).

While I have been working with the KPL, the KPL Women's Collective has been part of a larger collaborative research project based at Coventry University on Women's Communal Land Rights (Claeys & Lemke, 2020). The research focuses on the intersection of gender and land-rights, and also includes peasant organizations in Tanzania, Mali and Guinea. It started as a pilot project in 2018-2019 (Lemke & Claeys, 2020, p. 2), and originally ran from 2020-2022 (Claeys & Lemke, 2020), and has as far as I know been renewed for another period. As this research started when the pandemic started, the researchers attached to Coventry University were not able to visit Kenya, so all the research on the ground has been done by the Women's Collective members themselves, moreover, the project also included funding for the women to carry out the research (Lemke & Claeys, 2020, pp. 11–12). This has of course led to a high degree of participation and collaboration, which has not at all been achieved by this thesis, and a high degree of ownership of the research in the movement. This project running almost simultaneously with this one, has definitely clarified all the ways in which this project was lacking. Both the structural ways it lacked due to the constraints of the PhD: lacking in time spent on the project with a fixed number of years and demands of taking courses, lacking in funding aimed at being used by the participants to compensate them for their time, lacking in flexibility when it comes to the final product of a thesis. On the other hand, this project also highlighted my personal deficiencies, in terms of my lack of experience with online collaborative work, and my lack of confidence in being more persistent and insistent and trusting that the KPL would say no if they were not interested. Fortunately, this project has not been a total PAR failure, as the constraints of the PhD encouraged me to see the *action* part as somewhat separate from the *participation* in the academic side of the project.

Action

As this is a participatory *action* research project, the KPL is not mean to remain a static unaffected object throughout. The point is exactly to be a part of facilitating the kind of change that the members and the movement are seeking (Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1403–1406; Openjuru et al., 2015, pp. 221–222). And as this is a project also aimed at creating teaching materials, while focusing on the teaching of the KPL it is inevitably part of these teaching activities themselves, however, this part is arguably the least successful part

of the project. It is clear that this project has contributed to the work of the KPL, but not in the ways I had initially imagined. In the following, I outline the ways in which this project has contributed to the work of the KPL.

What were the contributions during my visit to Kenya?

Before leaving, and during my trip one of my main concerns was whether I was contributing positively to the KPL, which re-reading my field notes has confirmed. Looking back on it now, it becomes clearer that I have already contributed in small ways. The field visits and subsequent sharing of pictures and knowledge on WhatsApp inspired new solutions to old problems and demystified what it meant to write a report. As I return to in the analysis, the FGDs were seen as learning opportunities for the people acting as rapporteurs taking notes. Moreover, often the FGDs either reaffirmed a group's goals or a became a brainstorming session on what the group's goals should be. Specifically, the picture prompt cards I used for the discussion exercises were very popular as people said it helped them start discussions, so I left these cards with the KPL, and they are now using them in different trainings.

Another way I tried to contribute was, that when I heard people speaking of similar issues or problems, I would ask for their consent to put them in touch with one another, this could for example be people producing honey in need of people to sell it, or people focused on disability activism who did not know one another. The facilitation of county meetings allowed different clusters to meet and connect, some for the first time, and to plan and discuss projects and events for the future. Moreover, my presence facilitated connections between the KPL and the Institute for Climate Change and Adaptation at Nairobi University which hosted me. However, these small ways will and should only be the beginning of how this project will contribute to the work of the KPL and has by no means removed my anxiety of not doing enough. During this pandemic I am trying to be of assistance in any way I can. However, I was for sure of more use while in Kenya.

What have been the contributions during the pandemic?

One of the ways I have quite literally contributed, although it feels completely natural too me, but has been a positive surprise to the KPL, is to contribute to funeral costs. Being part of the East African diaspora, I am very familiar with the practice of donating money to the family of the recently deceased to help them cover funeral costs and support their lives in general. And I consider it a duty to contribute to these in the communities I am a part of. Doing this of course set of thoughts of the pitfalls of giving too much or giving too little. So, I decided to think of it as any other funeral and contribute what I have contributed to my Tanzanian community in the past, and to flowers costs at Danish funerals, which is around 20-25 Euros – sometimes a little more, sometimes a little less depending on the situation of the family and my financial situation at the time. And this reframing of my relationship to the KPL as my relationship to any other community that I stand in or with, has really helped me maintain a strong relationship with the KPL.

Moreover, I have tried to contribute to every collective raising of funds, whether it be too victims of a fire that devastated much of a neighbourhood in Nairobi or to buy pads for girls whose families cannot afford to buy them, as they lost their livelihood during the pandemic. The later has been a recurring campaign for the KPL Women Collective, and they have had success with collecting a lot of money and reaching many girls.

In 2021 I invited the KPL to teach a session in Colin R. Anderson's online course "PAR and Transdisciplinary Approaches to Agroecology" at the University of Vermont, which led to interesting collaborations on creating the materials for the presentation. The session strengthened the collaboration between the KPL and myself, and also, hopefully, created deeper connections between the students, the university and the KPL.

In 2022 I supported the KPL in their crowdfunding campaign to raise money to buy land for women affected by land-grabbing and gender-based violence, in order to build the KPL Women Collective Rescue Centre (KPL, 2022b; LVC, 2022). The issue of mainly widows having their land stolen by their in-laws is an issue you will see mentioned throughout the thesis, as it was a focus area for the KPL. And some women had suggested to me that owning land communally, as the KPL, that these women could farm and live on would be an amazing support to these women, so we had been talking about ways of finding funding for such a project since my first visit. As mentioned above, during the pandemic the KPL Women's Collective worked with Coventry University, directed by Lemke and Claeys, looked into the condition of women in their cluster's and communities in terms of access to land, gender based violence and micro-credits (Claeys & Lemke, 2020; Lemke & Claeys, 2020, pp. 9–12). Based on this additional research, the KPL Women collective realized how big the need for having such safe spaces is, so that survivors of both violence and land-grabbing would have a place to go. This motivated the KPL Women's Collective to do the campaign in 2022. The motivation for the campaign was how hard it is to find funding for buying land as small-scale farmers, especially the affected women who have basically lost their homes and their livelihoods. However, during the campaign several large funds reached out to the KPL offering additional funding, not for the purchasing of land but for the other related costs, such as building materials. At time of writing building continues, while the office building is completed and has been inaugurated by the KPL on the 25th of November 2022, which is the international day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This is probably the most lasting impact on the KPL's work that I have contributed to, and it is not directly connected to my academic work. Rather it is more directly connected to the academic work the KPL has done with Lemke and Claeys, which again speaks to how anchored this project is in the movement.

Of course, I still have instances of doubting my own motivations for wanting to support the movement, or not being sure of whether my role is friend, comrade, consultant, or researcher. But I have had the best experiences and best outcomes, by just being present – even though I know that is infuriatingly vague – because trying to be a decent human being in the moment, often reveals the right thing to do in the situation,

also as a researcher. It can be a fine and difficult line to walk as a researcher wanting to stand with movements, and especially in situations where university demands are not centred, the best answer is often the simplest – what would you do if this happened to your friends from other parts of your life? Sometimes that means contributing like everyone else, sometimes that means setting up boundaries.

It becomes far trickier when the demands of academia contradict the needs of the movements. Then, I often ended up trying to do both, and not respecting my own needs and limitations, which perpetuates this separation of the activist and researcher identities. A way solution that many PAR scholars point to, is to make the work done in service to the movements recognized as valuable work within academia, on par with writing articles or participating in conferences, but we are definitely far off that (Osterweil, 2013, pp. 612–613).

Limitations

Based on the epistemological outset of this thesis, and the ethnographic nature of this project, this project is not aiming to be generalizable in the classic sense (Earl, 2017, pp. 131–132). Rather, the aim of this thesis is to provide an in-depth contextualized look into the theory of the KPL, which hopefully adds depth to the different literatures mentioned in the following chapters. In relating the KPL's theory to academic literature, I am already *culturally translating* their theory to the academic context, and again from a decolonial feminist approach I do not assume that this theory will speak to all contexts universally. As any political theorist I am adding the voice of, what I believe to be important thinkers, to the pantheon of thinkers, by engaging with and explaining how I see their thought. Rather than Marx, Arendt or another academic thinker, I am engaging with the thought of the members of the Kenyan Peasants League. It is clear that the analyses and theories of the KPL are reached through group meetings and workshops, by members meeting sharing and discussing. So, when I refer to the theory presented by members as that of the KPL, this is what I mean.

The largest methodological limitation of this thesis is the low level of participation in the analytical part of the project, as compared to the beginning of the project. While there was of course still collaboration on other areas which then informed this work, because of the pandemic and the KPL's busy schedule there was a clear failure on living up to the plans for high levels of participation through for example coding. In the following I recount the analytical process for both the teaching materials and the thesis, and end with a brief overview of the empirical chapters. I leave it up to the reader to judge how much of an impact the failure of the participatory element has affected the thesis.

Cycles of the analytical process

In the following I present the underlying analytical process, from which I will present the overarching conclusions in the next chapter. As I recognize the intellectual work of the people I am talking to, and the analysis they are creating in order to present their knowledge to me, I recognize that the analysis starts with

the co-creation of data. As all researchers know, starting to facilitate interviews also naturally attunes the mind to noticing patterns, and testing those patterns out in the next ones, and that is when the analysis starts in our mind. However, it all starts with the intellectual labor of the interview participants summing up their thoughts and experiences for us, and it is important to recognize that labor. Moreover, in PAR, research projects are not viewed as a single linear process, rather it is seen as several iterative cycles of learning, action and evaluation that lead to more cycles, as it assumes that everyone can learn more from each cycle, including the researcher (C. Anderson & McLachlan, 2016, pp. 299–300; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, p. 12). Using specific methods is not what makes a project participatory, a mistake I myself have made previously, instead it is about the mutual relationships and altered power relations that insures that not only the academic researcher is shaping the project. Therefore, I attempt to sketch out what work happened "behind-the-scenes" to create the analysis presented in the next chapters, through the different sub-cycles of knowledge and theory creation the KPL and I went through.

The KPL and I planned to have explicit moments, where I present these emerging patterns that I see, and hear what the KPL members are thinking. Most of these occasions happened when I was in Kenya in 2019, and since I returned to Italy, we have had a number of official online meetings that served this among other functions, and many informal interactions. I do not want to make the project out to seem more inclusive than it is, and this chapter will also serve to demonstrate the lacks.

Moreover, unfortunately, I did not manage to arrange collaborative coding work. This has mainly been due to me not returning to Kenya because of the pandemic, and due to the KPL being busy with community organizing during the pandemic. The KPL received several different grants for other projects during the pandemic, which has made me hesitant to ask. As I cannot provide the movement with financial compensation for their work, I found it ethically problematic, to ask them to prioritize spending time analysing the transcriptions, mainly aimed at fulfilling what I need to do to finish this PhD. On the other hand, the focus on teaching materials, is directly useful for the movement, and here the collaboration has been clearer and more reciprocal. Therefore, two streams of analysis emerged – one around the creation of the teaching materials and one around aimed at this thesis. It should be noted that these two streams of course were often blurred for me, as the subject matter was so similar, and I was participating in both.

Teaching materials

First Cycle

From the earliest Skype meetings between myself and the KPL, the need for documenting locally held knowledge, and using that knowledge to create teaching materials was the main product they wanted from this collaboration. The goal was to use it in future summer schools and pre-summer schools, described in chapter 5, to teach mainly new members about agroecology, the KPL and their political stances. This shaped the interviews and FGDs, and I always made sure to ask people to share knowledge on specific issues they

indicated they had knowledge on, and specifically issues I had heard other members say they lacked knowledge on in previous interviews or FGDs. Each FGD had a section on what knowledge the participants had taught others, and what knowledge or resources they felt they were lacking. After each FGD and field visit either I or the local secretary would share pictures and a small report, on WhatsApp, on the day's proceedings, and here I would always be mindful to emphasize issues that others had previously presented an interest in. This could be everything from knowledge on organic ways to fight pests, the use and creation of manure, keeping bees, the care of livestock, seed preservation and storage, specific crops, and how to prevent soil erosion in hilly areas. The WhatsApp groups I am a part of, and the others that I am aware of, already have knowledge sharing as one of its functions, and in the two months I was there the groups became a precursor of the materials we were planning to make, by already serving this function.

This of course privileged the clusters I visited earlier on, as they were able to have me ask the later clusters about the knowledge they were searching for. However, for the later clusters, I would try to set up direct contacts with people I had met previously, where I thought it might be mutually beneficial – of course asking them individually first if they were okay with being put in contact with each other. Part of my explicit role, as I also presented it to the KPL, was to strengthen the network of the KPL by being able to document knowledge, share concerns and connect people who were previously unconnected due to for example large physical distance. Being a social movement, these networks already exist within the KPL, but as it is a growing movement with clusters in many different parts of the country, often far apart, and me having the resources to travel between these regions because of my scholarship, enabled a strengthening of these networks. This is why it was especially devastating that I was not able to visit Baringo county, due to mudslides, as the clusters here are very young. Since I left Kenya, even more clusters have emerged in both the ”old” counties of Nairobi, Migori and Baringo, but also in new counties such as Siaya and Nandi Counties.

As described above, figure 1 above illustrates the ideal process for my visits to the different clusters, which allowed for several moments of evaluation and discussion. However, as you can see in figure 5 in the appendix, this was only achieved in one cluster, due to practical problems and misunderstandings. The introductory meetings were opportunities to align our expectations to the coming days, while the final meetings were opportunities for me to share what I had seen and heard and for the members to evaluate the process on both a cluster and county level. In the final county meetings, I would highlight the age and gender balance, the projects proposed during the FGDs and then highlight which themes I thought would be interesting to continue with in the academic side of the project. Picture 3 is an illustration of part of one such presentation. I made it clear that leading/teaching by example came up in almost every interview, and that this is the focus I thought I should pursue, and there were no objections for this direction.

Second Cycle

The second cycle starts, when my trip to Kenya ends. Unfortunately, due to ill health on my trip to Kenya and a broken computer halfway through, I was not able to start transcribing until I returned to Italy and bought a new computer. The transcription process was lengthy due to my lingering concussion symptoms. I did not manage to finish the transcription until the end of the summer 2020. However, due to the pandemic the 2020 KPL summer school was cancelled, so new teaching materials were not needed that year anyway. Moreover, in the beginning of the pandemic, the contact between me and the KPL focused less on this particular project, and more on how I and other collaborators could support the several mutual aid projects they started as a response to the pandemic; e.g., setting up connections between teachers and students without internet access, buying pads for girls whose families could not afford them due to pandemic related unemployment, making sure underserved communities had access to water tanks and soap, sharing seeds and seedlings, and sending food from rural areas to Nairobi.

After finishing transcriptions, the KPL sent me a copy of teaching materials, made by the Coalition for Grassroots Human Rights Defenders Kenya (CGHRD-K), which they had previously used, as some members are also a part of this movement. My task was to use this as a skeleton and draft teaching materials based on the transcriptions. To be able to quickly present a draft, after such a lengthy transcription process, instead of using open coding through an iterative process, I used deductive coding by searching for certain agricultural practices that I knew were expected to be there; manure, seeds, goats, cows, chickens, pests, full army worm, GMOs, chemicals, pollution, and crops such as; sorghum, millet, finger millet, sweet potato, maize, casava ect. These were the issues that had come up throughout the process so far, and were highlighted in the WhatsApp reports, and I had noticed again when transcribing. I then coded these passages for whether they were instructions, praises of value, critique of consequences ect., to make it easier for me to navigate the material and find quotes for the teaching materials on various issues. Moreover, I would also open code those passages, on other issues not directly related to farming for the thesis analysis.

At the very end of the template there was a game that would highlight privileges, where I added some more gender perspectives and questions on reproductive work that had come up during the interviews and field work, where it became clear that especially young women have less time to participate because of how time-consuming reproductive labor is, and/or because of the timing of the meetings often would coincide with cooking meals or picking up children from school.

While I was drafting these materials the KPL started receiving several grants for different projects, and were therefore, too busy to confer on these. Unfortunately, when they got back to me in December 2020, I had contracted a severe case of Covid-19, so it was not until February 2021 that we had a meeting on these materials. At this meeting, the KPL informed me that they had decided to share these materials with LVC, and use a grant from LVC, to have them printed as a book. What they felt was most lacking, were more clear

tutorials, not based on the quotes, more on the KPL and LVC and a more general analysis of the global systems that are affecting peasants and more on the situation of peasant women. On the last point I was a bit surprised as I felt I was adding a lot more on women's issues than the original template entailed, but I was honestly still holding back as I did not want the draft to be dismissed out of hand on the grounds that I, as a cis-het woman biased it towards women. This was an important reminder that the biases that we often encounter in knowledge creation within academia – that we are too situated – is often not what we meet outside academia. Moreover, their points show the limits of not only analysing alone, but also only deductively coding for more practical farm knowledge, based on the knowledge they stated they were missing in interviews. In the next round of coding, I focused on these broader debates within the transcriptions.

We agreed that the next step was for the clusters to have printed versions of the draft and get their comments before we proceeded. In the meantime, I drafted and sent a glossary, focusing on complex concepts and the international organizations that affect peasants such as the UN, FAO, ECOSOC, IMF and WTO.

Third Cycle

During their marking of the International Day of Peasants' Struggle on April 17th, 2021, the different clusters of the KPL discussed, offline, the teaching materials. Following the collective feedback that was gathered during the April 17th commemorations, the KPL held a national workshop in June 2021. The training allotted one day to the evaluation of the materials, and present were two representatives from each cluster (1 woman and 1 man), and I participated over Zoom for the last part of this day. The members were divided into groups and tasked with evaluating what was needed and missing from the materials.

Many of the comments were on adding more focus on the political analysis the KPL bases its activism around, continuing the critique of the second cycle. Especially defining terms such as *peasant feminism, climate justice, food sovereignty, agroecology,* and other words central to the movement. Moreover, many were expressing a need for creating a program that would provide attendees with certifications, which would particularly be useful for younger members. This meant that there were also lengthy discussions on how to have evaluations, or exams, at the end of the program. On the other hand, during the workshop it was brought up repeatedly that this should be *a living document*, meaning that the content of the teaching materials needed to change and adapt to the needs of the students at a given time, and so should the certification and examination processes.

After this evaluation we started talking more about the *format* of the teaching materials and perhaps to think of them in an online format that would be easily updated, and to some degree accessed, by both members and non-members a like, rather than the printed format suggested in the previous cycle.

Fourth cycle

At the time of writing, the drafted teaching materials have not been used directly, but has been used as a database of knowledge in the KPL's summer school in 2022, which seems to be the best use of them so far. In 2022, the collaboration on the crowdfunding campaign for the KPL Women Collective Rescue Centre has taken up all of our collaborative energies, and the teaching materials took a back seat. During an evaluation meeting centred on this thesis, we discussed how best to make all the transcriptions available to the members as a database of movement knowledge, in an accessible and safe way. While these cycles of analysis informed the cycles of analysis below, on their own, they can thereby, be viewed as a failure, as they did not produce teaching materials that have been readily used by the KPL. There is yet to be a larger evaluation of the process, I hope to be able to travel to Kenya to do this.

The thesis

As mentioned above, I felt guilty about asking the KPL to participate in the coding for this thesis, as we had other collaborative work that was more directly beneficial for the movement, and the KPL members being busy. The following cycles of analysis are, therefore, mainly me taking lessons from the cycles described above and applying them to my work on the thesis. I tried to take every lesson the KPL has taught me, during and after my stay and *think through* the data (Smith, 2012, p. 12).

First Cycle

As described above the plan was to have meetings at the beginning and end of each trip, first for each cluster, and then for each region, and as mentioned this was achieved for Migori and Nairobi, but not Machakos. Besides presenting my findings and statistics of the interviews I also presented my initial thoughts for the direction of the academic part of my work. Based on the themes that were repeated throughout the interviews and FGD's, one notion kept coming up: leading or teaching by example. From this I thought my initial focus would be on prefiguration and social change. While the focus has remained, in part, on "teaching/leading by example", the focus has slightly altered in the subsequent cycles.

Second Cycle

As mentioned above, when coding deductively for inputs for the agroecology teaching materials, I was also doing open coding for other perspectives, among them the idea of "teaching/leading by example" perspective that I had declared my intentions to focus on. This was not in any way systematic, as the word searches for e.g. chicken rearing or manure composting brought me various places in the transcriptions, but it did start to unfold a focus on pedagogy, which was also being echoed by my supervisors. Prefiguration was for sure still a factor, but this prefiguration seemed to be important from a pedagogical standpoint first and foremost.

At the above mentioned, meeting on the teaching materials in February 2021, I also mentioned a new focus on pedagogy, and the KPL agreed to this. Often, I would wonder whether they agreed because we are on the

same wavelength, which happens when collaborating, or because they trust me and don't find it too important, or worse, because they defer to my academic position. The possibility that it could be the latter, makes me proceed with caution and humility. Not because the KPL needs to agree with every part of the analysis, but because the stated aim is for this knowledge to also be useful for the movement – which both can be through critique or praise – by focusing on something that is actually relevant for the movement, and not just interesting from an academic standpoint. As Bevington and Dixon points out, even though many social movement scholars themselves are activists and want their work to be relevant for movements, much of the academic work on social movements is not read by movement activists because they do not find it interesting or useful (Bevington & Dixon, 2005, pp. 189–194). And the only way to make sure our work is useful for activists is by creating a relationship of trust where they will be comfortable with criticizing the researcher, and sometimes I wonder if that is the case.

Moreover, the request to include more perspectives from women and more on the international structures affecting peasants in the teaching materials, from this meeting, made me realize that I was trying too hard to sum up all that I had learned from the KPL into *one* theory, *one* narrative, instead of seeing them as connected but separate theories.

Third Cycle

Therefore, in the third cycle I did open coding, not limiting myself to any perspectives that might come up, and keeping in mind that if certain perspectives completely disappear – such as peasant feminism, the international political reality, or teaching/leading by example – to look into why they have disappeared.

I finished initial coding of the material, which consist over 700 pages of transcriptions, and went through the 2716 codes again, dividing them into groups. Some of the themes are pedagogy, peasant feminism, indigenous plants and livestock, indigenous knowledge, climate change, climate justice, agroecology, water conservation, afforestation, freedom from debts due to expensive agricultural inputs, and the fight against industrial agriculture and the companies that profit from it.

Fourth cycle

In the fourth cycle I have been writing and re-writing this thesis, based on the coding done in the third cycle, while working with the KPL on the crowdfunding for the KPL Women Collective Rescue Centre. When I had a fully formed draft in December 2022, I called an online meeting with the KPL, where representatives from most all the clusters I visited were able to join. I presented the overall conclusions of the thesis, which seemed to resonate well with the members, and promised to send them the full draft after working in the suggestions of my supervisors. This is in no way participatory – asking their opinion at the final stage of the process does not give them much room to shape the thesis – rather the aim was more transparency than participation as that should have happened in 2020 or 2021.

Overview of the empirical chapters

Teaching is something that already had a very prominent position within KPL, and within LVC at large, as farmer-to-farmer teaching, is one of the backbones of the movements. So, it is not that this project created an unrealistic focus on pedagogy and teaching, rather the focus on pedagogy and teaching was chosen by the KPL exactly *because* it is an important concern for the movement. The first Skype meeting I had with the KPL, they expressed that creating teaching materials was a goal they were interested in achieving through our collaboration. In the FGDs the first prompt was to pick a card representing something they had taught others, to get an overview of the knowledge held in each cluster for the teaching materials. Moreover, it illustrated how much knowledge the members actually hold in their clusters. Then we discussed the ways in which they themselves had been taught the knowledge they were teaching others, and lastly, we often discussed what were the best ways of teaching others. With that in mind, it is not very surprising that pedagogy and teaching was a prominent theme throughout the data, as it was something we discussed explicitly.

While the co-created data touches on many different topics and themes – too many to deal with in *one* thesis – pedagogy and teaching was a red thread through it all, and it is also what I use to attempt to weave a clear picture of the KPL's work in this thesis.

The following five chapters will address the research questions guiding this thesis as follows: Chapter 5 and 6 answer the question, how does the Kenyan Peasants League teach, and what is their theory of pedagogy? Chapter 7 and 8 answer the question, what is the Kenyan Peasants League approach to scaling agroecology? And lastly chapter 9 answers the question, how does the Kenyan Peasants Leagues's context affect their theory of prefiguration? These five chapters also mirror, the five key aspects of the KPL's praxis:

1. The farmer as a student, a teacher and researcher: Seeing the farm as an inherent site for research and the farmer as a researcher. Challenging (neo)colonial patriarchal knowledge hierarchies through their peasant feminist critical traditionalism. (Chapter 5)
2. Learning in movement: Deconstructing the classroom, by seeing the farm as a classroom, and challenging knowledge hierarchies, by making research tools and results accessible through a place-based critical pedagogy. (Chapter 6)
3. Leading by example – prefiguration as a teaching tool for scaling deep: Letting others see, through your actions, that a different life is necessary, possible and a good life, and being intentional about informal learning, in terms of scaling deep within the movement. (Chapter 7)
4. Preaching what you practice, by respectfully, and at the same time insistently, teaching others to scale out: Using a mix of leading by example and actively seeking out to convince farmers who are against agroecology and peasant feminism is the KPL's main strategy for scaling out on a microlevel. (Chapter 8)
5. Living the future, they want and need, today: Basing their prefiguration on the needs of their members and communities, which is tied to a larger structural intersectional peasant feminist analysis. Prefiguration is about livelihoods and organizing for the KPL. (Chapter 9)

All of these five aspects are tied to the KPL's teaching practices which were the focus of this project. When we think of pedagogy, we most often think of classrooms, of black boards, or white boards, and one teacher facing a group of silent and attentive students. However, the KPL's approach to pedagogy goes beyond this. The KPL both deconstructs what research is and what a classroom is, while also using prefiguration as a critical pedagogy teaching tool to scale-out their movement through sharing knowledge in farmer-to-farmer exchanges, as other food sovereignty and agroecology movements do (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 533). The KPL's praxis aligns them with the rest of the critical pedagogy canon and the literature on teaching within other agroecology and food sovereignty movements, while also adding specific contextual differences and nuances that I return to in chapter 5 and 6.

While the KPL is also working on scaling-up through their lobby work, protests and legal action against different levels of government, this thesis will focus on how they use their pedagogy to scale-out and scale-deep, both inside and outside the movement. Below in figure 3 and in table 11-12 in the appendix, is a very summarized overview of the teaching practices of the KPL to give an overview of the coming chapters.

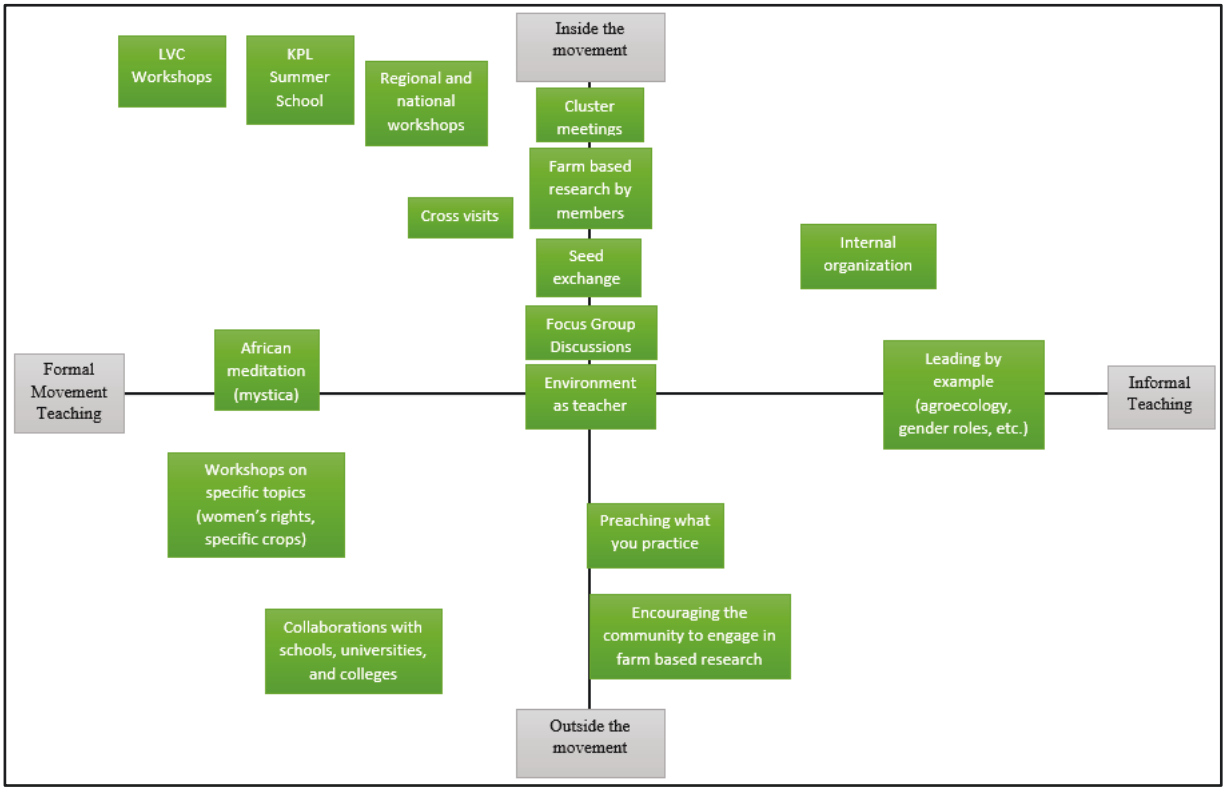


Figure 2 Summary of learning activities in the KPL, own production

Above I illustrate the many different teaching practices of the KPL. The y axis spans from activities solely aimed at the members of the movement (or inside the movement) to activities solely aimed at non-members (or outside the movement). The x-axis distinguishes between informal and formal movement teaching. To be clear, whether teaching is considered formal, in this thesis, designates whether it is a teaching situation where

everyone agrees ahead of time that this is a learning situation, while informal refers to situations where learning is either a by-product, or only pursued by the KPL members. Formal or informal has nothing to do with whether the teaching is participatory or not. Foley distinguishes between *incidental learning* (as an unintended by-product), *informal learning* (through social interactions, in families, movements and communities) and non-formal education (systematized teaching outside a classic learning institution) (Foley, 1999, pp. 6–7). However, with the KPL being intentional about their informal teaching I cannot truly say what is *incidental* and what is intentional, and so I collapse those two categories together. So what I define as informal teaching is when the KPL intentionally teaches people during social interactions (i.e. in churches, family functions, or neighbourhood gatherings) that were not meant to be learning situations. Moreover, what I in this thesis define as formal movement teaching of the KPL is what Foley considers non-formal education. He considers it non-formal as it takes place outside of classic learning institutions (Foley, 1999, pp. 6–7). However, while the KPL's more structured teaching often does not take place within halls of classic teaching institutions, from the vantage points of social movements it is *formal* exactly because of its structure and planning. Viewing it as "non-formal" mainly makes sense when viewing it from the vantage point of a school, college or university, but is confusing from a social movement vantage point. Therefore, when the movement organizes and facilitates workshops, lectures or classes I will term this formal *movement* teaching, as it mirrors the learning in formal institutional education, while of course being shaped by the KPL's pedagogy and the fact that it is happening in movement.

The following chapters are first and foremost based on the individual interviews, the FGDs, and the field visits conducted during my visit to Kenya in 2019, along with conversations and experiences I had when the recorder was off based on my personal notes. In order for me to be able to take field notes that would be the most useful for me professionally, and personally, to process what was going on around me, I decided early on that I would not share or publicize them, and so I will not be sharing or quoting them (Cerwonka & Malkki, 2007, p. 80). Rather my field notes allows me to confidently describe situations or patterns I saw throughout my stay when the recorder was switched off. I add to this material the autoethnographic observations and experiences I have had from my continual online collaboration with the KPL around the teaching materials that began in the summer of 2020, and which continues to the present day. The KPL has done a lot of on the ground activism during the pandemic, and I will mention the public facing activism, or the collaborations I have been a part of to clarify points throughout, but the data from 2019 will be the primary source, as this is what has been agreed upon initially with the KPL.

Formal movement teaching and peasant pedagogy

First, I dive into the formal movement teaching of the KPL. The activities highlighted in red on figure 3 below are the ones in focus in chapter 5 and 6 and are the formal movement teaching activities of the movement. As explained above, I define formal movement teaching within the KPL as the teaching which mirrors the practices within formal institutionalized teaching, for example when they have a planned out workshop. It is formal because of the level of planning and organization, but it is still *movement* teaching as it is of course shaped by the movement's particular pedagogy and context, which I go into below. So it is formal in the degree of planning and that it is expected to be a learning situations for all the participants. This type of formal movement teaching happens both inside and outside of the movement, but the KPL members are always the facilitators and organizers. On the other hand the informal teaching of the KPL takes place when they for example try to convince their neighbours about the benefits of agroecology and peasant feminism, in social contexts where this was not expected. Both types of teaching are intentional for the KPL,

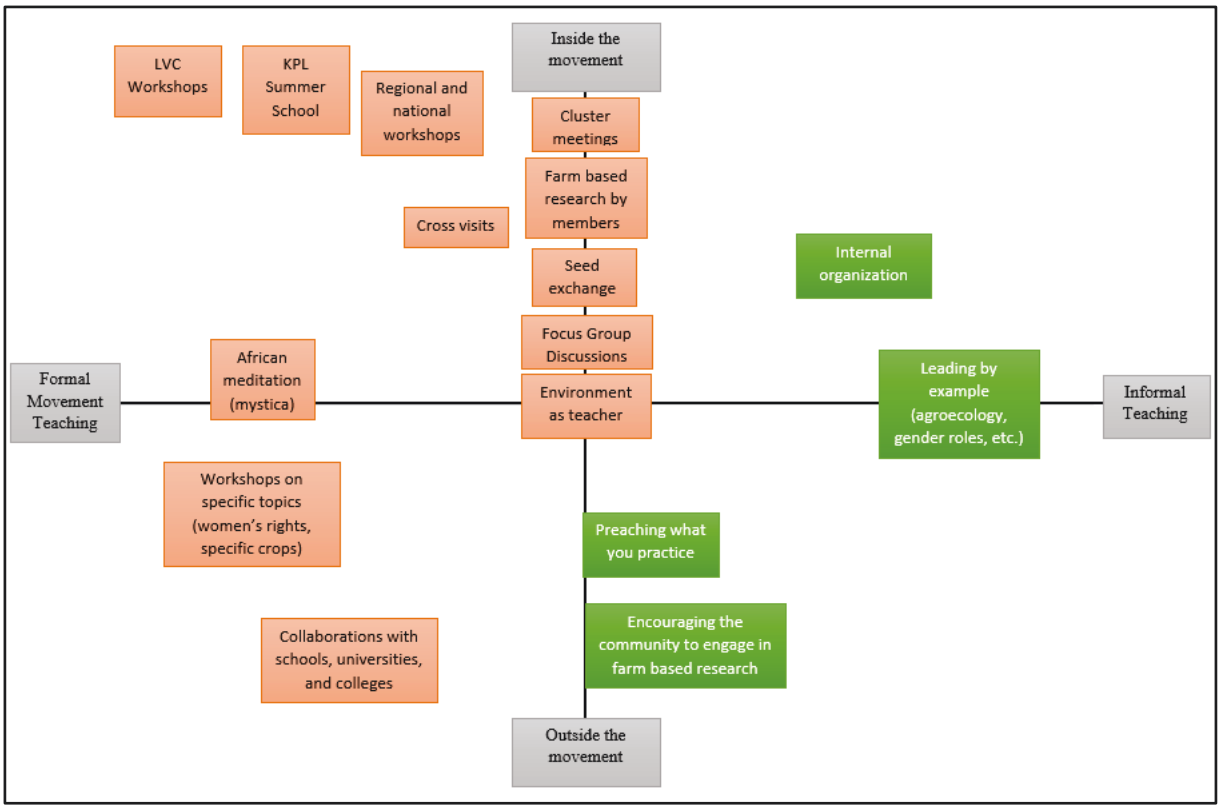


Figure 3 Summary of learning activities in the KPL, own production, highlighted activities chapter 5-6

and the distinguishing difference between the two are whether the participants are going into the interaction with the expectation of learning something. Of course there is overlap, and some activities are both formal and informal as I return to below. Overall, chapter 5 and 6 answer the question how does the Kenyan Peasants League teach, and what is their theory of pedagogy?

Chapter 5 sketches out how the members learned about agroecology and indigenous farming practices before joining the KPL, and how the KPL teaches formally inside and outside the movement. This chapter is mainly descriptive. Second, chapter 6 more broadly sketches out the KPL's theory of pedagogy, which is a place-based participatory pedagogy, based in a decolonial feminist epistemology, and the chapter relates this to the literature on critical pedagogy and agroecology. Most of this literature directly speaks to the experience of the KPL, as shown below, however, most of this literature is based on cases in Latin America, the Caribbean, and to a lesser extent Europe, Asia and the US (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 532, 534; Casado et al., 2022, p. 3), so the African continent is vastly underrepresented. These two chapters do not solve this underrepresentation but they are a small step in the right direction.

While the KPL's pedagogy aligns with other agroecology movements globally, it seems that what makes the KPL distinct from other movements is their explicit and steadfast intersectional peasant feminist approach to their work and their surroundings, especially as it connects to the re-valuing of indigenous knowledge.

5. Formal movement teaching, inside and outside the movement

This chapter adds to the already rich literature on the pedagogy of agroecology peasant movements, based on the different ways the KPL formally teaches agroecology and peasant feminism within and outside the movement. As described above, formal in this thesis designates teaching that is agreed upon by all the parties, for example, workshops, or farmer-to-farmer exchanges inside and outside the KPL, but facilitated by KPL members. This is mainly a descriptive chapter, setting the scene for the following chapters, and is therefore, less referential to the literature.

For the KPL, their formal movement teaching happens in their yearly summer school and in their different cluster based, regional or national workshops, and in a partly formal and informal context when they teach each other in their weekly or monthly cluster and collective meetings. The red thread going through all of the different ways the KPL teaches internally is practical hands on, participatory teaching, based in the needs of the students, which at the same time challenges the student-teacher hierarchy. The clearest example of this is the pre-summer school that the KPL holds before their actual summer school. The KPL holds the pre-summer school in order to decide the curriculum based on the needs and interests of the students and to hear what knowledge they have to share. The KPL also aims to make more abstract lessons practical through roleplaying and what they call *African meditations*, which are an appropriated version of the Latin American *místicas.* The KPL subscribes to a spiral learning model that they also connect to their insistence on doing research through PAR methods, both of which are inspired by a Freirean critical pedagogy. The KPL's use of formal movement teaching outside of the movement is often also very practical, depending on the topic. Many of the least practical sessions are on peasant feminism, even though the KPL finds way to make it practical and this chapter, and chapter 7 and 8, will go more into depth with how the KPL practically teaches peasant feminism, inside and outside of the movement respectively.

Much of the KPL's praxis is similar to the praxis of other agroecology movement. In most agroecology movements, this teaching can be in the form of agroecology schools, summer schools, certificate based programs, universities and/or informal farmer-to-farmer teaching (Brem-Wilson & Nicholson, 2017, pp. 140–141; Levkoe et al., 2018; McCune & Sánchez, 2019). While some members in the KPL have ambitions about having a KPL university or KPL certificates, this is not the reality at the time of writing. This chapter describes how the KPL teaches, in place-based, participatory ways, that often deconstructs the student-teacher relationship and the classroom from a decolonial peasant feminist epistemology, which will be elaborated on in chapter 6. While mainly descriptive, this chapter, thereby, adds an East African example to the literature on teaching in agroecology movements, to the few already out there (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019; Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019).

To get to the crux of their teaching approach this chapter takes its outset in the inter-generational learning from grandparents and other family and community members, which has formed many of the KPL members' approach to learning and teaching. Learning through practical chores in the fields and in their homes the KPL members learned three important lessons: first, the importance of practical place-based learning, second, they learned the importance of valuing indigenous knowledge, which is mainly held by women, and thirdly, they realized that a lot of learning happens outside the classical classroom. Indigenous knowledge and practices are in this thesis understood as place-based knowledges that are tied to cultural communities, and is in constant flux and change:

> "In this context [Kenya, ed.] indigenous knowledge is a multifaceted bodies of knowledge, practices, and representations that are maintained and developed by peoples with long histories of close interaction with the local natural environment. […]Thus, indigenous knowledge is a process of learning and sharing social life, histories, identities, economic, and political practices unique to each cultural group." (Owuor, 2007, p. 23).

So, indigenous knowledge is not a fixed entity or homogenous, rather they are, often, marginalized constellations of knowledge held by communities of varying sizes (Owuor, 2007, pp. 27–30).

The rest of the chapter then covers the KPL's approach to teaching, and the different examples of formal movement teaching inside and outside the KPL as outlined in figure 3 above: their summer school and internal workshops, their collaborations with schools, colleges and universities, and other external workshops. This chapter is, consequently, mainly descriptive in order to set the scene for how, where and when the KPL teaches formally inside and outside the movement, before diving into the pedagogical theory behind it all in chapter 6.

Intergenerational learning and practicals

Beginning at the beginning – where the members first learned the knowledge that they teach. When we talked about where the members had learned their knowledge, the most repeated answer was that they learned from observing their family members or other community elders when they were younger, or by doing chores as a child overseen by those same people. The next most frequent answer was from the KPL. Below I elaborate more on how these two ways of learning inform one another. However, family members and community members were the most frequent answer, and this was knowledge that they were still using and actively teaching others. As the FGDs were also a learning session on learning, I would often ask why they thought they still remembered the knowledge that they had learnt as children. Most of us cannot recall most of what we learned at school when we were 7-10 years old, but this information stuck with them.

> SW: Why do you think that learning sticks with you, why do you think you go back to that learning or why it, you remember it, why you still know how to fish, or fish farm?
>
> Agnes N.: It is because most of the things that we did, when some of us have grown up in a village so, all those things are not theory, they were practical.

> Mary N.: Our parents are not the modern parent like we are, so, when you go like for example to, about the cattle for example, you will not be taught that is a goat, it is you to go to the field with the goat and practically help it to feed and bring it back, milk them and everything else, we did it practically, we were taught by our parents, so it's very easy now for that thing to stick in our mind, because what you do practically is easier to stick in your mind than, than the theory that we teach our children, and then they don't know what a goat is all about, can even meet a dog and call a goat, because they look alike [all laugh]

Agnes N. and Mary N. here talk about how learning from their parents in very practical ways through chores is why the knowledge stuck with them all these years. Mary N. uses the example of learning about goats through tending to their needs and milking them, rather than learning about them through books. She even jokes that perhaps children without the same practical experience of goats might confuse a goat with a dog. This is farmer-to-farmer learning from a very young age, through intergenerational learning. One of the other ways people had learned their knowledge was also from other farmers, particularly other KPL members, or again community members and neighbours. However, many did not start practicing it fully until they joined KPL, where they re-learned or learned to re-value this knowledge.

Such intergenerational exchanges of knowledge are part of many other peasant activist spaces (Santiago Vera et al., 2022, p. 181), and is something the KPL valued. Often agroecology teaching attempts at replicating this intergenerational learning that often takes place unprompted in the home (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 537–539). As mentioned in chapter 4, one of the reasons the KPL thought individual interviews was a great idea was primarily motivated by the desire to document the knowledge of their elders, to make sure it was preserved for the younger generations and could exactly be used in trainings. However, I would of course give everyone a chance to share their knowledge, that they perhaps learned from an elder. During the FGDs, participants would pick a card representing something they teach others as a KPL member – either inside the movement, outside the movement or both – and this is the knowledge I would then ask where they themselves had learned it.

What many called *practicals* was always at the centre of this inter-generational learning. Some learned by practicing it themselves, others by watching the practice of others, and then trying it themselves. Theoretical training was seen as insufficient, although never completely absent, while practicals were seen as key to learning.

> SW: Yeah. And when they, when you were taught these methods, how did they teach you?
>
> Sally P.: Our parents or KPL?
>
> SW: Both
>
> Sally P.: Our parents, now we can do it practically, because you go to harvest with them, he or she shows how to harvest

Mary P.: Direct from the beehive

Sally P.: From KPL they are, we are able to know how to, members, some members may tell you how they count, they plant, you, you tell them, so we just share ideas in KPL, but from our parents we do it practically, yeah.

SW: Do you think, which one do you prefer? If you had to choose, one of those two methods, which one?

Sally P.: From parents or from KPL or both

SW: Yeah, which one do you prefer, or do you think both are

Mary P.: Both are correct.

Sally P.: Yeah

SW: Why?

Sally P.: Because in KPL we are able to exchange ideas, our parents

Mary P.: Then gain knowledge from the KPL, then in our grandparents

Both: We do it practically

SW: So, you do both?

Mary P.: Yeah

Mary P. and Sally P. here both pointing out how theoretical discussions are at their core, sharing ideas which is important, but so is practical experience. This is a very decolonial feminist approach, as Mary P. and Sally P. are encouraging me to not think in *either or*, but *both and* to understand the thinking of the KPL. As outlined above, many critics of the Cartesian world view highlight, westernized thinking is often binary and dichotomous, while decolonial thought often embrace the multiplicity of life, and the *both and* rather than the binary thinking of *either* (Arvin et al., 2013, pp. 11–13; Shiva, 2005, pp. 99–104, 2016, pp. 12–13; Tallbear, 2014, p. 2). While theory and practice for them, and many others in the KPL are two distinct things, both are still needed to learn.

SW: And how did your elders, or your school teachers, or your churches, how do they teach you about these things? What methods do they use to teach you?

Thomas T.: Okay, I can start there, you find that in school we have both practical and normal theory, for example when we start with the bees you'll be taught about bees or to keep bees, just in class only a place where you are just seated, then you go directly to practical and then visit the farms were bees are kept, and you see on yourself how they are being kept, yeah.

SW: Is that also your experience?

David T.: Yeah

Sara T.: Yeah

SW: Yeah, and how about from the elders? How do they teach you?

Thomas T.: Okay, a point

Sara T.: Okay, according to the elders, they teach us, maybe, okay, for example they give us beehives, yes, they show us how on the traditional ways, how they used to keep the bees, yeah.

SW: And then you take care of the beehives?

Sara T.: Yeah, we take care of the beehives

Thomas T.: We just inherit from them, then we keep

Sara T.: And we place them in the better places, yeah

Here David T., Sara T. and Thomas T. echo the sentiments of Mary P. and Sally P., that both theoretical and practical teaching is necessary to understand a practice fully, giving the example of tending to beehives. At the same time, they again highlight how they learned about beekeeping from their grandparents through chores, by being assigned the task of tending to beehives. Intergenerational learning was evidently crucial for many members, and surprisingly so was the official school system.

Practical learning in the classroom

Traditional schools were not completely out of the picture, as long as they understood the importance of practicals. A surprising amount of people had also learned about indigenous or agroecological farming practices in school. This is surprising because many agroecology movements are fighting to get agroecology to be part of the curriculum (Casado et al., 2022, p. 2), and historically the official school system in Kenya has had a negative approach to indigenous knowledge (Owuor, 2007). All the schools where members learned indigenous knowledge were in rural areas, where this knowledge might have been considered vital life skills, which could explain why the teacher felt comfortable including it. The ones who mentioned it underscored how the teacher also incorporated practical elements in their teaching, as Thomas T. did above,

Joseph E.: I also learnt in school […] they were not only teaching but there was a demonstration, whereby the learners were engaged on how to do some of these things, example is how to prepare the compost manure. So, we will do this in school and when it is ready, we go and use it in the farm so we see crops growing well and we get high yield. So, it was not all that easy to forget this. Even keeping fish in a fish pond will also be explained and in the [school, ed.] there was a fish pond that was built there so we will be taught on the type

> of food that can be given to them and even the type of soil that can retain water for a long period of time that is good for making a fish pond.

Joseph E. highlights how he had a great experience of learning about compost manure and fishpond management in school because they were both taught in a classroom and taught to do it practically. With the manure, they were taught how to compost it in the school, and then when it was ready, they took it home to use it in their fields, which resulted in a large harvest. Such positive, practical, experiences is what made the teaching memorable for Joseph E.. There were enough people with similar experiences to Joseph E., not just in his cluster, to see a pattern in certain areas of school being a place of learning these skills. However, these members were still in the minority compared to how many had exclusively learned from their families, elders in the community, and other farmers, before they met the KPL members.

This highlights a significant difference between some of the cluster of the KPL and other agroecological movements, who as mentioned often spend time unlearning what they learned in the formal schooling system about farming, in order to learn agroecology (Casado et al., 2022, p. 2). This also highlights how having this kind of knowledge present in the official education system can make a difference, and exactly why the KPL is interested in collaborating with such institutions as I return to below. The story of indigenous knowledge in Kenya is definitely not only one of erasure, as it is still alive in different pockets, however, as mentioned most of the members of the KPL ended up still incorporating parts of, or all of industrial agricultural methods before joining the KPL, despite encountering this indigenous knowledge early in their lives. So, while the knowledge these members learned in school is especially useful it was not being practiced. This shows the importance of the de-valuing of indigenous knowledge that happens amongst farmers. The re-valuing of indigenous knowledge is the through line of the KPL's pedagogy, as I return to in chapter 6.

Many of the farmers who are now in the KPL might have had the praxis or the science, of agroecology to a certain extent, but it was not until they joined the KPL that they started to implement it fully. And the simple fact that most of the people mention how they learned about this first from their family, but then went on to grow mono-crops with pesticides shows the need for mobilizing the knowledge in a *movement* and through *movement*.

> Joseph E.: Yes, there is a lot that I've learnt from KPL, as one: I have understood fully on how to prepare organic manure, though I had learnt some bit of it, I had some, or rough knowledge on it from my school
> […]But now to add with whatever I've gotten from KPL
> […] Now I had a wider knowledge on how to prepare organic manure, and now I know the shortcomings of inorganic fertilizer and also the advantages of organic fertilizer, manure.

Joseph E. here sums up that, while he did learn about composting manure in school, it was not until he joined the KPL and learned more about both compost manure and chemical fertilizers that he actually started preparing his own organic manure. This previously held knowledge eases the learning process for the members.

Access to agroecological training is also a large part of the food sovereignty, agroecology, movements, as many mainstream farming schools focus on industrial agriculture. This might make those particular areas with schools that taught indigenous or agroecological farming techniques more open to agroecology, however, many of them were still either solely practicing industrial farming or mixing their knowledge of e.g. manure making or bee keeping with GMO seeds or chemical fertilizer before joining the KPL. Even though there is no guarantee that elementary or secondary education will lead to action in adulthood, the KPL exactly values this introduction to all students, as it has given them some sort of basic understanding that will allow them to more easily use agroecology if they are introduced to it again later. And most people had learned a lot, if not most, of their knowledge from the KPL. This in a way confirms that idea that agroecology needs to be both a movement, praxis and science (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 542), where it is meeting the *movement* which affirms the value of the indigenous knowledge, and which mobilizes more indigenous knowledge, which motivates members to actually practice agroecology.

Overall, coming into the KPL most members appreciated a place-based, practical participatory pedagogy, which is also the outset in the KPL spiral learning model.

The spiral learning model

The KPL ascribes to a pedagogy that they call the *spiral learning model,* which members would mention very early on in meetings about co-creating teaching materials. When we started drafting the teaching materials, the KPL sent me teaching materials some of the activists had used as part of members of another movement "Coalition for Grassroots Human Rights Defenders Kenya", and these materials make a point out of following the *spiral learning model* rather than the *expert learning model* (CGHRD-K, 2017, pp. 4–6, 8). I should make clear that these are not materials produced by the KPL, but materials used by the KPL. This is something the KPL also repeat in trainings and workshops, where the spiral learning model is described as *participatory*, and acknowledging all participants as both teachers and students of one another, and compared it to participatory action research:

> "The fellowship shall be executed using the Spiral Learning Model which allows all fellows to share their experiences, then based on the experiences we identify the patterns that exist, look for additional information needed, practice new strategies to tackle issues identified and plan for action and then finally apply or execute the actions.
> It will take the form of Participatory Action Research as during the learning, the fellows shall be researching on issues within their communities with the participation of communities at all levels and plan joint actions to address the identified issues together with the community." (CGHRD-K, 2017, p. 5)

This is contrasted with the *expert learning model*, where a person recognized as an expert comes from the outside and imparts wisdom onto the non-experts. This mirrors Paolo Freire's distinction between a participatory problem-posing learning model and a banking learning model. Freire juxtaposed what he called the banking model of teaching – one way communication teaching, where the teacher tries to *bank* as many

facts as possible in the students' mind – with problem-posing teaching, where the students are engaged in a way that challenges the student teacher hierarchies:

> "The teacher is no longer merely the-one-who-teaches, but one who is himself taught in dialogue with the students, who in turn while being taught also teach. They become jointly responsible for a process in which all grow. In this process, arguments based on "authority" are no longer valid; in order to function authority must be *on the side of* freedom not *against* it. Here no one teaches, nor is anyone self-taught. People teach each other, mediated by the world, by the cognizable objects which in banking education are "owned" by the teacher."(Freire, 2000, p. 80)

So, while the critical pedagogy of the KPL is clearly related to Freire, the materials I was given by the KPL from CGHRD-K, exactly shows how these pedagogies were already present in other movements in Kenya, without a reference to Freire. Maathai and the Green Belt Movement also employed critical pedagogy teaching both in their workshops on tree planting, and later in their "bus driver" seminars, where they tried to empower people to see the problems with the de facto Moi dictatorship (Hunt, 2014, pp. 240–243; Merton & Dater, 2008). Similarly, the KPL came to this pedagogy on their own, and especially through their interaction with LVC, because they believe this is the method best suited for their movement's values and goals, and shows how the ideas of Freire did exactly not appear in a vacuum, but was born out of the same kind of movement praxis of the KPL. Consequently, I cannot credit Freire with the KPL arriving at this approach especially as I know most members are not familiar with his work.

Moreover, in the context of the feminist work of the KPL and the Green Belt Movement, it is crucial to remind the reader of that Freire's work has been critiqued for lacking a conception of gender, and that his categories of oppressor/oppressed are too abstract and thereby risk erasing the violence of colonial domination (Teasley & Butler, 2020, p. 11; Tuck & Yang, 2012, pp. 19–20), as mentioned above. However, I take hooks' approach to Freire, where she continues to use his work while adding an internal critique through a black feminist lens, that interrogates how gender, racialization, class, and other markers show up in and affect learning situations (hooks, 1982, 1991, 1994, pp. 47–51, 134–139).

Many members of the KPL are, however, also part of CGHRD-K, such as John H. and Margret H., which is why they had the teaching materials, so I cannot of course speak to the causality of the inspiration. CGHRD-K is mainly run by women, and has an inherently feminist and womanist focus, visible in their t-shirts and slogans such as "*this is what a woman human rights defender looks like*" and "*Pussy Power*" (CGHRD-K, 2022). Many KPL members are still active in CGHRD-K, and were part of planning their 2021 *Pussy Power Festival*, which had talks, documentary screenings, parties and other activities (CGHRD-K, 2021). So, in short, while KPL's pedagogy speaks to Freire, as much of PAR and agroecological teaching is inspired by Freire, when I point this out it is not to credit Freire with their choice of pedagogical theory.
In short, the spiral learning model attempts to remove the hierarchy between learner and teacher, researcher and researched, and their view of learning, teaching and research are very intricately linked, which of course again relates their theory to that of Freire's and other agroecology movements. PAR seems to be the link

between Freire, agroecology movements and the KPL's pedagogy, as all the activities are guided towards centring the needs of the participants and their communities through horizontal participatory teaching methods (Fals Borda, 1999, pp. 13–17, 22–23; Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1390–1393; Manzo & Brightbill, 2007, pp. 39–40; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 23–25). This is exemplified in the way that the KPL teaches using farmer-to-farmer pedagogy throughout their formal and informal teaching.

Learning practically – farmer to farmer

The horizontal nature of the spiral learning model is evident in all of the KPL, and something the movement shares with the rest of the food sovereignty and agroecology movements (McCune & Sánchez, 2019, pp. 597–602). And even when KPL members hold workshops on topics they are deeply knowledgeable about they still speak about it in a way that relates to this levelling of the student teacher relationship, and how both teacher and student are learning. David C. for example teaches people about the indigenous passion fruit, of which he is known to be an expert, and this variety of passion fruit is going extinct in many communities which means very few people have this knowledge, and the seeds. Still, he believes the workshops that he hosts are a mutual learning experience:

> David C.: [David C.] I am still researching more on it. Maybe in solidarity with secondary students and maybe the college and the university people who will be coming here, I know I will also get to learn more about indigenous passion fruit.

The fact that David C. is considered an expert of passion fruit, from his practical experience with growing the fruit and saving its seeds, does not clash with him still being able to learn more, and potentially learn more from the people he teaches.

The KPL also value practical experience, as this both motivates and brings deeper learning: having to feed and tend goats will teach a young child much more about goats than reading it in a book, which speaks to how most of the members first learned agroecological practices – in a practical farmer-to-farmer way, whether it was in the home doing chores or in the fields with other KPL members. Most of the KPL teaching takes place in the fields or in people's homes, and teaching and knowledge sharing is a big part of LVC and KPL's work. Farmer-to-farmer teaching, or *campesino-a-campesino* is one of the corner stones of both movements. This kind of teaching has taken place throughout history, but in its current form it was born in Guatemala, and takes it outset in Freirian pedagogy (Bernal et al., 2023, pp. 2–4; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, pp. 603–605; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 4; P. Rosset & Martínez-Torres, 2012, p. 17). In this spirit, agroecology schools and universities have also been created by peasant and rural movements, sometimes consisting of decentralized workshops and in other cases being brick and mortar schools offering continual classes (Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019; Brem-Wilson & Nicholson, 2017, pp. 140–141; P. Rosset et al., 2019, p. 898). This approach both deconstructs the ideas of classic classroom teaching while also insisting on

commoning both knowledge and agricultural inputs that are shared freely in these sessions. The farm is the classroom.

In general, what agroecology schools or the farmer-to-farmer teaching are actually teaching is agroecological practices, which often in the KPL context implies that the farmer has been practicing something else and wants to change. Gliessman defines five levels of steps towards food system change. The first three are the ones farmers can take practically, and that most of these trainings focus on, while the last two are focused beyond the farm (Gliessman, 2016, p. 187). They are, 1. Using industrial inputs more efficiently, 2. Substituting industrial inputs and practices with agroecological ones, 3. Addressing the underlying causes of the problems faced in level 1 and 2, by reinforcing new ecological cycles, 4. Creating direct connections between consumers and producers, and 5. Building a new global food system based on the first four levels (Gliessman, 2016, pp. 187–188). Gliessman shows how both scaling-up, scaling out and scaling deep is necessary for success, while not always being able to perform them all at once, as I return to in chapter 7 and 8. The KPL skips the first step altogether, as one of the prerequisites for joining the KPL is not using, or having pledged to gradually phase out, industrial farming techniques and inputs. Most of the KPL teaching inside the KPL was, therefore, on level 2 and 3. An example of both is teaching farmers different techniques, such as how to compost cow dung and food scraps to make manure, which then can replace chemical fertilizer, and thereby setting up new ecological cycles which reduces waste product on the farm and build soil quality (Gliessman, 2016, p. 188; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 10).

The knowledge shared in trainings would most often be very practical knowledge relating to farming practices that would fall in the following six categories of; 1. knowledge of indigenous crop growing (e.g., sorghum, sukumawiki, maize, beans, cow peas, passion fruit, pumpkin, mushroom, millet.) This included knowledge of how to grow the crops, maintain the seeds, and the medicinal and nutritional benefits of the plants. 2. manure and soil management (e.g. how to compost, growing napier grass, assessing and improving soil quality and water retention through manure use). 3. the importance of afforestation (e.g., how trees improve the environment, which trees to plant (indigenous trees e.g.; fig, acacia, baobab, moringa, avocado, coconut, mango, banana), which trees to avoid (mainly blue gum/eucalyptus), and indigenous trees as weather predictors and connected to rainfall) This included knowledge of how to grow, maintain the seeds, and the medicinal and nutritional benefits of the trees and their fruits. 4. animal and livestock care (e.g., bee keeping, caring for chicken, goats and cows in terms of diseases, feeding and breeding, how to maintain fishponds.) This also included knowledge on the nutritional and medicinal benefits of animal products. 5. pest and weed management (e.g., full army worm, striker weed, weevils), and 6. environmental care (e.g., trash management and growing flowers to make the environment beautiful). On top of this, there was knowledge focused more on the social and organizational aspect about, as a number of people highlighted how they teach others about the importance of unity and group work, and lessons on peasant feminism also

took up a lot of space. And in the KPL's summer school all of the above is on the agenda, while the specific knowledge taught is dependent on the participants and decided in the pre-summer school, in keeping with their participatory pedagogy.

Summer School and internal workshops

The most formal movement teaching inside the movement happens during their local, national and regional workshops, their cluster meetings and during their summer school, which was highly participatory. When planning their yearly[7] summer school, the KPL has a pre-summer school to assess needs and interests, which then informed the curriculum of the summer school.

> John H.: […] when we did the summer school, we did a pre-summer school, the virtue of the pre-summer school is to do the needs assessments, what are the issues in the clusters? What are the problems that various farmers are facing. The pre-summer school happens in February, and then the summer school happens in April.

It was pointed out to me several times, which making a curriculum without talking to the students first is something you do if you believe in the *expert learning model* as it devalues the input of the students. This again corresponds well to the PAR, agroecology and Freirian practices – having the participants shape the curriculum for their needs and their interests, rather than deciding top down what they need, is truly an expression of both respect for the farmers' ability to assess their own needs and a recognition of their local expertise, and a humble acknowledgement of the lack of knowledge that people based outside of the context have (Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 128–134). Again, challenging who the experts are and prefiguring a different kind of teaching that embodies this challenge.

Affirming this principle, several KPL members have pointed out during our meetings about the teaching materials that they are meant to be a living document, as the needs of the farmers participating in the summer school will change from year to year and need to be continually updated. This highlights how challenging the conventional hierarchies of the teacher-student relationship also requires a different infrastructure. The classic example is having the classroom set up in a circle facing each other, rather than everyone facing the teacher. hooks describes how a refusal to look at the physical set up of the classroom stems from the Cartesian mind-body epistemological split: if knowledge is purely a mind activity, then it should not matter how bodies, or which bodies, show up in a given classroom (hooks, 1994, pp. 16–17):

> "Liberatory pedagogy really demands that one work in the classroom, and that one work with the limits of the body, work both with and through and against those limits: teachers may insist that it doesn't matter whether you stand behind the podium or the desk, but it does." (hooks, 1994, p. 138).

[7] The first, time the summer school was held was in April 2019, and the second was not held until April 2022 because of the pandemic. The plan is, as it was in 2019, to hold this summer school every year.

So, the context of the classroom is also key and *place-based learning* is crucial in agroecology (S. S. Moore, 2017), as I return to in chapter 6, which underscores its connection to critical or liberatory pedagogy.

When it comes to the KPL teaching materials, it means potentially moving away from printing teaching materials, thereby making them static, or at least not having all the teaching materials prepared before. For the KPL this will not require much change, as they have built their formal education to be adaptable, and a lot of their materials are accessible through their WhatsApp chats, but for many teaching institutions this would challenge the way they offer, schedule and evaluate courses. For this reason, I have been looking into online formats of teaching materials – other than classical websites – that are both easy to navigate for learners, and easy for teachers to change or update. At the time of writing we are still looking for a good format.

In the KPL's summer school they, therefore, try to balance more theoretical days with practical sessions. The summer school itself was located in one of the clusters, and people would use what the KPL calls *solidarity accommodation*, where they are put up in the homes of the members in the hosting cluster. The KPL used grants to cover the transportation of all the participants to and from the summer school, and participants were mainly young and new members of the movement, and the members of the local cluster hosting, which allowed for intergenerational learning, and the teaching was farmer-to-farmer teaching, with no paid instructors. This type of summer school exactly values everyone being in the same place, learning from the people and the place, getting physical experience on the land together, just as the literature on learning within other agroecology movements points to (Gruenewald, 2003; McCune & Sánchez, 2019; S. S. Moore, 2017).

The local, regional and national workshops of the KPL often are very similar to their summer school, but with a more limited topic or number of days, but still structured, planned and executed in very similar ways to their summer school. As the KPL is decentralized in its organizing, most of the local workshops are not coordinated with all the other clusters, where the regional and national ones of course are, with two representatives from each – a man and a woman, unless they for example are separatist workshops for women on gender. So, a part of the summer school takes place in a setup similar to a traditional classroom, although less hierarchical, while much of it also takes place in the fields.

Much of what happens in the classroom is often the things the KPL teaches which cannot necessarily be taught practically. Here, the KPL uses different techniques to make complex knowledge more usable and understandable, with the main one being the so-called African meditations, which are an appropriated version of the Latin American *místicas.*

African meditations

So, it is not only practical demonstrations and cross-visits that make up a summer school, the more general political analysis of the global food system, and the importance of peasant feminism is also taught. In many

ways the summer school also teaches the culture of the movement, or scales deep, just as much as it teaches the practice of growing food in an agroecological way, as Mier y Terán et al., also highlight (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 12–14). These are often also practices where the KPL aims to lead by example to make what feels abstract more concrete, as I return to below in chapter 7 and 8. Some of these lessons are taught through a lecture followed by a discussion, but often *African meditations*, inspired by what is more commonly known in LVC as *místicas,* are used which also has the participatory medium, as the participants are tasked with creating them, relating to the topics of the day:

> John H.: […]místicas are also very much useful or you call them African meditation, whereby we summarize a whole thing in like a two minute play, or role play, for example, if you want to demonstrate how multinationals are robbing land, we find that and the místicas take place before the real training starts, and they have become very popular, and part of the, it also brings creativity, because, we always insist that before every, meeting, training must have a mística to be able to summarize, the whole process.
> […] yes, and you find that people will, when you do evaluation, people will remember what they heard on the mística than what you [lectured on, ed.], so we are trying to avoid the normal teaching and training, that we call the expert model.

John H. explains that African meditations can for example be people doing a short play about a widow getting her land stolen by her in-laws, or how micro-credit loans lead to unpayable debts, by acting out everyday scenarios, relating these more complex issues of rights or global systems to people's everyday lives. John H. also highlights that these African meditations are often what people remember and presents it as an alternative to a classic lecture style teaching.

Stemming from traditions of both Christian mysticism, and liberation theology, and Freirian pedagogy, the *místicas* centre around storytelling that energizes and mobilizes people to deal with the problems they are facing:

> "This untranslatable word [mística, ed.] refers to an expressive performance, mainly nonverbal, that incorporates themes central to the goals of the movement and affirms confidence in the achievability of those goals. It is a regular practice of the MST. It is intended to promote a sense of identity as a separate group and commitment to the group's purposes. The term mística refers not just to the performance, however, but to the whole world view that underlies it, drawing on traditions of Christian mysticism to affirm unity with a transcendent reality. Mística is sacramental in that its manifest physical reality is taken to represent the deeper meaning. It is impossible to separate the enactment of mística from the engagement with transcendence." (Hammond, 2014, p. 372)

Liberation theology is a strand of Christianity that insists it is a Christian duty to improve the conditions of the poor here on earth (Hammond, 2014, p. 373). While the KPL is not defined by any attachment to organized religion, most of the members I met were Christian, of very different denominations, but it seemed that the KPL is not as familiar with liberation theology as its Latin American sister movements. I also met a handful of Muslim KPL members, and the religious affiliations of the members seemed to be highly affected by region and location, both in terms of whether they were Muslim or Christian, and in terms of which

Christian denomination they belonged to. As mentioned in the historical chapter, Kenya is quite a segregated country, which means that mobilizing in one area – except for in the major cities – will mean almost only meeting certain ethnic or religious communities. The areas I visited, and where the KPL has most of its clusters, are far in land, and are mostly Christian, while for example the coastal counties have a larger representation of Muslims, but the coast is geographically very far away and are still without KPL clusters. As mentioned in chapter 4, each FGD started with a prayer, also among people of different faiths or denominations, and so did each meal. So religion did play a significant role for the members in the KPL, and it seemed that the differences of faiths and denominations did not cause problems.

However, it seems that the *mística* has come to the KPL via the secularized version of a performance, through their membership of LVC, and has been appropriated by the KPL mainly as an educational tool. As the KPL praxis is different from the original intent and praxis of the Latin American mística, I will call them African mediations to not confuse the two. The African meditations still accomplish some of the things místicas accomplish, in the way that all of the KPL's teaching activities also aim to build community and cohesion through creating mutual analyses of the world around them. They are a highly effective teaching method for the KPL, because as John H. highlights above the African meditations are often what people remember from trainings, which contributes to the cohesion and culture of the movement. The KPL's version, or African meditations are clearly still inspired by and related to the praxis of místicas, however, it seems more focused on the educational part, as John H. highlights above, and not so much focus on the spiritual element.

Through these practical lessons, the KPL is relating the everyday activism of the KPL with larger political problems (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 541–542), such as capitalism or patriarchy. Another way of teaching these more *intangible* values is through role playing, which was used, especially when teaching peasant feminism.

Teaching peasant feminism and role playing

When it comes to teaching or sensitizing people on the rights of women, and gender equality there are no simple, ready-made, tactile examples you can bring from house to house. One of the members would often dream of having a practical How-To-Guide for how to structure a peasant feminist household. Teaching peasant feminism does appeal more to what the KPL call theoretical teaching and discussions, of morality, ethics and rights, because you cannot have someone experiment with what it would be like to have a very different lived experience, as is possible with a different kind of agriculture, which is the KPL strategy for scaling out described in chapter 8. Much of the teaching on this is, therefore, centred around reading up on rights, and educating people on the rights they actually have, especially in workshops for people outside of the movement. As remarked above on the workshop for young girls, when they are given menstrual pads, these tend to resemble a more expert way of teaching for these reasons.

The most featured campaign on gender-equity within the KPL is the campaign fighting for the land rights of widows. For years, the KPL has highlighted how widows often have their land stolen by their deceased partner's family, who either threaten the widow with violence, or convince her that she has no claim to the land even though constitutionally she does. The issue of widows losing their land, and thereby both their home and their livelihood, is a serious issue, and while it is probably the least controversial feminist focus internally in the KPL, as there seems to be a consensus that this is a clear injustice, this is not the case for the wider Kenyan society:

> Murimi B.: Not everybody is really in support of empowering these people [widows, ed.]. Like people, not everybody feels happy, whenever the way we are taking a soda and also a widow does the same, not everybody is for it, not everybody is advocating for it. That is the challenge.
>
> SW: What kind of reaction do you meet, also when you advocate for the widows, what kind of reaction do you meet?
>
> Murimi B.: [translator laughs] They always say that "these people are being lied to", that "okay you people you are being fooled", when maybe you are told that you have your rights, is like these people are fooling you, [translator laughs] that is the reaction.

Murimi B. both speaks to the negative view of women, and particularly widows, which can be so entrenched that many do not think they are worthy of even sharing a drink with. At the same time, she is also highlighting how it can be difficult to have the women believe that they have these rights, perhaps exactly because they are treated so badly. It can, therefore, be important to try and try and have other people understand their situation through such *African meditations.*

In a sense, it is also giving a practical demonstration of something that is very abstract, in the same way that Kennedy G.'s grandfather taught him about solidarity through the strength of collected strands of gras:

> SW:[…] where did you learn your knowledge?
>
> Kennedy G.: About solidarity? I use to, sit around my grandfather, and he used to tell me a lot of old folk [stories, ed], one of which is that there is power in solidarity, as I said there is an adage in [local language] that says [adage] which simply means, there is power in solidarity, yeah and then he could ask us to go out and fetch long grass, like three or four pieces, and then he could give you one piece and ask you if you can break it, and that would work out we could easily break, and then he could maybe pile them up like this, and tie them and tell you, now break this and then we could get defeated and, so by that he was just demonstrating the power of solidarity, yeah. Yeah.

Kennedy G. explains that his grandfather asked him to pick a straw of grass and try to break it, which he easily could. Then his grandfather asked him to collect three or four straws of grass and break them together, which was much harder, teaching his grandson the abstract lesson that together we are stronger than we are alone, in a very practical way.

The KPL does still try to give people a sense of what it is like to walk in someone else's shoes through role playing. For example, the teaching materials from CGHRD-K that was shared with me to base the KPL teaching materials on, has a combination of *theoretical* teaching and role playing in the stream on "*Power Structures and Gender Relations*" (CGHRD-K, 2017, p. 29). First, there is a reading and discussion section on gender and power structures, followed by group work where each person will draw a card with an identity on it, such as "*Widow, aged 31, with 5 children living in a rural village*", "*Primary School Boy, aged 12*", "*Grassroots HRD, aged 24, victim of death threats (man)*", "*Teenager with a disability, living in a slum (girl)*", "*Political Party Leader (man)*". Each person is not to share what identity they got, and then stand on a line, and take one step forward if they believe the statement the facilitator is reading is true for their identity. These are the 21 statements:

> "1. I get to meet visiting government officials.
> 2. I can read newspapers regularly.
> 3. I have access to and time to listen to the radio.
> 4. I have access to micro credit.
> 5. I can speak in extended family meetings.
> 6. I have access to confidential counselling services.
> 7. I can negotiate condoms use with my partner.
> 8. I expect to go to secondary school.
> 9. I enjoy a healthy environment in my community.
> 10. I won't face discrimination or stigma when using public services.
> 11. I will be consulted on issues affecting health services in our community.
> 12. I can pay for treatment at a private hospital if necessary.
> 13. I eat at least two full meals a day.
> 14. My home and family are not vulnerable to natural disasters.
> 15. I sometimes attend workshops and seminars on development issues in my country.
> 16. I am not in danger of being sexually harassed or abused.
> 17. I could own a small business.
> 18. I can question the expenditure of public funds.
> 19. I get paid at least the official minimum wage.
> 20. I have access to or can afford the legal counsel of a lawyer.
> 21. I have access to public financial information from the provincial government." (CGHRD-K, 2017, p. 32)

These statements get to very concrete everyday expressions of power structures and how they differ through the different gender and class privileges, that people who hold these privileges might not think about. This exercise is very reminiscent of Peggy McIntosh's "*White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack*", wherein she lists 26 conditions that her white privilege affords her, such as "*5. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.*" or "*12. I can sear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.*" (McIntosh, 1989, p. 11). Both aims at making what seems abstract more concrete and make people think about what it is like to go through life without taking these things for granted. The exercise from the CGHRD-K materials focuses mainly on gender and class and the different ways that affects your life in Kenya, and in this example is something that has been used within the

KPL. This is a very intersectional analysis of their situation (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 14–15; Seibert et al., 2019, pp. 45–46), which I return to in chapter 6, diving into how their peasant feminism informs their peasant pedagogy. And while the KPL defines itself as a feminist movement, part of their peasant feminism is also being reflexive about the fact that they have not achieved gender equity in all the households of the KPL, so they still have to scale deep on this topic. Often this self-critic is expressed through the prefiguration of the KPL and their insistence on leading by example, inside and outside the movement, as I return to in chapter 7 and 8. The KPL also teaches in more formal ways about all of the above outside of the movement, often in the collaborations with official learning institutions, in part inspired by the positive experiences that some members had as children as described above.

School gardens and external workshops

The KPL has both formal, official, collaborations with primary and secondary schools, universities and colleges, and more informal, unofficial, collaborations where members are teaching or working in or with these institutions on their own without a formal collaboration. As with their internal formal movement teaching, these are most often centred around engaging the students in practical activities like tending to a garden, making compost manure –focusing on practicals. One member was a geography teacher who had taken an initiative to have kitchen gardens in the local school where he taught, the same way that he and others were taught by their teacher – through practical demonstration. In another cluster, based in Nairobi, members have also been working with one of their local schools on establishing a garden and teaching the students how to grow agroecologically. All of this is volunteer work that the KPL members do without compensation from the institutions. In general, the KPL works with more and more learning institutions – from primary and secondary schools up to university level. As mentioned above David C. teaches about indigenous Kenyan passion fruit to many different people, and he works with several schools and colleges.

> SW: And you also mentioned in the other interview that you were in contact with colleges and Universities?
>
> David C.: Yes. I am already in contact with colleges and some universities, who are soon going to come to do their agroecology practicals at my place.
> […]
> Now it started on small scale but now it has since attracted so many people because they have come to realize it is something good for their lives. I am also in contact with some ministries from the county government. Like the agriculture department, I had paid them a visit, they had also paid me a visit to my farm. It's now known by the various arms of the regional government from this county level to sub county what level, and all the administrative lines. I have also received a, some visitors maybe from outside the country like you and they've shown a lot of interest in what I am doing. Some have even urged me to look for passport so that maybe when there is an opportunity in one of their countries I can also go and share my knowledge there. Now, the major [reason, ed.] I started getting in to contact with as many people as possible is because this particular fruit here, the indigenous passion fruit, is one of the fruits that is facing extinction around this region, so I always make sure that whenever, I

> am paid a visit I usually give out a seedling, to be planted so that it spreads. That's why I am even visiting schools and such institutions, so that the passion fruit seedlings are planted there. Even the cluster members here are so happy, with my work here and I'm even, they even asked me to prepare some seedlings for them, so that each and every member from the cluster could have their own plants of passion fruit.[…]

David C. talks about how he teaches university and college students, and government officials about indigenous passion fruit at his home. What started small has slowly grown to a larger teaching practice, with people encouraging him to get a passport, so that he would be able to travel to other countries to teach about indigenous passion fruit. David C. teaches practically in his own farm and has become one of the sites where college and university students come to do their practicals. Moreover, David C.'s motivation for teaching is to secure the indigenous passion fruit from extinction, so for him teaching is inextricably linked to passing out seeds and seedlings and encouraging people to grow the plant themselves. David C.'s motivation is, thereby, very linked to notions of commoning of access to seeds as a means of protecting the environment and protecting indigenous species and knowledge. Sharing seeds is thereby linked to sharing knowledge, as I return to in chapter 6. For David C., and the KPL, the free sharing of seeds actually creates more value than selling them, as it adds to the overall biodiversity and can prevent certain species from going extinct.

Other school projects that I was told about had more general motivation of teaching students about farming, the environment and potentially having the schools be self-sufficient in healthy food. In these collaborations, the KPL exactly comes into traditional classroom settings and deconstructs the notion of the classroom, by using *practicals* in their own fields or on the land of the school, to teach the students. Regardless of the academic background of his students, which varies from secondary school to university, David C. for example teaches in the same way:

> SW: […]so, how do you teach people about passion fruit?
>
> David C.: Okay, I do that practically, when they come to my farm I show them, I do it practically with them, how to prepare the seeds, how to plant the already grown seedlings how to treat the whole plant from the first stage to the last stage.

So, David C. teaches people how to plant by, quite literally, walking them through the process from seed to plant to harvest, in his farm. This is the kind of school collaboration that takes the students out of their learning institution to visit his farm. While creating gardens or farms on school grounds makes it more accessible to students and deconstructs the classroom on campus, that is of course not an option available to all learning institutions or teachers who do not have access to a patch of land or a garden.

Lastly, another type of intervention into formal teaching institutions that the KPL does, is workshops and talks on gender equality, for example on the rights of women and girls, the rights of widows, or FGM, where the KPL engages in more of a classic lecture style with questions from the audience, usually comprised of people in their local community. Only one cluster organized workshops on FGM as they had identified it as a

big problem within their specific ethnic group, and in their specific community, but almost all clusters work on the rights of women and girls more generally. The most repeated, practical, campaign of the KPL Women's Collective during the pandemic has been their crowdfunding for buying menstrual pads for girls whose parents cannot afford them, since that became an increasing problem as people lost their jobs due to the pandemic. Not having access to menstrual products is both a question of hygiene and of a fundamental sense of dignity. While this was not an issue during the pandemic lock-downs, not having access to menstrual products also often means that girls do not go to school during their period. The Women's Collectives would, and still, host events with these girls, where they are given pads and taught about their rights. This is another great example of the intersectional analysis that goes before the work of the KPL, and how they are trying to address all the issues their communities are facing.

I have not been present at any of these events, but I have seen documentation of them. While not being institutionalized teaching forms, these examples are probably the closest the KPL gets to a banking model of education, at least from what I have seen, but I cannot say for sure. So, even though the spiral model is what the KPL always aim for this demonstrates how that is maybe not always be the case, depending on the time available for the lessons and to prepare them. However, the people leading these workshops often highlight that there is still a *dialogue* for example with the students and the parents before the event:

> [David A.: […]there is something we have introduced as KPL Madam Sophy, we are coming up with an idea of standing against the female genital mutilation. Because that practice is here in our community, we already have girls that we have thought, and they are really, anti that practice. We are trying to bring them in, to incorporate them [the girls, ed.] also, so they can serve as good examples that can be emulated by others. So, that is one of the new agenda that we have in this our KPL. Like on [date] we have meeting, […]will be talking over, on the same issue, with our girls it is one of the agenda they have in KPL[…]. Next week.
>
> Translator: We have, we will convene a meeting in one of the churches here, we are expecting to meet all, almost 8 girls.
>
> […]
> Kennedy G.: So, you, so [cluster] is doing this in collaboration with the church?
>
> David A.: With the churches around here?
>
> Kennedy G.: The churches around and the pastors who are within
>
> SW: When did you start this project?
>
> Translator: Recently
>
> David A.: Two years
>
> SW: Ah okay, has it been successful?

[…]

David A.: Yeah, it has been successful. Thank you very much.

So, what might seem like more traditional one-way communication actually is still born out of the needs of those affected, and the teaching, while aiming at the parents, will be driven by the girls who have either opposed or are at risk of FGM. This very many mirrors what happens during the KPL's internal formal movement teaching, and the same approach as they have with their pre-summer school.

Concluding remarks

While indigenous knowledge is ever changing, inter-generational learning is crucial to agroecology as place-based indigenous knowledge is often held by older generations. This chapter has shown how crucial inter-generational learning is for the KPL members, as the intergenerational learning they had experienced as children formed their view of learning and gave them their first experience of agroecology. Grandparents, especially grandmothers, parents and community members have been the first teachers of agroecology for most of the members of KPL. While people of all genders would teach these lessons, much of this knowledge is held by women, and learning from, especially grandmothers was a shared experience within the KPL. These lessons were taught through practicals when performing chores, and was their first meeting with place-based, practical farmer-to-farmer teaching, and an early lesson that the farm is a classroom. Several members were also lucky enough to have learned agroecology in their secondary schools as children, where they had also been taught this knowledge practically, either on school grounds and/or in their own farms at home. The seeds for the decolonial, feminist and place-based participatory pedagogy that the KPL practices was already sown before the KPL ever existed. The three lessons that the KPL members received from these experiences were, first the value of practical place-based farmer-to-farmer learning, secondly, the value of indigenous knowledge often held by women, and thirdly, they learned that a lot of learning can take place outside of the classroom, both in the fields at home and in the fields at school.

Consequently, the KPL is exactly following a critical participatory pedagogy related to Freire as many other agroecology movements across the globe, which I elaborate on in chapter 6 (McCune & Sánchez, 2019, pp. 603–605; P. Rosset et al., 2019, p. 900). The KPL summer school is the best example, where the curriculum is set in the pre-summer school, because the curriculum needs to be based in the needs of the people attending it. This also relates to the principles of place-based farmer-to-farmer learning seen through an intersectional analysis of need as I return to in chapter 6 and chapter 9. Moreover, the KPL focuses on practicals to try and make the knowledge more accessible, whether the topic is composting or the land rights of widows. For the more abstract lessons the KPL uses both classic role-playing games, and what they call African mediations, which are an appropriation of the Latin American practice of místicas. Part of the strength of place-based teaching for the KPL is that the learner gets to have a very tactile experience, and

through African meditations and role playing, the KPL tries to also give members who do not have the lived experience of for example a widow, the possibility to imagine what it would be like to be in their shoes. Lastly, these African mediations also illuminate how the KPL's, and LVC's, larger analyses of patriarchy and neo-agro-colonialism relate to their everyday activism.

This focus on practical teaching also ties in closely with the KPL's prefiguration as covered in chapter 7, 8 and 9, where they focus on *leading by example*, and to do that they have to find practical ways of living the future they want and need today. Most of the prefiguration of the KPL is focused on prefiguring an agroecological food system and prefiguring different power dynamics in society through their peasant feminism.

In all their different ways of teaching the KPL members both challenges the strict hierarchy between teacher and student, especially through the farmer-to-farmer teaching methods as motivated by their spiral learning model, while at the same time always basing *what* is taught on *who* is taught, closely related to their view of PAR – the people affected should be the people benefitting. This is the case when they teach about both agroecology and peasant feminism, and when they teach inside the movement, and when they teach outside of the movement in their collaboration with schools, colleges and universities. The latter is also often motivated by how most members themselves had been more open to joining the KPL because they had been introduced to indigenous knowledge and agroecological practices early on.

Overall, the KPL is building different, more participatory, learning spaces, and are thereby, prefiguring a different way of teaching both inside and outside the formal education system in Kenya. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the point of this work is to understand what the KPL is doing on their own terms, not to assess their work from the perspective of institutional education systems, so I have not looked into the impact the KPL has had on schools, colleges and universities. This would also be interesting to investigate, but it is a different study all together.

In the next chapter, I dive into the pedagogical theory of the KPL, and the epistemology and ontology that motivates their creation of place-based, participatory learning spaces. As I show in chapter 6 and chapter 8, what is truly distinct about the KPLs way of teaching is how their foundational peasant feminist epistemology is also expressed in their teaching of agroecology, through their focus on re-valuing indigenous knowledge which is intimately tied to the role of women.

6. Peasant pedagogy

As shown in the chapter 5, the KPL values practical place-based farmer-to-farmer learning, and through that the indigenous knowledge often taught in these practical ways. In this chapter I show how this is based in a participatory critical pedagogy which challenges Cartesian hierarchical notions of knowledge (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 533–534; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, p. 597; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 11–13; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–251). The KPL's pedagogical theory, is one of the foundational political theories of the movement, which is shaped by their peasant feminism that in turns informs their ontology and epistemology. It is an inherently decolonial peasant feminist theory of pedagogy, anchored in the Kenyan context, adding an important voice to the other examples of African agroecological pedagogy (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019; Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019). In this way the KPL's approach to teaching is similar to other agroecology and food sovereignty movements, with some context specific nuances, as I show throughout this chapter. Pedagogy is, thereby, something the KPL both theorizes about both informed by and informing their practices – they are prefiguring pedagogical theory by practicing and discussing place-based critical pedagogy.

Place-based knowledge is also meant as practically as possible, and as something that is anchored in the political, cultural and *physical* context of the place (Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 4–10), and knowledge is therefore also tied to more-than-human-life. Especially *seeds* are seen as carriers of knowledge in line with other peasant and agroecology movements and thinkers (Koch, 2021, pp. 13–15; Meneley, 2021, pp. 6–7; Shiva, 2005, p. 30, 2019; Shome, 2019, pp. 204–205). As mentioned above, the KPL experience mirrors that of many other movements, but as most in-depth examples in the literature cover the Americas, the Caribbean, Europe and Asia this chapter, and therefore, this thesis, still has an important contextual contribution to the literature.

The KPL's theory of pedagogy is formed by, and ties in to, their peasant feminism, which is a decolonial and intersectional feminism. This both informs the KPL's epistemology, where knowledge is contextual and powerful, and it informs the KPL's centring of peasant feminist issues through what I call their critical traditionalism. When indigenous seeds and indigenous knowledges are de-valued just as the women traditionally holding these are devalued, re-valuing the knowledge and the seeds also requires a re-valuing of the role of women in society at large. Being able to hold on to the value of *both* the traditional knowledge *and* their current peasant feminist critiques is what makes up the KPL's critical traditionalism, which is clearly a decolonial approach to re-valuing indigenous knowledge . Through their critical traditionalism the KPL also challenges the stereotypes of the traditional, regressive rural peasant, challenging the westernized notions of a linear progression of history where the peasant is the most traditional, backwards and regressive character (Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 5–6; Copeland, 2021, pp. 455–456, 460–461).

Re-valuing of indigenous knowledge is a big part of the KPL's practice. Met with the *de*-mobilizing narrative – the opposite of what Mier y Terán et al. call mobilizing narratives (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 13) – that agroecology is backwards or analog while industrial agriculture is modern and digital, the KPL members have to spend a lot of their time re-valuing indigenous knowledge in order to be taken seriously. In this way the KPL deviates from other agroecology movements by focusing more on re-valuing indigenous knowledge rather than engaging indigenous knowledge with other knowledges through a diálogo de saberes (Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019, p. 550; Owuor, 2007, pp. 23–25, 28–30). Perhaps this focus away from diálogo de saberes can be explained by how indigenous knowledge has been so heavily denigrated in the neo-colonial context of Kenya. Moreover, the KPL also has a very explicit focus on teaching both agroecology and peasant feminism, which other movements struggle to do at the same time, as I return to in chapter 8.

This chapter starts at the beginning, with seeds and how the KPL views knowledge, research and place-based learning. Then I dive deeper into the peasant feminism of the KPL, and what I term critical traditionalism, before turning to how this counters the de-mobilizing narrative through their re-valuing of indigenous knowledge.

Epistemologies and commoning

The KPL's approach to knowledge, as something that is co-created through the spiral learning model as described in chapter 5, is shaped by their feminism, which they designate *peasant feminism*. Several people indirectly expresses a feminist standpoint position when it comes to who should do research, and how diversity of experience is valuable in a movement. That knowledge starts from our own lived experience (Tallbear, 2014, p. 3), was one of the motivations behind having the different collectives, which are either separatist based on age or gender, or motivated by interest. Michael E. specifically argues that people personally affected by an issue are more determined to learn about it, and are therefore, better suited to do the work, and that this is why it is so important to have a diversity of voices, something that people point out repeatedly. For Michael E. this diversity will means that there will be people passionate about researching different things, as they are all affected differently by the structural pressures facing farmers:

> SW: And this might be a stupid question, [laughing] but it will be an interesting answer, why is it important that the youth does the research on the youth?
>
> Michael E.: Okay, you know what affects you, you understand it better than the person that it doesn't affect. So, if we have got the youths, you'll find that on top we'll be so inquisitive, so attentive on matters that are affecting the group where you belong.
> […]So, you'll find that if at all somebody is given an opportunity now to do a research on something that is not affecting him, or however much he can do it, but the person who is also feeling the pinch will go extra mile.

So, according to Michael E., when a young person is researching topics that affect their lives, they will be more motivated to really *go the extra mile* and spend time and energy really getting to the core of an issue. At its outset it seems to be simply a point about who would be interested in researching certain issues, but he obviously also implies that this emotional involvement will lead to better research, whereas a classic positivist approach would believe this would be disqualifying. Again, this is a more constructivist and decolonial feminist approach to research and knowledge, where closeness to subject is seen as a strength rather than a weakness, and where it is important to have research done from different perspectives (Cerwonka, 2007, pp. 30–31; Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992, pp. 237–239; Smith, 2012, pp. 138–142; Tallbear, 2014; Wylie, 2003). Michael E. continues:

> Michael E.:[…] just like you take females; and if there is some issue that is touching on females, you'll find that females can easily spearhead that, than the males. But then again if there is something that is affecting the males then males will also out
> […]So that is why we are bringing everybody on board, both female and male youths, so that we work together. And again as we do this, we also, normally also check on the gender balance.
> […] So, that is something that we take into consideration
>
> SW: So, it is important to have all perspectives?
>
> Michael E.: Yeah

Here Michael E. continues to expand on the notion that people will be more thorough researching topics affecting them, now using the example of gender, while also adding the crucial point that this epistemological outset then, consequently, must value a diversity in the backgrounds of people doing research, as that will translate into a diversity of topics being covered. Moreover, in Michael E.'s view of research there is also a more classic sense of the benefits of specialization, that came up when he discussed the different collectives of the KPL. As mentioned in chapter 3, the KPL has collectives for the different gender and age groups, women, men and youth, and also has collectives that focus on the different working areas of the KPL: climate justice, agroecology, human rights, trades and issues of land, and since I was there even more have surfaced. Michael E. speaks to this specialization below:

> SW: Right, and how often do these collectives meet?
>
> Michael E.: Normally what we'll do, you'll find that an individual can be existing in even all the collectives.
> […] Yeah. And there are those ones who are interested in given collectives
> […]So, if it all we have got a meeting, and it is maybe something touching on for example agroecology, then the people who will be spearheading this are people, with the agroecology collective.
> […]So, in a way we are looking at maybe specialization to make work easier. So, we know that if I'm [name] and I'm in agroecology, I dig deep into agroecology issues and share them

with the, with the rest. If somebody is in the trade and maybe this issue of debt, you also dig deep into that and get the best information

SW: And share it with the rest?

Michael E.: And share it with people, so that everybody is enlightened on what is taking place, how do we go about it, which people, which bodies do we approach, if it is the government, a given ministry. Then so, we have something that is well researched.

SW: And is it something they do alone, or is it something they do together in the collective?

Michael E.: It is, okay, this is a movement, and we normally do things collectively. So, when you do it as an individual you might not get the best of it. So, you'll find in any collective we don't have maybe just one person.

So, while there is a clear idea of specialization within the KPL, this is still tied to communal work, and to the free sharing and access to information. And not just in the classic academic way of creating an article or book and hoping people will learn from it, but actively bringing it to the people they are in movement with. Consequently, sharing the research is equally as important as the research itself.

The KPL has a very optimistic view of knowledge, and motivated by this they actively try to increase access to both research methods and its results. At the same time members acknowledge that they are fighting misinformation, which of course implies that not all knowledge is trustworthy. However, the overarching sentiment is that having access to *good* knowledge, can change your life. The KPL's epistemology, or their understanding of how people create knowledge is closely tied to their commoning practices, and the idea that tools of survival should be easily accessible. For many members of the KPL gaining knowledge is connected to power, and enlightenment:

SW: And if you heard another group, with these goals and with these priorities, what would you advise them to do, what advice would you give them?

Bill L.: Seek more information, for me I've always gone for, information is power. You always need information to go forward, just do your research, I'll tell them do research a lot of research, do a lot of networking with other people, it helps, yeah, but information is key to everything.

SW: This is gonna sound like a stupid question, but why is information key?

Bill L.: Wow, it's not a stupid question I'll do bee keeping, I have the idea, I have the place to do it, but I don't have the information on how it's done, yeah that can just explain why information is so important. We have the tire right here
[…]
For me it's like the tires and the trash, we have them muchly available, but we don't know how to turn them into gold, the information is not, it's there, but it's not there where it's supposed to be for me I think, it's a little bit shallow. Like the, we go with the poultry farming, you've asked why we do Kenyegi, why do indigenous chickens only, that's just how

> we explain to other people why I've done it, and we give them the information that it's much better to do Kenyegi than do the breeding. Yeah the breeding require a lot of infrastructure, electricity most important, you don't require electricity to the Kenyegi ones, and the way you, you build your houses for the breeding chickens is not the, it's much complicated than the way we build the house for the Kenyegi ones.
>
> Michael L.: Even Kenyegi are resistant to diseases than the broilers, they are more resistant to diseases than the broilers

Asking Bill L. to clarify why he believes information is key to everything he gives the example of tires and trash that right now are nuisances, but with the right information could be *turned into gold.* Before this FGD we discussed a group in Nairobi called Believers Transformation League (BTL), which recovers trash and turns it into furniture, playgrounds, community spaces and art (BTL, 2022). In this way, the right knowledge can make the difference between trash and treasure. Furthermore, he explains how he and his fellow cluster members chose to raise indigenous (Kenyegi) rather than non-indigenous (broiler) chickens, because of the information they have on how hardy and adaptable the Kenyagi chicken are, as they are more adapted to the local environment. Without this information, they could have made a poor decision, potentially risking their livelihoods, and this knowledge was in this sense the *seeds* of their success.

Bill L. ties expanding your network to having access to more knowledge, which makes a lot of sense when they are based on a farmer-to-farmer learning. A common sentiment among KPL members is that gaining knowledge of agroecology will change the life of peasants, which assumes that they had everything else they need to implement it – land, manure, seeds, labour, which is often true. The main thing that farmers are often missing is seeds, as talked about below, which is also coupled with the sharing of knowledge, and again networks are crucial. Seeds are a through line in the KPL's view of knowledge and their peasant feminist re-valuing of knowledge, as I return to below.

Seeds is knowledge, knowledge is seeds

Access to seeds is often mentioned by members as a barrier to people practicing agroecology, as they can be more difficult to find if you do not have access to the networks of people using them. Gaining access to seed sharing in KPL was a motivation to join for many.

> David C.: Now, I have been able to take a lot from KPL, some of the benefits I have realized from KPL is on **seed exchange**. I've gotten and planted some seeds that I never used to have before, like for example you saw the garlic there, I never used to have it, but during the seed exchange I was able to get that. And **also knowledge,** I have also been able to acquire knowledge from other people and also other people also acquire knowledge from me, so that **exchange of knowledge.** And even guests like you, now come, have been coming to my place through KPL, yeah.

—

> SW: And why did you decide that you wanted to be part of [place] cluster, part of the founding fathers of [place] cluster?
>
> Peter E.: I was attracted by the unity that was there in KPL after, it was narrated to me, and how, the various seeds that KPL were having, so that attracted me that we, if I joined it will also lead in spreading this same, same agenda. I like exchanging ideas and working in unity with other people.
>
> SW: And what kinds of ideas have you been exchanging the last couple of months with the KPL
>
> Peter E.: That the exchange programs, for example seed exchange program. At times when we have seed exchange programs, I'm able to get some seeds from the other side, I come with them here, also the ones I am having some people can get on the other side, their ideas and the kind of farming taking place with some people when visit them, I learned on those ones, come and try to practice them here. Equally when some other people also come this side are able to learn from what I am doing.

Here both David C. and Peter E. mention sharing ideas and sharing seeds as benefits and reasons for joining the KPL. And in these examples of the seed exchanges and the exchanges of knowledge, it is implied again that a diversity of seeds is good, as well as a diversity of ideas and experiences to learn from is. This really anchors knowledge as place-based as well, which I return to below.

Benjiemen Labastin sees the rise of GMO seeds as a way of turning farmers from active *producers*, of not just food but inputs such as seeds and manure, into more passive *consumers* of industrial inputs that also makes the farmers more dependent on the skills and knowledge of the makers of these inputs (Labastin, 2019, pp. 103–105). He is basing this on the praxis of the Philippines based farmer led organization MASIPAG, which was born out of a challenge to the Green Revolution, an approach heavily reliant on patented seeds and chemical fertilizers, and is a collaboration of academic researchers and farmers (MASIPAG, 2013). And this deskilling is a form of epistemicide which takes place through a privatization of what was before part of a commons of knowledge, and it is tied to the broader epistemicide on which westernized epistemologies are built (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 80–87; Koch, 2021, pp. 13–15; Meneley, 2021, pp. 6–7; Shome, 2019, pp. 204–205):

> "The Global South has been historically subject to epistemicide. And that epistemicide continues to rearticulate itself today in various ways: through the destruction of indigenous memories, through the annihilation of noncapitalist knowledge about the land, farming, and ecologies (for example, knowledge systems of indigenous seed production that are able to produce diverse varieties of seeds are being destroyed as seed production becomes linked to profit and capital instead of sustainability)."(Shome, 2019, p. 204)

This epistemicide, and deskilling, is in part not recognizing that farmers saving seeds requires knowledge and skill (or technology), and lobbying for seed laws that make freely sharing seeds illegal (Bhardwaj, 2019; Greenpeace International, 2007; LVC, 2015, pp. 4–6; Shiva, 2005, p. 30, 2016, pp. 72–79, 2019).

Consequently, the simple act of saving and sharing indigenous seeds, and sharing the techniques of saving and storing seeds, is an act of epistemic resistance as it reclaims some of the knowledge lost and the access to the seeds.

So knowledge sharing is not enough, farmers need access to seeds to grow food, seed exchange is *also* tied to knowledge exchange, again showcasing how even commoning of the biophysical also includes commoning of knowledge, as maintaining the biophysical requires knowledge and technology, in this case seed saving and sharing (Pimbert, 2022, pp. 23–27). Moreover, as Peter E. highlights, the seed sharing is not only about access to seeds, but access to a variety of seeds, which the events provide because they bring in people from different regions of Kenya. Pimbert also shows how in an agroecological farming praxis, which is closely tied to food sovereignty and are for the KPL often interchangeable, you *need* a diversity of seeds (Pimbert, 2022, pp. 26–28; Shiva, 2005, pp. 87–89, 2016, pp. 42–44, 50–51). Agroecology challenges monocultural farming through polycultural farming which is exactly dependent on a vast variety of crops which is already visible in many communities in Kenya: "*For example, agricultural and forager communities in 22 Asian and African countries (as shown by 36 studies) use an average of 90-100 species. In Ethiopia, India and Kenya, aggregate country estimates can reach 300-800 species (Bharucha & Pretty, 2010; Gujit et al., 1995).*" (Pimbert, 2022, p. 27). For the average farmer to gain access to the necessary diversity of seeds, the industrial model of patenting seeds is not viable and sharing or selling cheaply, like the KPL is doing is the only way. Shiva also highlights how biodiversity provides security and resilience of ecosystems (Shiva, 2005, pp. 59–60, 83–84, 126–127), and sharing seeds and knowledge, thereby, becomes both motivated by a sense of responsibility and a sense of self-preservation. As I go more into depth within chapter 8 and 9, the work of the KPL is founded in the *needs* of their members and their communities, and so is the knowledge that they seek to co-create or find.

This notion of knowledge as a powerful resource is, thereby, not a sentiment that came out of de-contextual ideas about knowledge, but from the practical experience of almost all the members I talked to. Apart from a few, almost everyone practiced industrial farming to some extent before joining the KPL, using GMO seeds and the chemical fertilizers that are sold with them. Changing to agroecology they experienced a vast difference in their financial situation.

> Jane A.: Since we start from this KPL or this our cluster we have learnt about, on the use of this local seeds for example maize. We have realized that it is really very good maize unlike the commercial ones. And whenever you farm it grows and actually matures very fast and, it is very easy to manage and it is something that we have learnt from this KPL, yes. […]we are really emphasizing and also advocating for that many more people to join this group, that is when we will be able to battle against the commercial plants. Since we joined this group, the KPL, we actually been able to get knowledge and also experience on the produce of this our local crops.
>
> —

> SW: So, you feel that joining the KPL has changed your life in a positive way, or has it, is it still new?
>
> Caroline E.: I have witnessed changes in my life.
>
> SW: What kind of changes?
>
> Caroline E.: That when I compare the amount, I used to use in purchasing the farm inputs and now, there is a great difference. I am spending less, as compared to when I used to buy farming input like fertilizers, hybrid, whatever, so there is some difference.

Here Jane A. and Caroline E. both speak to how learning about and switching to growing indigenous crops has improved their lives. While Jane A. focuses on how the indigenous crops are easy to manage, Caroline E. gives the example of how she is now spending less money as she no longer has to buy any of the inputs she uses for farming. Here, both Jane A. and Caroline E. emphasize learning this knowledge of indigenous crops as one of the ways joining the KPL has changed their lives for the better. In the same FGD as Caroline E., Michael E. continues:

> Michael E.: Okay, being a participant also, since I joined KPL and learnt about all this information, and putting them into practice: number one, there are great changes because the way I used to think at any given time that when we are approaching planting season I had to start thinking that how am I going to get fertilizers, how am I going to get seeds? How am I going to get maybe somebody to do, to cultivate my farm, but right now it is different because, when planting season come, I have some seeds with me. When planting season come, I know that there is some manure
>
> Caroline E.: Manure
>
> Michael E.: From my animals at some point. So, you find that the expenditure that I used to have it has been reduced. […]

Here Michael elaborates on how learning about the use of manure has freed him from spending money on inputs such as chemical fertilizers so that he, like Caroline E., has saved a lot of money being a part of KPL. And I just want to put this into context again – being low-income subsistence farmers in the global south saving money means being able to pay school fees, being able to pay electrical bills, and buy other things to improve their families lives, while also meaning that they are not dependent on a money income to be able to engage in farming. This seemingly simple change can, therefore, make a huge impact, and that is why it is something so many members highlight it as a benefit.

Most members have access to cow, chicken or goat dung, and food and plant left-overs, but they did not have the knowledge on how to compost it so it could be used as organic fertilizer or manure. Here again, *knowledge,* is the key to change. Their view of knowledge can, thereby, be encapsulated in their approach to seeds: indigenous seeds should be shared freely, because the more people hold this knowledge, the more

people will use and create liveable environments. Research, and making its tools more accessible, is therefore a crucial tenant of KPL's pedagogy.

Farm-based Research

The KPL definitely challenges the monopoly of knowledge that institutions, such as universities or NGOs often are perceived as having, simply by doing case studies, surveys and experimentation without any academic intervention. One of the more repeated phrases when talking about what the KPL terms *farm-based research* was that the *farm is a laboratory*, in the sense that it is a place for experimentation. Farmers learn and create knowledge when they plant different crops and compare results or use different methods on the same crops and compare results. A great point often made to me while walking in the fields was that farmers are experimenting and researching all the time, the main difference from academic researchers being that farmers rarely document their research for the public because the farmer is too busy with actually farming to also document and engage in knowledge sharing.

In this way they are prefiguring a different, more democratic, knowledge production, and often their internal workshops and summer schools also include an element of research. At the same time, they are also doing collaborations with me as well as other academic researchers, as mentioned in chapter 4. This is a quite common practice within agroecology movements, and as mentioned agroecology is seen as both a science, practice and a movement, and often it is the same people engaging in all three, being both farmer, activist and researcher. Some of us engaging with the research are not ourselves farmers, and often self-identify as scholar activists.

Being that you can be both farmer, activist and researcher, all members of the KPL who want to be involved in the research can be, there are for example no rules that it can only be cluster conveners or members of the secretariat. From this view of research, the KPL does not deny the value of academic science, rather they remove its methods from a pedestal and insists that it is something that is accessible, and perhaps common sense, in terms of how we learn new things in a reliable way. This is due to their insistence on research happening within a PAR methodology, which is in line with their *spiral learning model*, as mentioned. This understanding of how PAR aligns with other participatory methodologies which is often tied to decolonizing the university. In her seminal book "Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples" Linda Tuhiwai Smith outlines how indigenous communities have always done research, the issue was never with *research* itself, but how it was deployed as a colonial tool:

> "Despite a devastatingly negative experience of positivist research in Indigenous communities, Indigenous peoples have not rejected all forms of research. Indigenous people have always been researchers. In the simplest terms, research is observing a phenomenon (problem statement), making a hunch (hypothesis), forming a question (research question), and systematically searching for the answer (methodology). It involves seeking knowledge, learning to hear, to see, to be aware, to use and

> trust our perceptions, and observing if the observable facts can be repeated." (Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, p. 27)

The point is, thereby, not rejecting science but to reclaim it as a fundamental human search for answers that no one has a monopoly on, as is insisted within agroecology as well (Brem-Wilson & Nicholson, 2017, pp. 142–145; Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1406–1408). It is about demystifying the knowledge creation process, by making it more accessible and taking it of the pedestal, while still acknowledging the work and dedication that goes into it. And in the eyes of the KPL making research more accessible does not devalue it, on the contrary it makes it more valuable to more people. Here we see their inclination towards commoning, which at its core also challenges value being determined by capitalist logics of ownership, as they turn on its head. However, this is not about saying that any kind of production of knowledge is always good. As is central to PAR and decolonial methodologies, the KPL insists that the research process should be guided by the needs and interests of the communities it affects, and the KPL does seek to co-produce knowledge they believe will be useful, and which is why they consider it important to share this knowledge. Whether the KPL is doing research with or without the collaboration of academic researchers this is what guides them, and other similar movements as mentioned above. Their participatory approach is, thereby, what bridges the KPL's approach to researching, teaching and practicing agroecology – it needs to be based on the needs of the people learning.

In this way, farm-based research is both formal learning – as the point is to acquire new knowledge – but also informal learning, as the members learn new skills and new approaches while doing the research itself, something I return to in chapter 7. This is inherently shaped by their peasant feminist contextual epistemology, which brings me to another important tenant of the KPL pedagogy – the importance of place-based knowledge, and its connection to place.

Place-based learning and deconstructing the classroom

I understand place-based teaching and learning, as being a contextual form of pedagogy that encompasses the entire context, which is a social, cultural, economic, politic and a *geographical* and *ecological* context. Moreover, it is also assumed that the teaching both takes it outset in the present context, and that it will also affect that context (Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 4–10). This also fundamentally expands what a classroom is as so much of the students and teachers' context is in itself a classroom (Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 9–11), as we saw in chapter 5 with how the KPL values farmer-to-farmer learning.

In the KPL it is for example often highlighted how a restoration of the environment will mean a restoration of place-based knowledge, indicating how knowledge and the context are intimately connected. Much of this place-based knowledge were often seen as indigenous knowledge that had been lost or been made useless by the extinction of species because of industrial farming, climate change or both. In two different FGDs in the same cluster, Alice C. and Simon D. picked a picture of a fig tree in one of the exercises and talked about

how the indigenous fig tree used to function as a weather predicter – something which is becoming harder to do because of climate change, and the lack of indigenous trees such as the fig tree.

> Alice C.: Yeah. Will I start with mine? I picked this one, maybe I may pick two. I think this is a fig tree, I wish that these big trees should not be cut down in future, because with no trees no rain, and with these trees you can know when the rain is coming, and when the drought is coming, because when they are shedding their leaves, it symbolizes that the droughts are coming. Yes. So, they, there is a symbol they have for the rain, when the rain is near to come they may shed their leaves and when the droughts are to come, so you can know when to plant and when not to plant with these trees, and without these trees even the rain itself it will be very inadequate, so we will not long for these trees to be cut down, instead they should be added so that the rains are consistent, and I just want to try, I don't know whether this is a seed bed, or something. […]
>
> Dennis C.: Nursery
>
> Alice C.: Maybe a nursery bed, in our cluster, majorly [place] cluster we wish to start even a nursery bed so that as we teach members, when they request for the seedlings, they are readily available so that we provide. And we see the continuity of the, the atmosphere continuing to be green, the environment, so that they don't look up and down chasing for the seeds, they find them readily available at the cluster level of [place].

Here Alice C. explains how the fig tree acts as both a predictor of rainfall, and drought, through the shedding of its leaves, while at the same time the fig tree also supports the hydrologic cycle and brings water to the areas where they grow. For this reason, Alice C. wants to set up a tree nursery to make it easier for people to find fig tree seedlings that can then be planted with the goal of restoring the local environments. Alice C.'s quotes beautifully sum up how regaining a good environment, and commoning inputs, is also the same as regaining indigenous knowledge: specifically relearning the practice of weather forecasting through the life cycle of fig trees is only possible if there are planted more fig trees, and the environment is generally looked after. And the way to ensure more fig trees are planted is to make the seeds accessible. People in other clusters also touched on how trees and rain were connected. This underscores how the environment is a teacher, and that its lessons are limited when you limit the biodiversity, and counteracting this then requires that biodiversity to be *readily available*, as Alice C. wants to do through her idea of tree nurseries. This is exactly a decolonial approach to place-based learning, as explained by Gruenewald, as the KPL aims to both re-value indigenous knowledge and to re-store the environmental context (Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 8–10). Gruenewald defines a critical pedagogy of place as: "*A critical pedagogy of place aims to (a) identify, recover, and create material spaces and places that teach us how to live well in our total environments (reinhabitation); and (b) identify and change ways of thinking that injure and exploit other people and places (decolonization).*" (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 9).

The valuing of biodiversity is also a more general valuing of diversity, as described by Michael E. above. The discussion between Jaramogi G. and Grace G. below also reflects a more general appreciation of a

decolonial understanding of a pluriverse of knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 88–89). The valuing of a diversity of experiences, alongside biodiversity is in opposition to what Vandana Shiva calls the *monocultures of the mind*, which is part of a Cartesian world view that industrial agriculture is built around (Shiva, 2016, pp. 43–45). Instead, decolonial thinkers like Shiva underscore the importance of knowledge diversity along with biodiversity.

> SW: And, when you say in solidarity, what do you mean by solidarity? How do you understand solidarity?
>
> Jaramogi G.: Now, for me, solidarity means strength. And as always things that are bound together, the energy, or rather the strength also becomes immense.
>
> Grace G.: For me, solidarity also comes up with aspects of biodiversity. There are examples of, maybe in a cluster if a given farmer grows a particular crop another one also grows maybe something that is different, another also grows something that is different from the first two, so it becomes a variety, and that again shows the solidarity.
>
> SW: And is this why you also want more people to join? Are there also other reasons?
>
> […]
> Grace G.: There is this aspect of knowledge sharing, however, you know, as we are now, each and every one of us here, there is that biodiversity of knowledge amongst us, so in as many people as possible that means there will be a lot of wisdom, or rather, ideas coming from different people and that will also again help in building the movement.

Grace G. here touches on how being able to access seeds is an important motivation for joining the KPL, and she again ties the diversity of seeds to a diversity of knowledge, and sees a strength in both of these diversities, just as Shiva and so many other decolonial thinkers. Which brings me back to seeds and the sharing of seeds. This relates to how the *environment* is also seen as a teacher in its own right, and part of the pedagogy, and part of deconstructing the classroom.

If you observe the changes in your environment closely, you will learn. As when interacting with other humans in the spiral learning model, each time you interact with your environment it responds, and we can learn from those responses:

> SW: You all have different kinds of knowledge, where did you learn this knowledge that you have?
>
> Thomas T.: Just from our family, from elders , yeah, yeah.
>
> SW: Is that the same for all of you?
>
> David T.: From elders, from schools, churches,
>
> SW: That is many different places

David T. / Mildred T.: Yeah

David T.: Yeah, many different places

Paul T.: By the environment itself

SW: By yourself?

Paul T.: By environment

Mildred T.: Itself

Paul T.: Yeah

SW: How do you learn from the environment?

Paul T.: The way, the behaviour, by itself

[…]

Mildred T.: The other thing is about the plants, like mango tree, in fertile area the mangoes which are produced by that mango [tree, ed.] it's, they are different than others which is not fertile [soil, ed.], so the environment itself.

SW: It shows you what works and what doesn't work?

All: Yeah

SW: The environment

Mildred T.: Yeah

Sara T.: Also, about the soils, soils we have different types of the soil, there is loamy soil, there is clay soil, so you find, maybe for example, if you plant a tree, or a plant in a loamy soil it grows faster than that in the clay soil

Mildred T.: The clay soil

Sara T.: So, you learn from the environment, yeah

David T., Mildred T., Paul T. Sara T., and Thomas T. all touch upon the many different ways they have learnt about indigenous farming and agroecology. First, they mention their families and communities, as outlined in chapter 5, and then they talk about how the environment itself is a good teacher. Sara T. explains that for example if you plant a mango tree in two different types of soil, you will learn which soil type is best for the tree through watching how the tree grows and produces fruit. Consequently, the *farm is a classroom*, where, as mentioned, farmers teach other farmers, and also where the farmers learn directly from their

environment. Being observant and curious about the environment was often referred to by members as a learning process, and that the solutions to problems are often being demonstrated to us by more-than-human-life, if we take the time to observe how the environment reacts. Seeing where bees build their own hives, and thereby learning what kind of environmental needs they have, seeing where plants do well, observing that falling leaves decompose and improve soil quality, and so on, and so on. In this way, the KPL again insists that farmers are inherently researchers, and perhaps even more so when practicing agroecology, where industrial farmers are to a large extent deskilled, as explained above. Even though most industrial farmers still need a sense of rain patterns and their land, their actions are restricted by the already set and mixed seed and fertilizer packs that they use. Again, agroecology is both a movement, a science and a practice, and the KPL often collapses all those categories by performing all three at the same time.

However, I want to complicate the notion of the environment as a teacher. Because of deforestation and climate change the environment has become less predictable and a less reliable teacher:

> David D.: […] Another thing here, we have this, the so called sky, or the atmosphere. Yes, the atmosphere, when I want to talk about the atmosphere, for your crop to do well you have to understand the weather, on which time to plant and which to time to harvest, and it has become a problem to most of us that we don't understand and we can't forecast the weather. So, there is need for us to have some people to train as experts on how to do what we call it, prediction, weather prediction and to enlighten farmers when to plant, and when to harvest, and which kind of breeds to plant, and what season, so I'm seeing we as KPL members, there is need that you have to address this and we have to learn on how we can do what we call it, weather forecasting, and on what we can do for us to, our plants to do better. Because you find that at times I might plant late, when I plant late, before my maize matures, there will be a long dry spell, and this will lead to low yield of which my plant will wilt before it matures. So, we as members we need to train, and we need to learn on how to focus on weather, so that we can plant on the right time, that we get good what, good product from the farm. So that's what, my objective, as a member of KPL.

As David D. points out, increasingly unpredictable weather has made it difficult for farmers to predict when to plant and harvest, which is why he thinks more training on weather predicting is necessary, as it highly affects their livelihoods. And many of the problems that farmers faced were due to historically recent developments caused by industrial inputs, or the climate change these practices has worsened, such as the full army worm (worsened by changing weather patterns due to climate change), striker weed (worsened by chemical fertilizer) and soil erosion (worsened by both). And the solution to this unpredictability was exactly afforestation, restoring the environment through substituting industrial inputs for indigenous ones and mitigating climate change, as Alice C. also talked about above,

> Susan D.: […]in the near past our climate has been tampered with, so that even in some areas where they used to receive regular or reliable rainfall, there is no longer rainfall, so, can we get the indigenous trees so that the climate is restored, for us to have, and for also, that we can

> plant the crops and get some food, because when there is no rainfall there is no hope in getting food.

Here Susan D. connects reliable rainfall with reliable food supply, and how a good environment, thereby, connects with good livelihoods for their communities. This speaks to both the KPL's prefiguration strategy and it's commoning strategy, but here I mainly want to complicate the notion of the environment as an always reliable and caring teacher. In a way, the farmer-environment teaching relationships mirrors the farmer-to-farmer relationship, in the sense that neither party is passively receiving lessons but engaging in a reciprocal exchange of learning and teaching, and to learn from the environment, the farmer has to contribute to the environment. Planting (fig) trees will for example both contribute to the living economies of the hydrologic cycle (Shiva, 2005, pp. 13–15), and help give signs of when rains or droughts are coming. Caring for the environment, means the environment cares for us, and in this care the KPL finds lessons.

This resonates with other agroecological trainings and schools across LVC, as the concept of *place-based learning* (Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 10–11; S. S. Moore, 2017, p. 250), where the approach, as Moore puts it, is an effort of "*Bringing together critical pedagogy's focus on coming to political consciousness and land-based education's focus on learning from rather than about a place*." (S. S. Moore, 2017, p. 249). In agroecological training the place or the environment it takes place in is central to the teaching, as it is not a universalizing or one-size-fits-all kind of a science (Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019, p. 550; McCune & Rosset, 2021, pp. 441–442). What works in Kenya does not work in Italy, and what works in Mulo Cluster does not work in Kalianni Cluster. But that does not mean someone from Kalianni cannot learn from seeing how it is done in Mulo and the other way around, because they can extrapolate lessons, *exactly* because the lessons are context specific, so they know what to adjust and what to keep as they can see and feel what is different.

In that way agroecology mirrors critical pedagogy in the sense that it is more about teaching a way of thinking rather than providing a priori answers. Critical pedagogy aims to instil critical thinking and collaboration (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 533–534; Freire, 2000, pp. 92–95, 109–110; Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 6–10) while agroecology wants to instil a mindset of holistic and place-based thinking (McCune & Sánchez, 2019, 2019, p. 597; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 11–13; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–251). So, while the teaching techniques are the same, such as farmer-to-farmer teaching, the way it is being used and the content being shared is always different depending on the context. The clearest example of this, is the KPL insistence on planning the curriculum for their summer school in a pre-summer school which then takes its outset in the needs of the participants and the context of the environment where the school is hosted, as explained in chapter 5. Again, the KPL challenges the mind-body dichotomy of the Cartesian epistemology, where knowledge is seen as so detached from our bodies, that talking about embodied experience in a context is seen as dangerous (Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 8–11; hooks, 1994, pp. 15–17, 135–138). Again, it is

clear that the KPL's pedagogy is in line with other agroecology movements' approach to critical place-based pedagogy, while it also takes a specific peasant feminist approach in the KPL.

Returning to the outset of this chapter, the KPL's pedagogy and epistemology is greatly formed by their peasant feminist analysis, and their need to revalue indigenous seeds and indigenous knowledge which has been undervalued, in part because they are traditionally held by women (Shiva, 2005, pp. 124–127). Below, I sketch out the KPL's brand of peasant feminism, which is an intersectional, decolonial feminism, that shapes what I term the KPL's critical traditionalism.

Peasant Feminism is intersectional, decolonial feminism

As I have shown above, there is a clear connection between colonialism, patriarchy and knowledge production through the westernized Cartesian approach to knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 86–89; Shiva, 2016, pp. 112–115). As Grosfuguel outlines, the epistemicides that both enabled and were caused by the genocides of colonization outside Europe, also involved the epistemicide and genocide of powerful women in Europe, through the so called witch trials (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 76–78, 86–87). Westernized epistemologies separate the rational, human, masculine, white, disembodied, universal knowledge from the emotional, more-than-human, feminine, embodied, racialized knowledge. In that hierarchy, the black peasant woman in a former colony, is at the bottom of the knowledge hierarchy (Shiva, 2016, pp. xviii–xx, 111–115). Moreover, it builds these differences up as binaries just as mind and body becomes a strict binary. And while elder women are also shown respect in Kenyan culture, and in many African cultures in general, as Salami writes, when it comes to women on the African continent "[…]*respect and equality are not the same thing.*" (Salami, 2020, p. 103), and cannot guarantee rights. This is evident when the traditional knowledge that is overwhelmingly held by women is considered "backwards" or "analog" or is accredited to men, as I return to later in this chapter.

So much of this indigenous knowledge is held by women and passed on from woman to woman as highlighted in chapter 5, both in terms of teaching their children, grandchildren, and in terms of women interacting with each other, in these informal intergenerational teaching moments. And as many highlighted here, much of this teaching happened in the home, which is still the domain of women. This was also evident in the way that the mothers I met in the KPL taught their young children through practicals, and especially when it came to teaching their children how to cook, which they all taught all their children, regardless of gender, as I return to in chapter 9. In the KPL's teaching, taking a decolonial peasant feminist approach is, therefore, crucial to re-valuing the indigenous knowledge that has been undervalued, erased or lost, as it is a connection to femininity that has motivated part of the erasure in the first place (Shiva, 2005, pp. 124–126, 2016, pp. 112–115). This again reaffirms the connection between the erasure of the knowledge mainly held by women, and the work mostly done by women:

> Margret H.: […]You see, when you go to the farm women do a lot of work, a lot of work! But by the end of the day, they don't get any profit from whatever they are doing, which is weighing them down, and it makes them give up, they just think that I'm just there, yeah.[…]

What Margret H. is here highlighting, is the fact that women in Kenya, and globally, perform a lot of the work in farming and food production without receiving the benefits, as they often do not own the land for example. Gender discrimination is a huge issue in rural and food producing communities globally, and in the KPL's work asserting the rights of women has to go hand in hand, with asserting that indigenous knowledge has value.

This was exactly the critique from women within LVC, against LVC, in the 1990s when the movement wanted to focus on seeds, and women as the custodians of seeds without talking about the violence and discrimination faced by these women (Desmarais, 2007, pp. 161–167, 171–172; LVC, 2008). It seemed hypocritical to focus on the role of women as seed keepers, while remaining silent on the issues these women were facing in society general and inside the movement as well (LVC, 2017b). In 2008 at the fifth International Conference of La Via Campesina in Maputo, Mozambique, there was a renewed vow to focus on how patriarchal and gender based violence was present both in society at large and in La Via Campesina as well, with a focus on how it affects rural and working class women in general, through an international campaign (LVC, 2021a, pp. 42–47, 2008). In this way, LVC was very early on an intersectional movement, pushed by internal critique, in the way that it analysed the oppression faced by its members, and the KPL is very much the same.

In my first year of the PhD program, I went to a feminist conference where I presented LVC as an example of intersectional feminism, as they address questions of class, gender, age, nationality and colonial position through a fundamental understanding that all of these intersect and compound in different ways in different contexts. From that presentation one question stuck with me; one woman asked, "how they managed to do all those things?". I wanted to bring it up in the interview with Margret H., as I knew we had plenty of time to talk:

> SW: […]I was presenting my project at a conference, and I was talking about the LVC, […]and I presented all the LVC's focus areas and all the things they are fighting for, and all the things they are fighting against, and there was this woman who asked me, she said " that's amazing, but how can they do all those things at the same time", so I am going to ask you [laughs] because, like you said, you are fighting, you are fighting for gender equality, you're fighting for organic farming, you're fighting for people having enough money to send their kids to school, how, is it not fighting to many battles at once?
>
> Margret H.: Okay, it's like, when I talk about LVC; let me talk about the meeting we had in South Africa as peasant feminists workshop, so it was like, all of us we were presenting what challenges do women face when it comes to like for example in KPL, we have our own issue, which is land, you could in Zimbabwe, they had the issue it was seed. So, women had

> challenge of accessing seed you see? If you go to Uganda, they also had their own challenge there, you see?
> […]So, we were trying to see, how can we come up with a way to campaign against these challenges that are facing these women. So, also in LVC we have different organization and they have their own challenges, but you see they will sit down and see how can we come up with a way to tackle this challenge that we are facing, even if it is affecting women, it is also affecting men you see?
> […]So, how can we come up with a way to tackle this challenge, yes
>
> SW: Right, and so, I think the question from that person was, I think she was impressed that you're not just tackling women's issues, you are tackling women's issues and women farmer's issues and seeds issue that not just affect women but also of course sounds like it affects women[…] what do you think about, somebody thinking that that's too much to handle at one time?
>
> Margret H.: It's a matter of, to me it's a matter of planning, because for example in KPL, the issue we have is widows and land, so our main focus should be on that, by the end of the day widows are women, you see?
> […]So, when it affects them, it affects widows and it affects the single women, let me talk about that sector, so, our main focus will be on that, we will see how can we come up with a way of tackling these issues, also, how can we come up with ways to help up, to help these widows, you see?

So here Margret H. explains that while LVC covers many different areas, each of the movements in LVC have their own areas of focus because each movement experiences for example gendered oppression in different ways. Margret H. explains that while one of the pressing issues for peasant women in Kenya is access to land and the way widows are treated, in Zimbabwe women struggle with access to seeds, and in Uganda it might materialize in a completely different way. In this way, LVC manages to fight many of the different faces of gendered oppression in Africa, as each of the movements are fighting the problems they face. This again, values place-based knowledge, and exemplifies how the larger movement is also decentralized, leaving it up to each local movement to define their own feminist struggle. Lastly, Margret H. addresses the key intersectional point that even though it may look like all of these women are fighting different battles, all their battles are linked – so while gendered oppression may be expressed through a lack of access to seeds in one place, and a lack of access to land in another, these battles are connected and fighting the same enemy. The notion of it being "too many things" does not phase Margret H., as she points out it is just a matter of organizing, and various parts of the larger movement, LVC, works on different issues, by all addressing what is most pressing for them on the ground. In many ways LVC is a great study of how to make global grassroots movement survive and thrive (Desmarais, 2007; Gaarde, 2017), but this is not a study of LVC.

While it might seem unrelated to the casual observer, gender-based violence very much affects women's access to land. First, for example by being denied physical access through the threat of violence, which happens to a lot of the widows who have their land stolen, but also happens to married women whose

husbands chase them away or deny them access to land, and of course the rarer case of divorce also poses issues for women in terms of violence and land ownership (KPL, 2022b). Second, women with little access to financial and social resources often have nowhere to turn, which leaves them more vulnerable to staying with a violent partner for fear of losing their access to land, which is their livelihood, as class often compounds gender-based violence (Crenshaw, 1994/2006, pp. 10–11).

The point of raising this is, that the reason the KPL, and LVC by extension, are dealing with so many "different" types of oppression, is because their members are affected by all of them. Just fighting one – neo-agro-colonialism, industrial agriculture, patriarchal oppression, or neo-colonial epistemicide – will not solve the problem, as these oppressions interconnect and compound differently for different members. This is why more and more voices are claiming that agroecology *needs* an intersectional feminist analysis to truly address all the inequalities it professes to address (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019; Martignoni & Claeys, 2022; Milgroom, 2021; Seibert et al., 2019).

The example of the Kenyan widow being robbed of her land is illuminating. Often, when a widow has her land stolen by her in-laws, it is used for industrial agriculture which requires more hectares, thereby motivating land grabbing. And when people do not value the knowledge that traditionally has mainly been held by women, they instead turn to the agro-vet to sell them chemicals and GMOs. This intersectional analysis is also closely related to decolonial analyses, because, in the words of Audre Lorde, there are no single-issue decolonial struggles (Arvin et al., 2013, pp. 17–19).

Understanding how these different oppressions intersect and compound, and how to fight back, is exactly intersectional analysis, and it is often also at the heart of a decolonial agroecological approach. In many ways, this goes back to the notion of food sovereignty, which in itself is a holistic community and justice oriented approach to food production; it is about fighting the exploitation of immigrant farm workers, the patriarchal oppression of women, neo-colonial land grabbing, the patenting of seeds and Green revolutions, and so many other battles (Claeys et al., 2021, pp. 244–245; Seibert et al., 2019, pp. 45–47). Another related feminism is ecofeminism, and similarly, the ecofeminism of Maathai and the Green Belt Movement wanted to highlight the connections between the everyday struggles of rural women, environmental destruction and global oppression (Hunt, 2014, pp. 240–245; Merton & Dater, 2008; Muthuki, 2006, pp. 88–89).

This work, consequently, goes beyond a singularly focused gendered perspective, and takes a holistic approach to the world – these women's issues are affected by not only their gender, but their class, their countries neo-colonial position, and so on, which is an intersectional analysis (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 2–4; Claeys et al., 2021, p. 245; Fernandes, 2019, pp. 394–395; Seibert et al., 2019, p. 46). Since Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the phrase intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) it has been enthusiastically embraced, but not always understood. It is a common misunderstanding of intersectionality that it is about tallying up the number of different intersecting identities, and declaring who is more oppressed, rather it is

about understanding that "[…]*oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice.*" (Collins, 2000, p. 21). Consequently, intersectionality is about seeing how oppression is context dependent, and that oppressive forces can compound. Moreover, intersectionality is not about declaring someone as the most marginalized, as again that is contextual. Sexism presents differently depending on the gendered, classed and racialized position of a person, much as racism presents differently depending on the gendered, classed, and racialized position of a person, and so on (Crenshaw, 1994/2006, p. 8). As a light-skinned mixed-black cis-hetero woman, I am both marginalized in spaces and dominant in others, exactly because all of my different identity markers compound and interact, not because I am sometimes just a woman or sometimes just a person of colour. Intersectionality is not about making definitive statements, but about being sensitive to the nuances of context and individual positionalities. While many white feminists and scholars have seen intersectionality as an aggressive assertion of difference, for many black women it has just been an overdue statement of how the world actually looks. This goes back to the frustrations BIPOC women had with the lack of recognition of especially racialization, sexuality and class in the early women's movement when talking about what it means to be a woman, and the lack of recognition of sexism within civil rights and post-colonial independence movements, often dominated by BIPOC men (hooks, 1982, pp. 93–97, 130–134, 188–189, 2015, pp. 124–125; Salami, 2020, pp. 130–133). As Crenshaw put it back in 1994:

> "Although racism and sexism readily intersect in the lives of real people, they seldom do in feminist and antiracist practices. And so, when the practices expound identity as 'woman' or 'person of color' as an either/or proposition, they relegate the identity of women of color to a location that resists telling." (Crenshaw, 1994/2006, p. 8).

This of course applies to all the different ways people can be othered and marginalized; gender and gender expression, sexuality, age, class, racialization, whether you are able bodied and neuro-typical, are all facts that are not *either, or* for many people. The same can be said of peasant *women*, whose plight can easily be overlooked if the conversation is only about the precarious positions of peasants in very broad terms ignoring gender or whose class position can be overlooked if the discussion is about women in very broad terms. And the same can be said for peasants with disabilities as I discuss in chapter 7. The peasant feminism of the KPL is therefore a feminism which does not identify with more liberal board room focused feminism and is of course also inspired by the feminism of LVC.

Many members of LVC were at first hesitant in even using the term feminism. Just as the black *womanist* movement, they did not see themselves in the mostly, white, urban and middle-class mainstream feminist movements (LVC, 2021a, pp. 23–26). Instead, women based in Latin America proposed a *Peasant and Popular Feminism*, that would take its outset in the classed and racialized lived experience of peasants and farm workers, and the KPL clearly is inspired by this feminism (LVC, 2021a, p. 27). The feminism of the KPL is very much a *peasant* feminism, in the sense that it centres the issues of peasant women in its

solutions and its critiques. Their feminism includes exactly an intersectional analysis of the wider political landscape and the problems of food production, an analysis based in the lived experience of peasant women in Kenya. Therefore, for them agroecology is also a powerful tool for the same ecological and financial reasons, but with the added gendered perspective of bringing financial independence (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 14–16). Moreover, their peasant feminism is focused on gender parity, and the seemingly small everyday ways they can support women and girls, taking their outset in the idea that the people affected are the experts of their own situation. Here the KPL's peasant feminism again mirror's Maathai's, as she actively went against the advice of agricultural experts who thought the rural women of the Green Belt Movement, were too uneducated to learn how to plant trees. Instead Maathai valued the knowledge the women already held, in that she believed it was important to work *with* and not *for* the people you want to support (Hunt, 2014, pp. 240–241, 247; Merton & Dater, 2008). This is one of the areas where the KPL's participatory pedagogy, their decolonial peasant feminism and agroecology practice meets – that context, economic, political and ecological, is always key as there are no universal answers (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 532–533).

Similarly, to other decolonial feminists, the peasant feminists of the KPL are trying to counteract the epistemicide of modernity, which means both reaching back and reaching forward. While the KPL's peasant feminism is motivated by practical solutions to practical problems, which I return to in chapter 9, some of those practical problems are exactly caused by internalized colonial and patriarchal values. Moreover, decolonial thinking is not about deifying everything that went before, but about moving forward with what works in the context (Owuor, 2007, pp. 23–25).

Critical traditionalism

It seems that the overarching approach to knowledge within the KPL is what I call critical traditionalism. It is where their feminism merges with their decolonial re-valuing of indigenous knowledge, and in their challenging the hierarchies of mainstream educational institutions through insisting on both participation and grounding education in place-based and embodied contexts. Again, this does not deviate much from experiences of similar movements in other parts of the world, rather it adds an example of how this looks in Kenya for the KPL, which seems to heavily emphasize an intersectional analysis.

An interesting point is that lot of the teaching around peasant feminism in the KPL is about challenging traditions and norms, as Margret H. highlights above, and below, while much of the other work of the KPL is about re-valuing traditions and norms, when it comes to traditional knowledge on agriculture and food production. This is not an unusual complexity to find in peasant movements, but one that is often missed by more cursory glances or understandings of peasant movements. Often their revaluing of older farming traditions means that they are assumed to be *regressive*, *traditional,* or *conservative* in other areas, which again goes back to one of the central assumption of westernized modernity that history is linear progression,

where traditional and progressive are seen as clear dichotomies (Bhambra, 2007, pp. 30–31; Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 5–6; Copeland, 2021, pp. 455–456; Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018, p. 73). Once again, the KPL is in line with decolonial thinking, as they challenge this dichotomic thinking of either being traditional or being progressive.

> Margret H.: [...]you know we have, we've been documenting cases of widows and land grabbing, so when we brought the issue, we were telling them, the reason why these widows are being chased, for example now they have been chased, where are they going with the children? Nowhere. They have to go and live in the shopping centres, because they don't have any lands of their own, but for example, if their fathers could have given them some space to farm and to build their own houses, they could not be having all these stresses, they could just go back, farm there, have their own land and raise their kids. But these things are happening because the girl child has been neglected, you see, in my culture they believe that once I'm married, I don't have a right to own land on my own, but constitutionally I have the right, but since most of us [Practical discussion [00:25:04] - [00:25:10]], but since most of them don't have the information about the, the inheritance and everything, they assume it's okay [...]Yeah, we will go with what the culture is telling us, the culture is telling me that I cannot own land in my home, so it's okay with me, why should I go back? But in reality, constitutionally they have the right, yes. So, these are some of the things as KPL Women Collective we are trying to advocate for.
> [...]

Margret H. outlines how gendered expectations not only mean that women who are widowed have their land stolen without much objection, but also that women are not considered to inherit from their own parents, which speaks to a more fundamental gendered societal expectations of who can and should own land and means that also unmarried women face issues of land access. Consequently, Margret H. is insisting that the parents of the widows should break with these societal customs and allow their adult daughters to return to their family home and farm a piece of their land. In this way, what will allow these women to practice traditional indigenous farming, is that their families specifically, and society in general, change their traditional notions of who can and should own land. This is why I call it critical traditionalism.

Of course, it is not a completely unfounded thought that there are issues with gender-based violence in rural areas, exemplified by LVC's global campaign against gender-based violence inside and outside the movement, and the KPL's own work on these issues. As mentioned in chapter 4, the KPL's research collaboration with Coventry University on the gender and land-rights (Claeys & Lemke, 2020; Lemke & Claeys, 2020), has led them to document a very high level of gender-based violence during the pandemic, and how gender-based violence and land access are crucial obstacles and threats for peasant women, as mentioned in chapter 4.

So, there clearly is gender-based oppression happening in rural communities, and within food production, otherwise there would be no need for this feminist activism in rural areas. However, the very existence of this feminist activism complicates the very simplistic dichotomy of progressive urban and regressive rural

(Copeland, 2021, pp. 455–456, 460–461), as the activism against this oppression is also rural. Within decolonial thought, you can hold two, seemingly, separate things to be true at the same time: Re-valuing old practices *and* valuing different gender roles, and even seeing the two as intrinsically linked. And it is only from a westernized perspective that this will seem strange (Arvin et al., 2013, pp. 22–23).

This is very explicit in the sense that much of the knowledge and many of the practices that are being re-valued by the KPL are held by and practiced by *women*. In this way, one of the only ways of *truly* re-valuing the indigenous knowledge of their communities is by challenging gender inequality and valuing the women holding this knowledge (Shiva, 2005, pp. 124–125). As mentioned above, this mirrors the early internal critique of women in LVC, which led to the movements first focus on gender-based violence and discrimination (Desmarais, 2007, pp. 161–167, 171–172; LVC, 2008). Moreover, one of the stated aims of the Declaration of Nyéléni from 2007 was to create a world where; "[…]*there is recognition and respect of women's roles and rights in food production, and representation of women in all decision making bodies*[…](Nyéléni Forum, 2007). So, the struggle of women is clearly also at the centre of the food sovereignty discussions, and the re-valuing of traditional knowledge (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 1–4, 14–15).

But why is there a need to re-value this indigenous knowledge? As many of the above quotes point to, there are so many advantages of agroecological farming compared to the many disadvantages of industrial agriculture. This led me to ask, over and over again, if agroecology is so great, why is everyone not doing it?

If agroecology is so great, why is everyone not doing it?

One question I kept returning to was, with all the advantages of an agroecological food system, and all the disadvantages of an industrial food system that the KPL were telling me about, why are so many farmers still participating in the industrial food system? (Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, p. 2). Often the answer got to the core of *why* the KPL spends so much energy on re-valuing indigenous knowledge: Farmers use GMO seeds because they either do not know any other option exists, or they think that indigenous knowledge is backwards, useless and tiresome. The first quote is from an FGD with Hawi D., John D., Simon D. and Susan D., while the latter quote is from another FGD.

> SW: Why do you think so many people are still growing GMOs?
>
> Hawi D.: The reason as to why people, go for GMOs instead of the local breeds, one: these people have no, they have no idea about the GMOs because they are not informed that these things are chemically made, […] they are looking for outcome instead of looking the effect that it can bring. Somebody see that the maize will be very healthy and big as compared to the indigenous one, which is smaller and healthy.
>
> John D.: Many people saying, that now a days we are in the world of digital, we move from the

Susan D./SW: Analog

John D.: From the analog we are moving to digital, so everything is digital. So, they are harmful, these digital things are harmful to human health.

Simon D.: To add on top, the reason as to why people grow GMOs instead of the local breed, one: We realize that there are several, these GMO like, they fund many organizations. So, these organizations like One Acre Fund, […]there are so many organizations, so when these organizations come to us, first of all they will fund farmers, they will give you seeds, and you will pay loans, they bring them in terms of loans, and they have several offers, so when Africans or the farmers get these offers they will prefer that one, because you can access loan, you can get these seeds, and fertilizer, again they teach you on even, how to plant, they will tell you the advantages instead of telling you the disadvantages, yeah, so there are the reasons as to why most people prefer these GMOs, because of the loans and offers that they give, yeah.

In this FGD Hawi D., John D, Simon D. and Susan D. are discussing how they are faced with the notion that indigenous seeds and farming is analog, while industrial agriculture and the use of chemicals in farming is the digital way of farming. Moreover, Simon D. adds that many organizations and companies offer loans to get farmers to accept GMO seeds, which makes them even more convinced that GMOs are solutions of the future, as they seem to provide capital, while indigenous seeds are backwards and connected to a solidarity economy. A similar conversation takes place in another FGD:

SW: So, you've mentioned many advantages of doing it this way, why do you think people are still using hybrid seeds, and GMOs and fertilizer? [Diane J. leaves the group]

Aweno J.: Some still use it out of ignorance, and again some have just decided to oppose the whole thing, and they are seriously pro GMO. But I hope they will also, they are soon going to change because they see the effects of using the chemical fertilizers and even consuming the GMOs.

Kennedy K.: There is another thing, why these people still stick to the GMO and hybrid seeds, the multinational companies producing these hybrid seeds offer loan facilities.

Sally J.: I also wanted to say that. Give me loan, the multinational companies have come up with the loans in form of inputs and then they allow you to pay bit by bit, but in the process, it is you who gets hurt, because in the long process the chemicals will terminate everything.

Kennedy K.: Another one is that when you decide even to plant using the organic manure, the work will be tiresome, and the chemical fertilizer is very light, when maybe you take just a simple bucket just a bucket of 20 kg, let's say 10 kg, it will be able for you to plant even half an acre, and then when you want to plant using the organic manure you will bring loads of sacks of the organic manure, so it becomes tiresome. So, for those who dislike heavy burdens and duties they rush to the chemical fertilizer.

Stephen J.: Now another reason is, when you want to use the fertilizers and the hybrids, you can just go and get them under one roof, you can just go to a [agrovet, ed.], where they are

> sold and you buy them at once, you can just wake up in the morning, go buy them you come the same time and plant. But for you to acquire the indigenous seeds that we, we peasants use, it can take you a lot of time to go, search for them, to make that manure takes a lot of time, so, the hybrid they are time saving. […] And another reason why some people still use the fertilizers, the soils that we have now have been weakened by the same fertilizers, so without applying the fertilizer, then the produce from that farm will be very low, so at least to get something from it, it will force them to still use the same fertilizers that destroy the same farms. Then the providers of the hybrids they also advertise their things, so the advertisements also make some people to still go for the hybrids.

Aweno J., Kennedy K., Sally J. and Stephen J. highlight further reasons as to why not all farmers practice agroecology. While also highlighting the dynamic of companies offering loans, they also mention how agroecology is more physical labour, and if you have the money, it is actually easier to practice industrial agriculture; you do not have to look for or save indigenous seeds or spend time composting manure, you can just go to one shop and get all the seeds and chemical fertilizers you need. Moreover, spreading chemical fertilizer is easier than spreading manure, but as they point out in the long run it is not good for soil health, or, as a side note, human health. I should stress that these are of course not exhaustive explanations as to why not all farmers in Kenya practice agroecology, rather these are the arguments that the KPL members meet when talking to their community members about switching to agroecology.

These conversations speak to several of the points made above of why farmers do not practice agroecology despite all of its benefits. First, the question of access is crucial. While KPL members often point out that a lack of money will mean you cannot access neither GMO seeds nor the fertilizers that go with them, indigenous seeds can be difficult to find for different reasons. While they are shared freely in the KPL and through peasant networks, if you are not part of such networks, seeds can be difficult to find, something the KPL and other food sovereignty movements tries to address, through seed commoning, plant nurseries and seed banks. So, while it is something the KPL tries to address, it exactly needs addressing because it is an actual obstacle for farmers, and a motivation to join the KPL for many.

Second, the groups in the quotes above analyse how the promise of low-intensive labour, fast profits, and access to loans for a group, whose class position often makes it difficult to access loans, makes the offers from these industrial agricultural companies very appealing to farmers. Lastly, and connected to the previous, they also raise the crucial point of industrial agriculture being easier in terms of physical labour and often with faster yields. That agroecology requires more physical labour is not surprising, but what agroecologists like Shiva point out is that this labour is necessary and that the chemicals are providing unsustainable shortcuts, and the bill will come due eventually (Shiva, 2016, pp. xii–xiii). And as many of the farmers in the KPL can attest to, as Stephen J. addresses above, the chemicals of chemical fertilizers eventually strip the soil of all nutrients that can only be reinserted through the time-

consuming labour of composting manure and adding that organic material to the soil, as Caroline E. detailed above.

Subsequently, there are obviously down sides to using agroecology compared to industrial agriculture: agroecology is often more labour intensive, and can require more time, seeds can be harder to find if you do not have a network or movement, and markets can be harder to access if small localized markets do not exist. However, for the KPL members the positives far outweigh the negatives, and they are actively trying to prefigure solutions to these issues. Moreover, many insist that these negatives are downsides because farmers have become *lazy*. This idea of lazy farmers is I think tied to the notion of *de-skilling* of farmers, who have become accustomed to only being consumers rather than keeper of seeds, not weeding but spraying pesticides, and using tractors to sow and harvest. This is especially evident in the negative reactions people have towards the members when they *preach* agroecology, as I return to in chapter 8:

> Samuel E.: People normally fear hard work. So, if you are telling them of maybe long-term project, or something they tend to shy of because they normally want things that come very fast. So, that is also what is making some people to have negative response.
>
> SW: How can you convince such people?
>
> Samuel E.: When some people tend not to side with what we share, some will first see what we have achieved, and the progress, so they will also learn that, however much it can take some time, but once it is ready the benefits outweigh the other one.

So, this exactly returns to the notion of re-valuing already existing, values and practices, creating an understanding that while chemicals are easier in the short run, while in the long run it creates more problems.

Analog vs. digital, indigenous vs. industrial

When *preaching what they practice*, as described in chapter 8, the narrative that the KPL members often faced, was that agroecology, and traditional knowledge was backwards or analog, as opposed to industrial agriculture which is seen modern or digital (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 20–22, 26–27; Shiva, 2005, p. xx). This can be seen as the flip side of what Mier y Terán et al. mobilizing narrative (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 13), a "de-mobilizing" narrative for agroecology, or the mobilizing narrative for industrial agriculture.

> SW: Yeah, and what about […] when you talk about for example indigenous trees, what kind of reaction do you get? Or indigenous ways of treating pests, what kind of reaction?
>
> Murimi B.: The indigenous trees, they say we are in the 21st century and you are taking us back to the early stone age [translator laughs] that is the reaction.
> […]
> Because when you tell them of bringing back the indigenous tree, and yet they see the eucalyptus around they say "ah", like you are wasting time. Those trees, it's good to get rid of them, then we plant in the, these exotic ones.

SW: What do you say, when they say, 'you bring us back to the stone age'? What do you

Joseph A. : I tell them is that since the disappearance of these indigenous trees there are problems, although they don't hit to it.

Joseph A. and Murimi B. echo the experience of the quotes above, as they are also told by people that indigenous tress and farming are *stone age* practices. Moreover, Joseph A. mentions that because of these attitudes people do not listen when he tries to explain to them that the disappearance of indigenous species, such as for example fig trees, are causing a lot of environmental problems, because they have already dismissed the indigenous as backwards and unnecessary in a modern world. While the words used differ the opposition of the exotic/modern and the *stone age* is pretty consistent across clusters.

SW: And do you think it's true that the GMOs are digital, and the indigenous ones are analog? Why?

Doris D.: They are not analog, it's people who are trying to move, they are moving with the time.

[…]
Susan D.: People are not for their culture, they are running away from their culture, so they embrace the new

[…]
David D.: And just to add on that, we can just say that most of us have been brainwashed that what we are doing today is so digital as compared to what we were doing.

John D.: In the past

David D.: Initially. So, most people are thinking that if you are growing indigenous crops, they perceive that you are so much analog, but when you are growing these GMOs, you are so much digital, of which is not true, yes, so that's what causes that. Yes, so most of people have neglected these indigenous crops and now they are feeling that we need not to have them, and now you are getting that the rate of growing GMO is increasing so rampantly just because to obtain these seeds, of these indigenous now becomes a problem, and if you wanted GMO you just have your money in the pocket you go to the shop and you buy, so that makes to increase so rapidly, yes.

Doris D.: The local, the local breeds are also not there now a days, just because people have, have tend to forget about them. You will only find them in houses where there are older people, yeah, older women, older men, that is where you will find them. That in our houses the way we are here.

[…]
Hawi D.: I used to grow it, I used to grow it

> Doris D.: It's very rare to find such a breed yeah, just because we are enticed with these new breeds, now with the issue of these, the organizations, if you get somebody able to give you fertilizer, give you the maize seeds, people will go for that
>
> Hawi D.: Through loans [laughs]
>
> Doris D.: Even through loans, though loan, that loan you will pay
>
> Hawi D.: And you will pay more

Davis D., Doris D., Hawi D., John D. and Susan D. here describe how they are faced with the notion that indigenous seeds and knowledge are analog, and GMOs are digital. They again bring up the dynamics of farmers being offered GMOs through loans, and how it is easier to just go and buy GMO seeds, than it is too look for the specific community elder who might have stored indigenous seeds, just as Aweno J., Kennedy K., Sally J. and Stephen J. highlighted above. Moreover, speaking to the deskilling and epistemicide following the introduction of industrial agriculture (Koch, 2021, pp. 13–15; Meneley, 2021, pp. 6–7; Shome, 2019, pp. 204–205), they mention how the indigenous seeds that are being replaced by GMOs are forgotten, which implies that they might disappear with the older generations, if the knowledge and the seeds are not passed along. In another FGD we discussed what the members do when they are called analog:

> SW: And what do you say when someone calls you analog? [laughs]
>
> Michael E.: Okay [laughs] when somebody calls you analog, if at all you are somebody who is about to bring change, you don't get irritated, because you flash back on how it started on you. Maybe you opposed the idea than even the person is doing it, so accept, but let what you are doing prove that you are the person who is now digital
>
> Caroline E.: Digital
>
> Michael E.: […] Because, maybe I will give an example: I remember there was somebody that we got, so almost the same produce in terms of yield, it was two, two bags. His was from the hybrid seeds, mine was from indigenous, but now he's the person asked me that, “why is that mine is moving at a very, alarming rate? It is getting over, and yours is still it's still there”, while my family is bigger than his. So, even in terms of kg's if you weigh them, you'll find that the indigenous they are heavy as compared to this hybrid, and even when you take them to the posho mill, the quantity of flour that is got from the indigenous maize is higher than the exotic. Then again, come to the pests, for example the weevils. You'll find that the exotic or the, the hybrid seeds, they are more prone to weevils or pests as compared to the indigenous, these ones are hardy, so even the pests do not like them. Yeah. So, he came to me and that was now justification that you are the one who is now analog [laughs] I'm digital.
> […]
> Yeah, so that is something that I experienced as a person.
>
> SW: And you, you said the same you agreed that, now you are the digital ones? [Caroline E. and Michael E. laugh]

> Caroline E.: Yeah I'll just accept when they call me analog, but from my crops they will see and admire, yeah.

Caroline E. and Michael E. make it clear that they do not take the "accusation" of being analog very personally or very seriously, as they are confident in the benefits of agroecology. First, Michael E. brings it back to their *spiral learning model,* and starts from the fact that he himself previously, probably, believed that agroecology was analog, before encountering the KPL, and that it is possible to change your mind, as I return to in chapter 8. So, while these are arguments the members often encounter when they are teaching people outside the movement, this also informs the work of re-valuing knowledge inside the movement, in order to scale deep, as I return to in chapter 7. This stance both gives credit to the person you are talking to, while also giving patience to the KPL member. Second, these stories came from all different clusters, in all different counties, and emphasizes which discursive battles the KPL members were fighting.

This brings us back to the decolonial critique of how modernity has led to epistemicides, as this shows how industrial agriculture has succeeded in tying itself to the colonial narratives of *development* and *modernity*, that looks at history as a linear progression, which then assumes that the technology that is older will always be inferior to the technology that is newer (Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 76–78; Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 20–21, 25–26; Shiva, 2005, pp. 35–37, 2016, pp. xx–xxi; Teasley & Butler, 2020, p. 5). Moreover, the narrative of modernity is very much tied to ideas of making farm work redundant, by exactly making it mechanistic low-intensity work, which is why the peasant is often the figure highlighted as the furthest from modernity.

In order for people to not be so easily swayed by loans – which in the most extreme cases led to farmers losing their land or committing self-harm – the KPL re-values what most people see as *analog*, and question that everything seen as *digital* is inherently superior.

Lesson of the lessons: Re-valuing indigenous knowledge and peasant feminism

Consequently, what the interaction with the KPL, and originally LVC, has thereby done is remind people in the movement of the value of their traditional practices that they already had, and to many farmers it is the most natural thing to have their farm be their classroom and a research site. The peasants in the KPL also highlight how this kind of communal teaching and sharing have been taking place for a long time between peasants in Kenya, but that it has disappeared with the introduction industrial agriculture dependent on buying inputs. And seeds are at the centre of the sharing of indigenous knowledge, as biodiversity and diversity of knowledge are intricately connected.

Moreover, it is both values based and needs based – valuing a society where commoning is central – and needing a society where commoning is central. A great example is how David C. aims to preserve the indigenous passion fruit through sharing seeds and seedlings. This is exactly why the KPL values not just

seed saving within the KPL, but with people outside of the movement as well, as I return to in chapter 9 on the KPL's prefiguration.

In this way the KPL is also prefiguring a different educational system, more formally through their summer schools and workshops, and informally through their internal farmer-to-farmer teaching. This is education that is more accessible, both monetarily and physically, and creates epistemic justice by valuing indigenous knowledge (P. Rosset et al., 2019, p. 900).

> SW: It was said here that his knowledge was gained by learning from another cluster , where did you learn your knowledge?
>
> Penina G.: Mine I gained from my grandmother .
>
> SW: How did she teach you?
>
> Penina G.: When I was young, we used to collect the droppings from our chicks, later on in life when I was old enough to own my farm I started the project and the KPL members, with introduction of the KPL I learnt that the DiaP [pesticide, ed.] are poisonous, so I carried on with the grandmother's experience from the life back, and so up to now that's the one I use on my farm.

This is exactly the experience of Penina G., and suggests that perhaps an important aspect of KPL is not so much a dialogue of different knowledges – *diálogo de saberes* – which is an important component of many agroecology movements (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 536–537), as much as it is a reaffirming of the knowledge already existing within the communities through the of farmer-to-farmer teaching as described in this chapter and chapter 5 (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 539–540). As Bernal et al. puts it, through farmer-to-farmer teaching the KPL members are re-assembling the puzzle of their traditional, indigenous farming knowledge by gathering the *isolated knowledges* of their members and putting them together one puzzle piece at a time (Bernal et al., 2023, p. 4). The KPL is, thereby, focusing on having a clearer picture of their own knowledges rather than focusing on contrasting that knowledge with for example, academic knowledges.

This indirectly adds to the critique of diálogo de saberes being centred around the relationship between academia and peasants, which is an unequal relationship at its core, which does not take its outset in farmer-to-farmer dialogues. To be fair diálogo de saberes is a concept made for exactly exchanges across knowledges, but it does often centre around an exchange with academic knowledge (Júnior et al., 2019, pp. 4–6).

Instead, what the KPL focuses on is re-valuing indigenous knowledge, indigenous seeds, and the position of the women who traditionally holds them. Of course, these values and technologies is not passed on automatically through the seeds. One example of how sharing seeds does not automatically equate to valuing

the contribution of women, is of a seed that was widely shared by two cluster members, a married couple, and how the community erased the contribution of that women in the naming of the seed:

> Michael E.: Yeah, people got seedlings from her. There is a kind of maize that people have nicknamed on the husband, remember [name] we were with yesterday. […] So, there is a kind of seed that people call the maize of [name]. So [name] is the husband, but this is indigenous type of maize, and it is the one that even has been grown here. So, you'll find that at one point the husband was giving it freely, you could come maybe he can give a scoop, you go and plant to a point that I'm very sure you go to every homestead around this place you'll find however much people grow some other type of maize but you'll find that one, they call it, ah which one is this ah this one that one [name]. So, you can see that's what we are saying we are not just producing for ourselves but now even those ones who are not members of KPL have started growing not knowing that after some time, because they say that "this one you grow even during, when we don't have enough rain" at least you'll get something".

The members here do not seem concerned with people using the seeds without being aware of the origins of the name, however, it can be argued that since it still carries the member's names it could be traced back to him. Moreover, it is interesting that both parts of this married heterosexual couple are passing out these seedlings, and while Michael E. emphasizes how the wife was widely sharing the seedlings, the community still nicknamed the seeds after her husband. This erasure of the contribution of women, and especially women of colour, are according to many decolonial scholars part of the problem of modernity (Dalmiya & Alcoff, 1992; Grosfoguel, 2013, pp. 75, 85–87; hooks, 1991, p. 7; Shiva, 2016, pp. 111–116), and even in movements that actively try to work against these notions some remnants still stick around. So, while epistemic justice or a re-skilling of farmers is not automatic with an exchange of seeds, seed sharing is the key tenant of these processes. What the above quote illustrates is that there needs to be a conscientious effort to also highlight the work of women, alongside sharing the techniques and methods of seed saving and storing. This part of the work might be a particularly central struggle in a neo-colonial African context, and for peasants in this context, where the epistemic injustice runs very deep along racialized, gendered, imperial and class lines. And perhaps such a re-valuing is the precondition for marginalized knowledge holders and marginalized knowledge to engage in diálogo de saberes in the first place (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 540).

Of course, this marginalization is something peasants across the globe experience, but considering the historical context it could be more important to assert the value of communal knowledge internally through the kind of intergenerational learning highlighted above. That is not to say that the KPL does not interact with, for example different education and research institutions (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 537), chapter 5 and this thesis clearly proves that is not the case. And of course, the members of the KPL have different perspectives, biophysical contexts and positioning depending on their gender, age, and family backgrounds, which means they bring different knowledge to their meetings. However, re-valuing the knowledge of women was part of many conversations, and I hesitate to call this a diálogo de saberes, as it is not as much

about merging the knowledge of industrial agriculture with the knowledge of indigenous agroecological agriculture, as it is about valuing the later through a peasant feminist lens.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I presented one of the foundational political theories of the KPL – their pedagogy and how it is shaped by their epistemology and ontology. The peasant pedagogy of the KPL is a complex decolonial, peasant feminist political theory of knowledge and learning, which insists all knowledge is contextual, subjective, and powerful. I believe this theory adds invaluable perspectives on how to approach building a different world using critical, practical place-based pedagogy. As mentioned in chapter 2, the KPL like other movements prefigure political theory through their cognitive praxis, so the pedagogical theory of the KPL is born out of the teaching practices of the KPL and their discussions of them. Below in table 3, I summarize the main take aways from chapter 5 and 6 and their contributions to academic literature, using the same framework as shown in table 1 in chapter 2.

Table 3 Main take aways from chapter 5 and 6, self-made

Main take aways from chapter 5 and 6		
	Practice ⟺	**Political Theory**

The work of the KPL featured in chapter 5 and 6	• Practical, place-based farmer-to-farmer learning at meetings, cross-visits, and internal workshops
	• Emphasis on participation and levelling the teacher/student hierarchy
	• Actively seeking out inter-generational learning
	• Actively re-valuing indigenous seeds and knowledge, through a peasant feminist lens
	• Doing farm-based research and using the farm as a classroom
	• Seeing the environment as a teacher and the farmer as a researcher and student of it
	• Teaching peasant feminism through African mediations and other role playing methods
	• External workshops on the rights of women and girls
	• Collaborations with primary and secondary schools, universities, and colleges
		• Insisting that teaching is participatory and adapting to the needs of the participants for example in the yearly pre-summer school
		• Insisting that knowledge is partial and inherently contextual, and that there is strength in diversity in knowledge
		• Seeing the connections between diversity of species and diversity of knowledge, and how seeds and knowledge is connected
		• Seeing the necessity and strength in practical place-based pedagogy, and deconstructing what a classroom is
		• Insisting that research should be democratized and its tools and results should be accessible
		  • Research should be done using PAR ethics and be useful to the communities it covers
		• Critical traditionalism
		  • Insisting on the connections between peasant feminism and agroecology
		  • Challenging – progressive/regressive

Contributions to the literature	• **Agroecology:**
	  • Adding more East African cases to the literature
	  • Supporting the critique of diálogo de saberes as being centred on farmer-to-researcher dialogues and not farmer-to-farmer dialogues
	  • Confirming the importance of practical place-based critical pedagogy with an emphasis on intergenerational learning
	  • Confirming the connections between agroecology, PAR and decolonial feminist thought

The KPL shows how intersectional peasant feminism, critical pedagogy, agroecology and a decolonial re-valuing of indigenous knowledge are not contradictions that need to be solved, but mutually supportive strands of thought that are inextricably linked through their peasant activism. This is what I term critical traditionalism, which challenges both the stereotypes of regressive, conservative rural areas, and the westernized dichomatic thinking where movements are either regressive or progressive in a linear understanding of history. This re-valuing of knowledge is motivated by the de-mobilizing narrative – a play on what Mier y Terán et al. call mobilizing narratives (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 13) – that the KPL faces, which frames agroecology and indigenous knowledge as backwards and analog, as opposed to industrial agricultures digital modernity. This is why the KPL's pedagogy is focused a lot on re-valuing indigenous knowledge, often held by women, as something valuable.

The ontology and epistemology of the KPL is highly informed by their peasant feminism, which is intersectional and decolonial, and insists that all knowledge is partial, place-based and powerful. Powerful in the sense that the indigenous knowledge at the basis of the agroecological practice of the KPL has changed the lives of all the members and can change the lives of their communities for the better. Moreover, the understanding of knowledge as place-based means that knowledge both is shaped by and shapes any given environment. Consequently, the notion of a diversity of life and a diversity of knowledge is intricately linked for the KPL, in terms of creating good environments. When the members share seeds they protect indigenous species, and protect their environment, which in turn protects the indigenous knowledge connected to those species. The most often repeated example was that of the fig tree which both supports the hydrological cycle, which brings rain, while also acting as a sign for when the rain and drought periods starts which is crucial information as it informs farmers of when to plant and when to harvest. In this way, the environment is a caring teacher, as long as we care for the environment – by for example planting trees – while the lessons are a lot harsher when the environment is affected by pollution, deforestation, climate change or all of the above. In this way, the reciprocal understanding of learning is as present in the farmer-environment teaching relationship, as it is in the farmer-to-farmer teaching relationship; both are reciprocal exchanges of learning and teaching, which are also rooted in care for one another's needs.

Moreover, members highlight how having members with different lived-experiences, strengthens the movement, as our lived experience brings different interests and knowledges to the table that everyone will benefit from. So, a variety of indigenous plant life is needed to create sustainable, liveable environments, and a variety of perspectives and lived-experiences are needed to create a strong movement that encompasses a fully intersectional analysis of their situation in the global and local economy. In this way the KPL's epistemology and ontology leans heavily on both decolonial and intersectional feminist thinking (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 2–4, 14–15; Fernandes, 2019, pp. 394–395; Shiva, 2016, pp. 43–45).

Consequently, a seed exchange is also an exchange of knowledges, and knowledges that are traditionally held by women. However, as shown in this chapter, such exchanges are not inherently peasant feminist, as they are not exempt from the gendered power structures of the surrounding society. The example of how a community nicknamed a certain maize variety after the husband of a married couple, even though the wife was perhaps sharing the seeds even more widely than the husband, is a crystal-clear example of how the re-valuing of indigenous knowledge and species is not an automatic re-valuing of the contribution of women. So, while the re-valuing of indigenous knowledge is connected to the re-valuing of women's role in society, the connection does not happen automatically which is why the KPL explicitly couple their practice of agroecology to their peasant feminism, which is inherently intersectional in the way they analyse power structures.

The peasant feminism of the KPL is an intersectional decolonial feminism, and in their praxis the KPL underscores what many scholars are also addressing; that agroecology needs an intersectional analysis at its core to be able to address the many different oppressive structures facing people in global food production today (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019; Martignoni & Claeys, 2022; Milgroom, 2021; Seibert et al., 2019). Like in LVC the KPL peasant feminism is very much a feminism that is class aware, and is anchored in the lived experience of their members (LVC, 2021a). When the KPL re-values indigenous farming practices they are also challenging traditional patriarchal hierarchies, and these two moves do not contradict each other, rather the latter is the prerequisite for the former: without challenging patriarchal hierarchies the indigenous knowledge cannot be truly valued on its own terms, as it erases many of the people who actually hold it. They need to both re-value seed saving practices and challenge the tradition of women not being expected to own land. So, the KPL ties this re-valuing of indigenous knowledge to their peasant feminist activism for gender equity as this is knowledge often denigrated because it is tied to feminine black bodies, and this is why what I term critical traditionalism is central to the KPLs pedagogy. Trying to only re-value indigenous knowledge without fighting for gender equity is exactly what the women of LVC criticized LVC for in the 1990s. At the time LVC was championing women as holders of seeds while actively ignoring the gendered challenges women face in food production, such as gender-based violence (Desmarais, 2007, pp. 161–167, 171–172; LVC, 2008).

Refusing to separate gender equity from issues of challenging neo-colonial knowledge hierarchies, the KPL highlights how agroecology is closely linked with intersectional feminist thought and decolonial thought, through its aim to re-value indigenous knowledge (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 533–534, 537-; Gliessman, 2018a, p. 600; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 896–897). This leaves peasant movements in an interesting non-dichotomous position of being neither analog nor digital, neither modern nor regressive, but exactly critical traditionalists – they value indigenous knowledge, through a current intersectional peasant feminist analysis, as indigenous knowledges are not static but ever evolving with the communities they are grounded in (Owuor, 2007, pp. 23–30). Consequently, the KPL is more focused on re-valuing indigenous knowledge rather than engaging indigenous knowledge in *diálogo de saberes* with other knowledge systems. This could be because they are facing a lot of mistrust of indigenous knowledge, and perhaps the valuing of one's own knowledge system is a prerequisite for being able engage in a diálogo de saberes. Another explanation, for why the KPL focuses less on diálogo de saberes than other similar movements, could be that this thesis mainly focuses on the farmer-to-farmer work of the KPL and not the work the KPL does with researchers which would probably resemble diálogo de saberes more. The concept of diálogo de saberes has been criticized for being a term centred on the farmer-to-researcher relationship (Júnior et al., 2019, pp. 4–6), which this finding could to some degree support.

Lastly, the re-valuing of indigenous knowledge, in turn requires a deconstruction of the classroom, and teaching methods that are open to indigenous knowledge being taught on its own terms. The KPL's pedagogy is, therefore, a critical, place-based, participatory pedagogy that takes its outset in the places and backgrounds of the people participating, like other agroecology movements (Casado et al., 2022; McCune & Rosset, 2021, p. 446; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–252; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 900–903; Val et al., 2019, pp. 7–8). The KPL's spiral learning model is shaped by their interaction with LVC, but first and foremost by the members' early experiences of farmer-to-farmer training in their families and communities through intergenerational learning, as shown in chapter 5. This is a non-hierarchical way of approaching learning, where the roles of student and teacher are constantly in flux. And in the same way that critical pedagogy trusts the participants to arrive at good conclusions, the same is true for the KPL's view of research, where the KPL challenges the hierarchies of knowledge creation by making its tools accessible to everyone in an effort to democratize research (Fals Borda, 1999, pp. 16–17; Freire, 2000, p. 80; hooks, 1994, pp. 205–206). They trust the both the process of learning and the intelligence of the learner.

This brings me to the next chapters on scaling agroecology, where both this approach to research as a teaching tool and the re-valuing of indigenous knowledges plays an important role. The main challenge that the KPL members face when scaling out is the de-mobilizing narrative of agroecology and indigenous knowledge as backwards, and re-valuing knowledge, therefore, is also a big part of the KPL's strategy of

scaling out. This motivates the KPL to try and scale agroecology and peasant feminism both deep and out, using prefiguration as a teaching tool, which is both place-based, participatory and practical.

Scaling deep, scaling out and prefiguration

The following two chapters expand on the KPL's theory on how to *scale* agroecology and peasant feminism on a micro scale, which is a crucial concern in the literature on agroecology (C. Anderson et al., 2020; Ferguson et al., 2019; Gliessman, 2018b; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015; Nicol, 2020). As mentioned in chapter 5, through the literature on both organizational change, and agroecology, it is clear that to achieve systemic change, it is necessary to scale up (policy change), out (geographically) and deep (culturally) (Ferguson et al., 2019; Gliessman, 2016, 2018b, p. 842; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 10; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, pp. 70–71, 74; Nicol, 2020, p. 3). While the KPL also focuses on scaling-up, particularly through their lobbying work on both the regional, national and international level, most of their day to day work, that the data for this thesis covers, focuses on the horizontal *scaling out* and *scaling deep* of agroecology and peasant feminism by *leading by example* (Ferguson et al., 2019; Gliessman, 2018b, p. 842; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, pp. 70–71, 74; Nicol, 2020, p. 3). This thesis, therefore, focuses on scaling out and scaling deep, starting with the latter.

In chapter 7, I show how the KPL aims to scale the movement deep – changing and internalizing values and norms mainly for their own members (M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, p. 70) – through their strategy of *leading by example,* which is using prefiguration as a pedagogical tool through intentional informal teaching. Then in chapter 8, I show how the KPL scales out – expands the movement geographically (Gliessman, 2018b; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, p. 71) – through a combination of leading by example and *preaching what they practice*, where they very actively create informal and incidental learning opportunities for their surrounding community. While chapter 5 and 6 sketched out the formal movement teaching practices and pedagogy of the KPL, chapter 7 and 8 dive deeper into the KPL's specific variant of informal practical teaching through prefiguration. Chapter 7 and 8 address the activities highlighted in red on figure 4 below, and as you can see there are many overlaps between the formal and informal activities. The following two chapters will, therefore, answer the question, what is the Kenyan Peasants League approach to scaling agroecology?

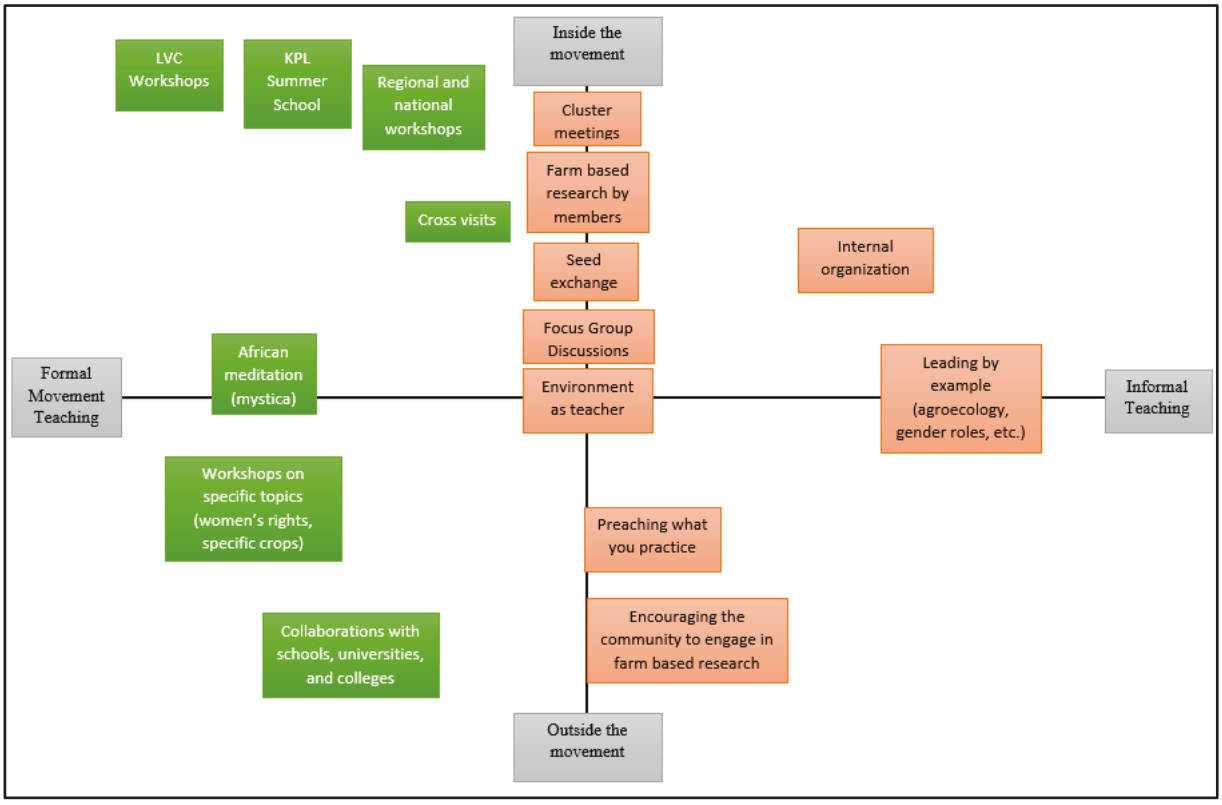


Figure 4 Summary of learning activities in the KPL, own production, highlighted activities chapter 7-8

Prefiguration is, thereby, a crucial concept for scaling within the KPL, and in chapter 9 I take a closer look at the KPL's overall political theory of prefiguration, and how it is intimately tied to the class position of the members of the KPL. The KPL shifts the focus of prefiguration from lifestyle and spectacle to livelihoods and organizing, which challenges the notion that prefiguration is only a play-thing for middle-class activists in the global north. The following three chapters is thereby an expansion of how we understand prefiguration, who uses prefiguration as a strategy, and how prefiguration is used as a strategic tool, and chapter 9 answers the question, how does the Kenyan Peasants Leagues's context affect their theory of prefiguration?

7. Scaling Deep

In this chapter, I go into depth with the KPL's notion of *leading by example*, which is their strategy of using prefiguration as a pedagogical tool, through informal and incidental learning. Here I look at how it is used inside the movement to scale deep, before looking at how it is used outside the movement to scale out in chapter 8. This chapter, thereby, adds to the literature on the intersection of critical pedagogy, agroecology and prefigurative social movements, by looking at how prefiguration is utilized and theorized as a teaching tool in the KPL (De Vita & Vittori, 2022; Luchies, 2014). In this chapter I show the close connections between critical pedagogy and prefiguration, as argued by Luchies, De Vita and Vittori (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 77, 79–85), while also showing how this connection and both practices are inherent to peasant movements. Much of the teaching and learning in agroecology movements is centred around the farmers actual experience of practicing agroecology – without the everyday prefigurative work of these movements there would be no knowledge to share, no practices to emulate, no example to lead by. I thereby, combine the social movement literature on teaching and prefiguration, with the literature on teaching and agroecology: The first literature rarely covers rural global south movements, while the latter rarely addresses prefiguration explicitly even though I argue that it is a common and powerful strategy used by many agroecology movements. This is why I believe that it will be fruitful to combine the insights of the two literatures. I show how when the KPL prefigures they are scaling deep, and consequently the two terms will be used interchangeably going forward.

Prefiguration in this thesis is defined as *living the future today*, or equating goals and means (Boggs, 1977, p. 100; Leach, 2013; Maeckelbergh, 2011, p. 4; Yates, 2015, pp. 3–4). The KPL is, thereby, prefiguring when they are practicing agroecology and peasant feminism – they are not waiting for the government to support agroecology, or discourage industrial agriculture, they are farming in the way they wish everyone would farm in the future. Moreover, the KPL is also prefiguring peasant feminism in the way they are organizing themselves: First, they challenge sharp power hierarchies through participatory dialogue-based decision making. Second, they make sure that the voices of women and youths are heard in those decision-making processes, and that women and youths are given extra support to counterbalance their marginalized positions in food production and society at large. For the KPL, the only way to reach gender equality and a sustainable agricultural system is by simply doing it and building from there, and *that* is prefiguration. Yates and Moor warn against considering *all* alternatives as prefiguration, unless the movements behind these alternatives actively work towards societal change and intentionally use prefiguration as a strategy towards their goals (Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 184–185). In this chapter, I show that the KPL exactly uses prefiguration intentionally as a tool towards reaching societal change, as they consider prefiguration essential to scaling deep for three reasons: 1. prefiguration strengthens the movements credibility, 2. prefiguration acts as a

powerful tactile argument for their values, and 3. prefiguration creates opportunities for participatory learning, allowing others to copy their practices through informal and incidental learning.

Foley underscores how much learning in movements is incidental and informal (Foley, 1999, pp. 6–9, 39, 45, 48–51, 130–131), and while that of course also is the case for the KPL, the point of this chapter is that much of the informal learning facilitated by the KPL is *intentional* and talked about explicitly. So, where Foley decries the lack of focus on informal learning in movements – both from movements and scholars (Foley, 1999, pp. 39, 45–46) – the KPL intentionally focuses on, and values informal learning, demonstrating the strength in being intentional with this learning. This is in itself an interesting aspect of the movement, and could both be a particular marker of *this* movement, or agroecology movements more generally (Casado et al., 2022, p. 16). It could also be a sign of a more general trend of our more reflexive times, where movements in general perhaps are thinking more about informal learning than they were in 1999, however, it will require further research into several movements to answer this question. Moreover, this practical informal learning fits well within the practically oriented place-based pedagogy of the KPL as described above, and this chapter is in many ways simply a deeper dive into the informal aspects of the KPL's pedagogical theory.

Moreover, the KPL also adds an interesting example of how a social movement can use the concept of *agroecology lighthouses*, which are deliberately created areas, such as demonstration farms, combined with the kind of informal learning processes that other agroecology movements use as well (Casado et al., 2022, pp. 5–7, 16; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 12–13; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–251; Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, p. 3; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 902–903). While KPL members would discuss the creation of more classic agroecology lighthouses, such as demonstration plots, the KPL's use of prefiguration and leading by example, means they in a sense view every single member of the KPL as a lighthouse for agroecology and peasant feminism. This is why it is so important for the KPL that they all lead by example. And in this chapter, I show how the KPL aims to scale these practices and values deep within the movement, to ensure that all members can act as lighthouses for each other, and, in chapter 8, for their communities.

Lastly, the chapter adds a case from the African continent which are far and few between in all of the above literatures. The KPL and the Kenyan context is by no means representative of the vast continent of Africa rather it is a start towards filling this gap.

This chapter starts with how the KPL creates intentional informal teaching moments inside the movement, with the example of the informal teaching planned throughout this project. I then explicate what prefigurative pedagogy is, using the example of how they teach peasant feminism, which they do by leading by example on gender equality and the inclusion of people with disabilities. Lastly, I show how leading by example can also be used as a way of practicing internal-critique, asking others to live up to the movement's values.

Intentional informal teaching in movement

The KPL is very aware of the informal learning that takes place in movement settings. Like other agroecology and food sovereignty movements, their pedagogy relies on the assumption that learning takes place in all parts of the struggle, and the KPL is intentionally trying to create as many learning opportunities for their members as possible (Casado et al., 2022, pp. 5–7, 16; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 12–13; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–251; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 902–903).

This project is again a great example of that. When we were planning my visit to Kenya, one of the major concerns of the members I talked to, was how this could be a learning opportunity for members, which is why the KPL insisted that in each FGD a local cluster member would be designated as the rapporteur and take notes, and then someone with the language skills necessary would also assist with translation if it was necessary. Both these roles were seen as necessary; I needed translators because of my lacking language skills, and they wanted to have notes to make sure these FGDs directly could inform the cluster's work without being dependent on me. So, it was not just giving people a role for the sake of giving them a role, it was motivated by need, while also enabling practical learning for their members. The project was, therefore, seen as learning opportunities, especially for young members, to learn how to take notes and practice their language skills. On top of this, people often said thank you for the lesson when we had finished the FGD, recognizing that listening to their peers was also a learning opportunity in and of itself, farmer-to-farmer learning in a different setting.

Documentation of the KPL's practices and the need for resources to do documentation of their practices came up several times, both so it could be shared internally but also so that people outside their communities, and perhaps even outside Kenya can access the information. This was particularly the concern of the youth members, who themselves would do quite a bit internet research on different issues within the KPL, like food sovereignty or climate justice, and wanted to make sure the knowledge they had would be similarly accessible to others doing internet research. This is one of the reasons the KPL was interested in working with me, and why they were so keen on members practicing their documentation skills by taking notes during the FGD's that I facilitated. Having younger members be rapporteurs, thereby, served the purpose of being a learning experience for that particular person, and it also was seen as a way to strengthen the movements future through much needed documentation work.

These forms of intentional informal teaching moments, happened throughout my stay in Kenya. As described above, brief reports were made from each FGD and field visit, which meant that the other members experienced that taking pictures and describing in plain language what we discussed or what was demonstrated on the day, is basically the elemental parts of a report. This both brought the more abstract concepts of "reports" down to earth, while also giving the people writing them the experience of positive feedback from other members who appreciated their report in the WhatsApp chat. These WhatsApp chats

become a living accessible archive of the KPL work, helping all members to keep up to date with what was happening, and making the information easy to share. This way they aimed to encourage members to both feel secure that they can report, while also instilling the notion that what they have to share is interesting and important to others, exactly the two parts of informal teaching according to Foley: learning skills and learning that your actions matter (Foley, 1999, pp. 24–26, 39; Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 163–164).

The division of educational roles during my visit to Kenya is mirrored in the overall movement through the division of organizational roles in each cluster. Each cluster has a secretary keeping the notes and the schedule, a treasurer collecting membership fees and keeping the books, and a convener who takes care of the larger organizational planning, for example when a researcher is in town or workshops need to be planned. Viewing organizational structures as learning opportunities is something that was visible throughout the movement, and it is closely tied to their theory of prefiguration and leading by example as I show below. So, while the formal movement teaching of the KPL focuses on farming techniques, knowledge and skills, often the informal learning is focused on more organizational skills *and* internalizing the values of the KPL or scaling deep. They are using prefiguration to teach informally inside the movement.

In their study of Baserritik Mundura's experience in the Basque country, Casado et al. highlight how such informal learning is part and parcel of the self-organized form of peasant training;

> "[…]the participative nature of these peasant training models, developed through group organization and with the intention of learning something from all the tasks that arise from the training process. This organicity means that the process generates a diversity of tasks and responsibilities to be carried out in different work groups, of an intense nature and with significant impact on the individuals and the group. […] Specifically it builds awareness of how we reproduce in everyday life what we want to transform, identifying inertias and contradictions that arise and, through politicizing the process, learn to transform them." (Casado et al., 2022, p. 16)

This rings true for the KPL, especially in the above-mentioned example of being strategic in who should hold certain positions of power, to exactly politicize the process, by challenging who tends to hold power in what fields, specifically challenging patriarchy and agism (Casado et al., 2022, p. 16). In this way the KPL is prefiguring a different society which is a learning opportunity both for their own members, and for the community around them by organizing in a way they wish all of society was organized.

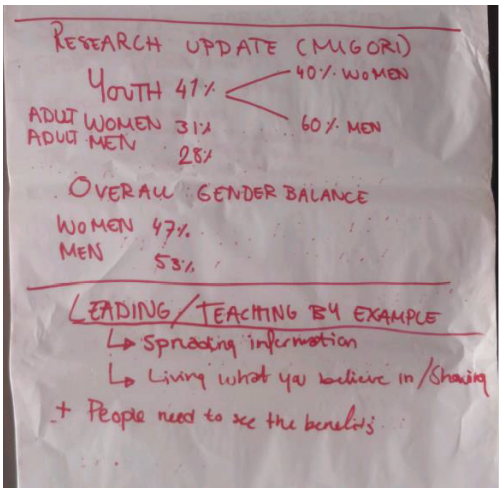
It sets an example, both inwardly and outwardly, that the KPL would encourage each cluster treasurer to be a woman (of any age), while it was encouraged that the secretary role is held by youth (of any gender). However, I did visit clusters where this was not the case. On top of these roles, there are also a youth and women convener, as there are youth and women collectives in each cluster. This focus on youth and women mirrors LVC in general which for many years has had these two groups highlighted as being marginalized when it comes to e.g., land ownership, proper working conditions and social and political power (LVC,

2008). There are now also active men's collectives in several clusters, and I assume men conveners, however, they were not very active when I was in Kenya.

In encouraging women (of any age) and youth (of any gender) to hold more central positions within the movement, the KPL tries to be mindful of counteracting potential power imbalances within the movement, that exist in the wider society, by giving these central positions to the least socially powerful groups prefiguring different power relations, and at the same time giving them opportunities to learn organizational skills. They are trying to be allow their members to learn by example, by leading by example; they are using prefigurative pedagogy.

Prefigurative pedagogy

One theme that kept coming up in one way or another in all of the interviews was; *Teaching/Leading by example*. This was also one of the first themes I brought up in the cluster and county evaluation meetings as a theme I wanted to keep my focus on going forward, as you can see in picture 3 here. This concept was so prevalent in all interviews and also deeply interesting to me. The motivation for *leading/teaching by example* was exactly for pedagogical reasons: because if you preach, without practicing what you preach, no one will take you seriously, you will lose all credibility, and no one will learn how to copy your example. So, to get to *preach what you practice*, as I look into in chapter 8, you must first lead by example.



Picture 3 Research summary, Migori County, November 25th, 2019

> Ann E.: Talking about indigenous seeds, then somebody again sees you in the agrovet buying these seeds [GMOs, ed.]. They will never believe what you are saying. That is one.
>
> SW: So, you have to do what you are saying?
>
> Ann E.: Mm, or whatever you are teaching, you must, people must be able to see that you are also doing it, yeah.

And on top of remaining credible, *leading by example*, was also seen as a convincing *argument*, in the sense that it showcases the advantages of what is being prefigured, which often was agroecology. The underlying assumption informing all of this work, is that people can and will change their mind when presented with information that speaks to their situation. And the members have seen it happen repeatedly, as is described throughout this chapter. Returning to the pedagogical aspect of prefiguration, Peter E. explains really well why seeing it happen in one's own farm or in a friend's farm is such an effective argument:

SW: And just, why is it important that people see it for themselves?

Peter E.: I can answer by also asking a question, if it were you that you go to the hospital

SW: Yes

Peter E.: and you get cured.

SW: Yes

Peter E.: what will you say about that hospital?

SW: I will say that it is very good

Peter E.: Yeah

Translator: So that's the answer [all laugh]

SW: Yeah, yeah. So, you need to feel it yourself

Peter E.: By yourself

Feeling it for ourselves or seeing it affect people we trust and care about is a fundamental human way of believing in something – whether a hospital, an organization or a farming method. And that is the crux of prefiguration's pedagogical nature, and a continuation of the KPL's place-based pedagogy. This is also reminiscent of the agroecological notion of demonstration plots, or lighthouses, which is another great example of prefigurative pedagogy.

A movement of lighthouses

Nicholls & Altieri write about creating *lighthouses* of agroecology, or demonstration plots which eventually can help mobilize policy changes (Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 3, 7–11). The KPL members would also discuss having demonstration plots but through leading by example, every single member's field and garden becomes a demonstration plot or a lighthouse. This in turn makes it important to scale deep within the movement, to make sure everyone is leading by example and shining the light bright for the wider community. An important part of this prefigurative pedagogy is gaining other people's trust, while at the same time piquing their interest, by being a good example:

> Alice C.: First thing, you want to teach somebody something so that she or he understands it well you must be the role model, it must start with you. So, it started with me, these vegetables beside my house there, […] when it is on that I already have vitamins, you have that, and the hens. So, I can sell one hen and buy two fish[…] I have the farm for maize, so already I have all this, so I must be the role model, when I teach they see it practically then they get it, the interest grows high because they see it in me, yes.

—

> Hawi D.: You should be a role model, such that you grow these indigenous crops and when the person comes, he can see the importance. You are healthy because you are taking food from, I mean you are taking indigenous food, again your farm is full of indigenous crops, not that you mixed them, so you lead by example, so he can learn from you.

Alice C. and Hawi D. both use the term *role model*, and again bringing attention to the lighthouse effect of prefiguration, of modelling behaviour that they want others to learn from, and copy. This is both to build trust, but also so there is actually something to learn from – as both Alice C. and Hawi D. point out, without this prefigurative agroecology practice there is no practice for others to get intrigued by or to learn from and copy. Joseph E. also touches on this, pondering whether this need to see it for your self is a particularly African thing.

> Joseph E.: […] we hope that given time and the resources are available we'll be able to sensitize all the community members, and they will see the importance of practicing all this thing that KPL does. Because I like the way they bring their things, they don't only teach, but they will like you to do what you teach. Because it is the nature of a human being that if you just talk, I don't [know, ed.] if it happens only in Africa, you just teach but they don't use, they don't see you doing what you are teaching then they take that to be light, they don't take it as something important. But if they see you doing it, and they see you succeeding, it will be very easy for them to follow you and do the same thing you are doing. Others will join even without you informing them.
> […] Of what is happening

Joseph E. praises the practical way the KPL teaches, and the way the KPL wants to lead by example, because it creates a deeper trust of what they are teaching. He speaks to a profound scepticism, which I suspect is relatable to the reader, of wanting to see something for yourself especially if it sounds too good to be true. And like Alice C. and Hawi D. above, Joseph E. again points to the fact that without the KPL's prefigurative praxis of agroecology, there would be nothing for others to learn from. Once again, the connection between prefiguration and practical place-based pedagogy are very visible, and the element of prefiguration is almost taken for granted to be part of the KPL's pedagogy. The members of KPL distinguished between convincing with arguments and convincing with practice, as complementary strategies. As mentioned above, theoretical discussions are often seen as necessary to as certain degree, but definitely not sufficient to learn a practical skill.

Moreover, as Joseph E. points out many people are hesitant about being convinced purely by the good argument. The current public debate with regards to climate change is a good example, as many people cannot even picture how such a different climate sustainable life might look like, good or bad. Prefiguration is thereby, both part of the ongoing solution and a tactile lived-in argument. Again, this supports De Vita and Vittori's connection between prefiguration and critical pedagogy. While De Vita and Vittori focus mostly on self-education, and not so much on communally centred teaching, they also highlight how prefigurative

movements both actively and incidentally teach their surroundings about the causes that they are fighting for (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 86–87). Again, the claim here is not that the KPL is the first or only movement to utilize prefiguration in this way, rather that this intersection of prefiguration and pedagogy in peasant movements has not garnered enough explicit attention and that it is an important part of agroecology movements. It is a combination of the farmer-to-farmer critical pedagogy, which values the horizontal learning model, with the notion of lighthouses guiding and inspiring their communities.

When the neighbours of KPL members pass their homestead or their farm land, and see how their crops are growing well, when they talk to KPL members and hear they can now afford to send their children to school because they no longer have debts because of expensive farm inputs, and they can come to them for food when they themselves run out, they start to see this *"old school analog"* way of farming actually has a lot of advantages. And the KPL members know that they will lose all credibility if they are telling everyone how it is best to use farmyard manure, but they then use chemical fertilizer on their own farm. Moreover, practicing what you preach, also extends to encouraging others to try it by offering them free seeds or seedlings to grow it on their own, and encouraging farm-based experiments, focusing on practical place-based learning as mentioned above. Following Luchies, De Vita and Vittori all prefigurative practices are related to critical pedagogical thought and specifically Freire's thoughts on conscientizaçáo, a mutual learning process where ends and means correspond, and that all prefigurative practices are instances of learning (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 77, 79–85). Isaac et al., look into what they call Social Movement Schools (SMSs) across different types of social movements, and conclude that they contribute to knowledge production in three keyways:

> "SMSs contribute in an intense fashion to the knowledge production process through several key dimensions: (a) deliberate pedagogy and curricula designed to change participant's consciousness; (b) the creation of new knowledge about how the world works, not only for participants, but to be circulated to wider audiences; and (c) prominent sites for social development in the sense of prefigurative models for social change." (Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 177–178)

So, Isaac et al., are seeing deliberate critical pedagogy and the creation of a common analysis of the world within a social movement to be intimately tied to the movements' prefiguration of social change. However, for the KPL their prefiguration is not only tied to their pedagogy and critical analysis of the world, their prefiguration is also the prerequisite for the latter. As outlined in chapter 9, the KPL's prefiguration is at its heart based in necessity which motivates members to participate, and all of their leading by example is motivated by being solutions to problems such as pollution, climate change, and also gender and age discrimination. Without the KPL's prefiguration there are no lessons to be taught, nothing for the movement to rally around. In this way, all prefigurative movements function as lighthouses for the new practices, institutions, or social relations they are trying to act into reality.

This is also related to the LVC term of *formation.* In 2008 LVC made teaching or *formation* a priority at the fifth International Conference of La Via Campesina in Maputo, Mozambique (Casado et al., 2022, p. 2;

LVC, 2008). Formation, is a translation from the Spanish formación or the Portuguese formação, as the word *training* does not encompass as many aspects as *formation* (Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 220–221) in terms of designating the depth and breadth of the teaching. This of course also makes the Latin American roots of these practices evident, and the KPL members would often refer to teaching as training or *formation*. When talking about changing the values and practices of the community around them this exactly speaks to the nuances formation brings (Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 220–221) – walking in formation, but also *forming* or shaping people in new ways:

> John H.: Yes, and that's why as LVC now we are talking about the formation process, where the formation is actually, we want to form a new society a new country, a new people, and the people[…] that is why we say that the household is a very important unit for mobilizing, because there must be one or two people who are educated, who have gone to school and now how can these people […] be people who can analyse some of these issues. So, we need a lot of serious analysis and that's why sometimes as the secretariat that's what is done by trying to analyse how is the structure of the onslaught.

While John H.'s assertion that the KPL secretariats job is to do serious analysis, he also highlights how the aim is to have people in every single household do this analysis for themselves, and through that process, a new people will be formed. So, formation is about creating a new people, or scaling deep, as it is about internalizing norms and values, which is a big part of the teaching of the KPL, in terms of *re-valuing* indigenous knowledge and challenging patriarchal power structures, mainly inside, but also outside, of the movement, as I return to in chapter 8. This also relates to the Freirean term of *conscientização*, and it also takes inspiration from Fanon's assertion at the end of *Wretched of the Earth*: "*For Europe, for ourselves and for humanity, comrades, we must make a new start, develop a new way of thinking and endeavour to create a new man.*" (Fanon, 2004, p. 239). This speaks to longer decolonial traditions of challenging the westernized global north epistemologies and ontologies, which aims at creating something new rather than performing an internal critique of westernized modernity. Moreover, this is exactly the aim of scaling deep, or having members internalize the values and goals of the KPL through a process of self-critical learning.

Moreover, teaching practically can be a more accessible mobilizing strategy to people who feel less able to preach:

> SW: Why is it important to demonstrate it?
>
> Joseph E.: Because if we talk theoretically, sometimes somebody may not understand it better, but now if you demonstrate on how, it happens now it sinks deep and people see sense, than if you speak words. People can easily copy if you teach and you do it as compared if you just teach and you leave them.

Joseph E. underscores how doing things practically, will support a deeper learning of the theoretical knowledge, but without that actual practice of these values, nothing happens. Again, we see how the crucial

point of the KPL's prefigurative practice is to make it easy for others to *copy* and learn from their practice – they want to all be lighthouses, that their community can look towards to guide them away from industrial agriculture and patriarchal oppression.

So, according to the KPL a prefigurative strategy is inherently pedagogical, as it is a very tactile and accessible way for people to unlearn their notions of what the implications of certain ideas are, whether it is peasant feminism or agroecology, while *also* making this alternative life seem not just possible but appealing. They are working towards making each and every KPL household is a lighthouse for agroecology and peasant feminism. This, consequently, also means that they need to make peasant feminism something that can be practically done, for example by focusing on counter-acting gendered and aged power dynamics within the movement, as I return to below.

In this way, asking people to lead by example carried a lot of weight, and was a way of doing internal critique within the movement, whether it was about farming techniques or the presence of women in decision making. While I was in Kenya, I encountered the strength of the appeal of asking other KPL members to practice what they preach, as I had to ask them to lead by example when it came to the representation of women in this project. This example crystallizes the prefigurative pedagogy of the KPL and the way the KPL aims to be intentional about informal teaching, while also highlighting the self-critical peasant feminist nature of these approaches – it is about self-critical, reflexive evaluation of whether they are actually equating aims and means. Below, I go more into depth with how leading by example can be used for internal critique with several examples, first by Margret H. at the KPL summer school, then by me through this project, and finally by Joseph A., who uses his interview with me to ask for the KPL to use the same energy it does on the plight of the widows on the plight of people with disabilities in Kenya. First, I explain how the KPL aims to lead by example when it comes to peasant feminism.

Setting a peasant feminist example

So, leading by example, would refer to both the agroecological farming practices and to the peasant feminism of the KPL and be a way of encouraging being self-critical. When it came to peasant feminism, often the focus would on gender-equity both internally and externally. As Margret H. mentions in the quote below, she called out men in their summer school for not bringing their wives, and the following day these men then brought their wives. I have also seen this play out in the WhatsApp groups where members will post pictures from meetings and events and if there are then mainly men present sometimes women from other clusters will ask them to remember to include women in the meetings.

> SW: Right. So, you said that it's important that you practice what you preach
>
> Margret H.: Yeah
>
> SW: In terms of gender equality

Margret H.: I believe that

[…]
SW: And from what I've seen I think this is one of the areas where the KPL has the biggest challenge, so, you are convinced that it's possible to change this within the KPL?

Margret H.: Yeah, I believe we can do it, if we work together, because we have to work with all the parties, for example, I cannot just, talk only with women, I also have to involve the other parties, in order for us to dialogue and come into agreement. But if we do it as women alone, it cannot work.
[…]Yeah. Like I told you in agroecology summer school, it was doing well, because we had all the parties there, so it's a topic we had to bring up, for all of them, as much as we had some who were declining, but they were seeing some sense in it, and I remember there was one mzee [respected elder man, ed.], he was called mzee who? I liked the way he responded, because he was saying "that whatever she [Margret H., ed] is saying you might see that she is young, but she is making some sense to us, she is speaking sense, because these are our daughters, my daughter might go for the marriage, you know now a days[…] we have domestic violence, you see in marriages, so what if instead of my daughter to go and die in that marriage, why can't she just come home and I give her some piece of land so that she can see how she can now start managing her own life." So, I liked the way he responded. Mzee, he's from [place]
[…] He was reasoned, and he liked it and then, the [name], mzee [name] also, and they were telling me whatever you are doing is so good. I wish it could go on, so that most of the elder wazees [mzee plural, ed.] could understand, because it's making sense. So, it's like we had a positive response, yeah. And also, I got happy because [name] learned from there that every meeting he should be carrying his wife, so you see it's like something that is yielding fruits, even though the rest are not doing it, but you see as much as he is coming with his wife to the meetings, it's like he's encouraging them, that they should also do the same, yeah.

SW: And I assume that the mzees they have people listen to them more

Margret H.: Yeah

SW: If you can convince them

Margret H.: Exactly

SW: They have a lot of influence

Margret H.: Yeah, yeah. But I saw we had a positive response on it, and they promised that as much as the culture and tradition[…], they'll do their best
[…]Yeah. So, it's like the project we are trying to do with the Coventry University, it's about that, issues affecting women and youth, because when it comes to decision making at the table women and youth are always left out.

Here Margret H. touches on the holistic approach that the KPL takes – if men are a part of the problem of gender discrimination, they need to be part of the solution, which is why Margret H. was so happy to see

some of the older men, wazees, supporting her peasant feminist arguments and starting to slowly lead by example by bringing their wives a long to meetings. And these wazees will act as much more powerful role models, or lighthouses for peasant feminism, as they are respected and listened to. The peasant feminist activism inside the KPL is facing both a generational challenge from all genders, and a challenge from men in general who probably listen more to the elder men than a young peasant feminist woman. On topics such as gender equity a lot of slow, patient learning is still taking place within the movement, and outside the movement as well, as I return to in chapter 8. However, while the learning is still ongoing the KPL is very responsive to being asked to improve their gender equity, as this project is an example of.

Aren't they a youth?

A few weeks into my visit to Kenya, I noticed a pattern, that there was an under-representation of particularly young women, as the young women often had to leave meetings early, or join later because of reproductive labour, as many young women had small children. I brough this up with the KPL during our evaluation meetings on both the cluster and county level, and halfway through my stay in Kenya I highlighted how young women were the most underrepresented group amongst the FGD participants, which then prompted me to encourage the clusters that I visited after to make sure this group was represented. As you can see in table 8-10 in the appendix this was taken into consideration, as I ended up having 47% young women out of all the young participants in the FGDs, and 66% in the individual interviews, where I may have overcorrected, trying to make sure their voices were heard. All of these conversations of course happened outside of the interviews and FGDs, alongside other practical discussions. I had a clear sense that my request were taking seriously, and that in the clusters where I mentioned this, they went to great lengths trying to ensure an equal gender representation in the FGDs.

While this is a good example of the KPL members being motivated by an appeal to lead by example with gender equity, it is not unlikely that I, as a foreign researcher, would have a faster and more enthusiastic response than if a young woman in the movement pointed out the same thing. However, the example of Margret H. above, and the others I have witnessed in my collaboration with the KPL on teaching materials, shows that it is not only to please outsiders that this motivation works. At the same time, I do not want to negate the likelihood of my positionality potentially affecting the speed in which people reacted (Mara & Thompson, 2022, p. 381).

Addressing not just the solution, but the problem, the intersection of age and gendered dynamics, often left young women being forgotten and overlooked, as they had neither the seniority of elder women nor the male privilege of their young counterparts, and on top of that they also often would shoulder all of the reproductive work in their household on their own. And as I brought up in an interview with two young women, when talking of *youth*, what people often meant were *young men*, and the ideas brought up to support the youth were often aimed at young men, erasing the young *women* of the movement (hooks, 1994,

pp. 123–124), and their particular experience and struggles being young peasant women in Kenya. Inspired by the famous words of abolitionist and women's rights activist Sojourner Truth, and hooks' book of the same name, insisting that black enslaved women also were women: "[…]*I have plowed, and planted, and gathered into bvarns, and no man could head me – and ain't I a woman?*[…]" (hooks, 1982, p. 160), I also felt it necessary to ask, are these young women not youths? In the interview with Sally P. and Mary P., two young women, the only individual interview with two participants, I brought up my observation. Their cluster was one of the last clusters I visited so I had the opportunity to ask these kinds of questions, which would have been great to follow up on if the pandemic had not prevented my return in 2020 and 2021.

> SW: Yeah, this is just a feeling I've had, that sometimes when people talk about youth, they think of boys, or men, do you think that's true, or do you think when people say youth they also mean women
>
> Sally P.: That mentality was there
>
> Mary P.: In our cluster,
>
> Sally P.: Initially, but now
>
> Mary P.: They, when they say youth
>
> Sally P.: We have changed the society, when they say youth, they say both
>
> Mary P.: Both, women and men
>
> Sally P.: But initially was there, that separation
>
> SW: Why do you think it was there?
>
> Mary P.: They preferred more; they preferred boys more than girls
>
> Sally P.: That is women ignored, the way it is, so men to say what
>
> Mary P.: Final say
>
> Sally P.: Yeah
>
> SW: But you think that it's changing now?
>
> Sally P.: Yeah
>
> Mary P.: That was, came to an end, now there is no that
>
> Sally P.: Mentality of men, women, now we are mix up, yeah, we work together as a team.

Sally P. and Mary P. talk about how people prefer boys to girls, and that this leaves them to forget girls, as the norm is that men have the final say. But they also feel like this is no longer the case in their community,

after the youth of all genders mobilized together. It should be noted that Sally P. and Mary P. were both members of the cluster that was based on a previous women's group, so it only consisted of women, while the youth group also included young men as they state. This could potentially mean that Sally P. and Mary P. have benefited from the added confidence of successful previous organizing, as Foley points out (Foley, 1999, p. 64), which might mean that young women in other clusters might not have had a similar positive experience with challenging these dynamics. This is exactly the kind of positive organizational learning, that the KPL is being intentional about internally in the movement to scale deep, or have people internalize the values of the KPL.

Moreover, the two areas where intentional incidental learning was most evident inside the KPL, was when it came to the rights of women and people with disabilities. Many women talked about how they through participating in meetings had learned that their voice matters, and I could tell that there were more women comfortable participating in the older clusters, or clusters based on other pre-existing movements or organizations, than in some of the newer clusters where women tended to be shyer. With Sally P. and Mary P. being examples of this. In the same vein, hooks underscores how critical, participatory, pedagogy also indirectly teaches students that their voice matters, by encouraging them to use it (Foley, 1999, pp. 63–65; hooks, 1994, pp. 19–21, 2010, pp. 21–23; Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 120–122; Ismail, 2003, pp. 99–100). Similar lessons were learned in the Green Belt Movement, where tree planting trainings were not only aimed at teaching the women of the movement how to plant trees, but also for them to trust their own knowledge and believe that their voices mattered (Hunt, 2014, pp. 240–243).

Additionally, when the women find their voice to speak up on their own behalf it is also a learning opportunity for the men in the KPL, as they get to experience more gender equal relations, through KPL's prefigurative praxis. In this way, when the KPL prefigures different gender relations inside the movement, they give their members an experience they might not have in other parts of their lives. In their book "We Make the Road by Walking" Miles Horton and Paulo Freire discuss how Horton's Highlander Folk School challenged the racial segregation of the US by prefiguring a different society within the walls of the school; having everything be integrated, and having black and white students participating together without ever questioning it was a transformative experience for the students:

> "Some dealt with segregation by having segregated programs, and educating Blacks here and whites there, like it was traditional to do. We chose to deal with it directly, knowing that a discussion and analysis wouldn't change their minds. We decided to hold integrated workshops and say nothing about it. We found that if you didn't talk about it, if you didn't force people to admit that they were wrong – that's when you debate and argue with people – you can do it. People didn't quite understand how it was happening. They just suddenly realized they were eating together and sleeping in the same rooms[…]. They had experienced something new, so they had something positive to build on." (Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 134–135)

Here Horton outlines how the participants in the Highlander Folk School, would not have to argue about integration, they would just *experience* it, which gave them something powerful to build on going forward. Prefiguring different power relations within a movement space is, thereby, educational both for the marginalized and the ones holding the power, perhaps even more so for the later who are given the opportunity to experience a different world they might have never considered could possibly exist (Foley, 1999, pp. 20–23; Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 134–135). As many of the men in KPL themselves highlighted, gender parity also requires them to change their behaviour, not only women to be empowered, and this can be difficult.

> Joseph A.: […]what makes men not to give them [women, ed.] a chance to come up, some men tend maybe to feel inferior, that they are overpowered but if given time and maybe given chance, a good example is my wife, whenever I want to do something I have to consult her the way she guards me, we have never failed, but if I am the decision maker I get, we get ourselves stray. I feel she is the right manager, that is when we are able to succeed. Sometimes back we used to suffer, but since I empowered her [Joseph A. and Jane A. laughs] in fact if women are given freedom of expression, then we will have peaceful families and we men will just be okay.

So, there are a lot of things going on in this quote. First, Joseph A. acknowledges that some men feel "*overpowered"* at the thought of empowered women, which points to how gender inequality is exactly about *power*, and maintaining these systems is about maintaining this power. In turn, reimagining gendered relations then means redistributing power, which inevitably does mean that some must give up some of the power they currently hold. To this, the pedagogical power of prefiguration is that the KPL prefiguring these different power relations, allows these men to see that different gendered relations will not be the collapse of society they imagine. Secondly, Joseph A. asserts that empowering women also benefits men and that they will *be okay*, perhaps even doing better in relationships with more equal power. However, it is interesting how Joseph A. is first taking credit for *empowering his wife*, both him and his wife, Jane A., who then both laugh at this statement. In this, Joseph A. shows how this type of learning can be conflictual, and Foley also underscores how conflicts cannot be avoided in learning and can exactly be learning opportunities (Foley, 1999, pp. 50–51, 56–61). Once again, we see an intimate connection between pedagogy and prefiguration, and practical place-based learning through this prefigurative pedagogy that aims to teach through experience.

Lastly, in his individual interview Joseph A. indirectly asks the KPL to lead by example when it comes to people with disabilities, such as himself, adding the last example of how this pedagogy is also mobilized for internal critique, and bringing us back to the intersectional nature of the KPL.

Disability activism

A similar kind of learning is taking place when it comes to members with disabilities, which is a great example of how membership of a movement like the KPL for certain marginalized groups can be ground-

breaking, and a way for the KPL to lead by example, by simply not excluding marginalized groups from being members. Within the intersectional peasant feminist epistemology of the KPL, also including work to support the disabled community is a natural extension. Joseph A. talks about how his community has changed their views of the ability to people with disabilities to contribute to society, by seeing him being part of KPL:

> Joseph A.: the disabled's condition or plights in Kenya are not being taken seriously
> […]
> We are not given our rights, for example if you, if a disabled person visits any public facility, they are just made to undergo the normal routines with any other persons. The budget, the government budget for us […]doesn't reach us.
> […]So, the condition is worse, and we are seriously worried as the disabled, where will we get help.
> […]Our plight is so serious and even if we try to compare ourselves to the old people's scheme, we even wonder, we don't know. The aged has a scheme for them from the government budget that is really coming and we see it on the ground, but then with ours, nothing comes to the ground. Now I am pleading now, if KPL will now start fronting also for the rights of the disabled, yeah.
> […]Then you find some disabled person is just locked inside, yeah, and nobody seems to care. The big people in the government, most of the time ransack the kitty for the disabled, from the government budget and they just go scot-free nothing happens. All the best that they can do is to give you an identity [card, ed.] that shows you are physically challenged and then nothing more.

Joseph A. is describing a grim picture of a group in society in need of assistance that is both ignored by the government and shunned by society to the extent that they are sometimes left locked away in a room and are not able to access the government funds allocated to them because of corruption. Joseph A. also touches on how people with disabilities need assistance and need to be given different ways of for example accessing government offices to reach equity, but that this is often not thought of. And unlike the pension schemes, his experience is that the schemes for disabled people are not respected. Like the widows, people with disabilities have a lot of rights on paper in the new constitution, but a vastly different experience in practice. UN estimates that around 3.5 % percent of the Kenyan population have a disability, most of which are physical impairments (UN, 2014, p. 8), and disability is defined as: "[…]"*physical, sensory, mental or other impairments, including any visual, hearing, learning or physical incapability, which impacts adversely on social, economic or environmental participation.*"[…]." (UN, 2014, p. 13). Moreover, the UN has found that there is a large stigma facing both the person with a disability and their families who can feel pressured to keep them hidden (UN, 2014, pp. 13, 20–21, 30–33, 46–52), just as Joseph A. describes.

Joseph A. continues to talk about the importance of him joining the KPL as a person with a visible physical disability, exactly because it is so stigmatized:

SW: So, you want the KPL to educate the community about not just leaving these people locked in a room.

Joseph A.: Yes.
[…]Another group that also has several challenges are the widows.
[…]their rights are being trampled on every now and again
[…] and the government seems not to care.
[…]There should, rightfully there should be someone who now fights for the rights of the physically challenged. Because we hear that happening in other countries.

SW: Yeah. Is that something that you've already started to talk to other people who are physically challenged?

Joseph A.: I have been in the forefront to bring the physically challenged together, but whenever, maybe we seek advice or even some assistance from the government, the government develops a dead ear on that.

SW: Yeah, so now it's through the KPL instead of through the government?

Joseph A.: Yeah, and now maybe I am trying to do that through KPL
[…]to see if anything can come out because even the disabled are also human beings.
[…]
If KPL maybe would, maybe do something, like I am, in my case, maybe one person. The physically challenged would at, least feel that they are also, you know, honoured in the society, yeah.
[…]My family was so happy when they saw I had joined KPL. They say, 'oh so there is an organization that can even allow the physically challenged to be with them'.

SW: Really?

Joseph A.: Yeah

SW: Because they think that you are not allowed?

Joseph A.: They became so happy and even the rest from the community when they saw I was neatly dressed, then I tell them it is the knowledge that I get from KPL that makes me look like this. And they are so happy.

SW: So maybe there is also other physically challenged people who themselves think they would not be allowed in the KPL?

[…]
Joseph A.: The disabled community members, now have a feeling that KPL even thinks about them more than the government does. Because they see I am here.

Here Joseph A., compares the situation of the widows whose lands are stolen with that of people with disabilities in Kenya – they are both structural problems of discrimination, and it is particularly important for him to note that he is *not* arguing for abandoning the widows in favour of people with disabilities, rather that the KPL should fight for both groups. Here Joseph A., is considering how different intersections of power

affect people, and of course, there are of course widows with disabilities who face both gendered and ableist discrimination, as women with disabilities face more discrimination (UN, 2014, pp. 46–48). This goes back to chapter 6, and the KPL's intersectional peasant feminist analysis and approach, where the movement can address several connected forms of oppression that are experienced differently in different contexts. It is in this way exactly, that Joseph A. can ask the KPL to lead by example and live up to its own intersectional feminist analysis by including the perspective of people with disabilities.

Moreover, the way Joseph A. talks about people's reactions to him *dressing nice* and being part of KPL, as something surprising also speaks to the extremely low expectations people have of people with disabilities. I am not sure exactly which disability activism Joseph A. is referring to, but disabled communities globally face similar, but of course contextually different, challenges. In the Kenyan context being a person with disabilities comes with considerable social stigma, adding to that also being low-income and based in a rural area, can make it even more difficult to, for example, access medical care when government support is lacking or absent. Again, Joseph A. shows how prefiguration is a powerful teaching tool, both for the able-bodied people in his community to get a different perspective on what it means to have disabilities, and for other people with disabilities, who can see that they would be welcomed in the KPL as Joseph A. highlights.

Joseph A. is highly respected within KPL as an elder who holds a lot of indigenous knowledge, and he clearly uses this interview as a way of calling for the KPL to do more work on the rights of disabled people, just as they do for widows. Because he knows I will continue talking about this, and more directly because the translator was a convener in the KPL. To be clear, Joseph A. is not suggesting that the KPL champions people with disabilities *instead* of widows whose land has been stolen, he is saying that the former *also* deserves attention. Joseph A. is using this project to ask the KPL to lead by example as an intersectional peasant feminist movement when it comes to people with disabilities. I also made sure to bring this up during the different evaluation meetings to make sure, that this concern was raised more openly within the KPL as well.

I should note that so far, no large campaigns have been planned from KPL on these issues, but as far as I know no specific campaigns have been proposed either. Perhaps when there are enough members with disabilities to form a collective of disabled members, just as there are youth, women and men's collectives, there will be more specific work on it, but so far Joseph A.'s request has not led to any further work. This is an issue I return to in chapter 8, where it seems that a standpoint epistemology can lead to the affected group carrying all of work on certain issues, pulling double duty. Moreover, while Joseph A. found agroecology as an accessible way to make a living with his disability, there are also questions of how accessible agroecology is considering the assertion in chapter 6 that agroecology is a very labour-intensive approach to growing food. I will not speculate beyond the scope of the data for this thesis, but disability and agroecology deserves attention as the main focus of a project and not, as here, only taking up the margins of the data.

Concluding remarks

This chapter deepens the KPL's pedagogical political theory, by showing how the KPL intentionally uses informal and incidental learning to scale deep within the movement when it comes to agroecology and especially the KPL's intersectional peasant feminism. Their aim is to *form* a new world and a new people. In table 4 I summarize the main take aways from chapter 7:

Table 4 Main take aways from chapter 7, self-made

Main take aways from chapter 7		
	Practice ⟺	**Political Theory**

The work of the KPL featured in chapter 7	• Prefiguring different power relations within the KPL through organization
	  • Making sure the marginalized to practice taking up space
	  • Making sure the less marginalized experience that giving up space is not dangerous
	• Making sure there are intentional informal and incidental learning opportunities for members on research and organizational skills
	  • Especially members who are marginalized in wider society
	• Prefiguring agroecology and peasant feminism at home, or leading by example
	• Using the term "leading by example" as a way of practicing internal critique
		• Using prefigurative pedagogy to scale deep is the way to *form* a new society from the ground up
		• Often this work is harder when it comes to peasant feminism than agroecology, but one cannot be taught without the other
		• Prefigurative pedagogy is strong because
		  • It grants the movement credibility as they practice what they preach
		  • It provides tactile arguments allowing people to experience agroecology and peasant feminism
		  • It has a large reach as each member becomes a lighthouse through leading by example

Contributions to the literature	• **Agroecology:**
	  • Adding more East African cases to the literature
	  • The KPL demonstrates the connections between pedagogy and prefiguration
	  • The KPL's formal pedagogy is mirrored in their informal and incidental learning, mirroring the rest of the agroecology movement
	• **Social Movement literature:**
	  • The KPL is *intentional* about their informal and incidental learning challenging Foley's theory
	  • The KPL demonstrates the connections between pedagogy and prefiguration	

Internally the focus of this informal and incidental learning is on two things: first, they try to increase the opportunities for their members to learn skills such as research and documenting skills, organizational skills and so on, through their work in the movement. This project is a great example, as the KPL made sure to build in learning opportunities for their members by having one member act as a rapporteur and translator in each FGD, thereby having them practice their note taking, report writing and language skills. Being

intentional about informal and incidental teaching is something the KPL has in common with many other agroecology movements, who view these informal lessons on organizing as just as crucial as the lessons on agroecology (Casado et al., 2022, p. 16). The informal and incidental teaching of the KPL is, therefore, often more focused on the organizational skills and scaling deep, compared to the formal movement teaching which is more focused on sharing agroecological knowledge and techniques. While Foley decries a lack of focus on this informal and incidental learning within movements (Foley, 1999, pp. 39, 45–46), the KPL is *intentionally* creating these learning opportunities. The KPL aims to create this kind of learning in their day to day organizing for all their members. Moreover, when the KPL recommends that the treasurer of each cluster should be a woman (of any age), and each secretary should be a young person (of any gender), they are aiming to give members who are marginalized in society more learning opportunities, while showing members from more privileged groups how a different power dynamic can work. Which brings me to the second goal of the incidental and informal learning: to prefigure, and normalize, agroecology and peasant feminism ways of living.

Through their organization the KPL aims to challenge the logic of industrial agriculture and the age and gender discrimination that exist in wider society, within the movement: They are prefiguring a different society, in order to scale deep within the movement. As Foley points out, this kind of informal and incidental learning teaches the more marginalized activist that their voices matters, while also being a powerful learning opportunity for those who have never experienced that kind of marginalization (Foley, 1999, pp. 24–26, 39; Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 163–164). Just as the Highlander Folk School allowed its students to experience what an integrated society could look like during racial segregation, the KPL allows its members to experience what peasant feminist organizing can look and feel like, and how growing and eating agroecological food can look and feel like. It is this tangible tactile argument which illustrate their values. They lead by example, and allow people to experience this first hand, and that is prefigurative pedagogy. Having prominent members with disabilities, having representatives be women, giving women and girls the feeling that their voice matters within the movement, is then a way of modelling how a different society can and should look according to the KPL, which allows people – inside and outside the movement – to see for themselves that it can lead to better lives, and not the total collapse they might imagine. In this way, this *intentional* informal teaching that the KPL sets up by each member being a prefigurative lighthouse, is their way of scaling deep, by creating and normalizing different social relations around gender, age, physical ability and food production. Prefigurative pedagogy is a combination of the horizontal farmer-to-farmer critical pedagogy, with the notion of leading by example as agroecology and peasant feminist lighthouses.

The prefigurative pedagogy of the KPL is completely aligned with their overall pedagogy sketched out in chapter 6, as it is place-based contextual learning, which expands the notion of the classroom, allowing people to learn through experiences which will always be bound to the context they are in. Luchies, De Vita

and Vittori point to this fundamental connection between prefiguration and a critical Freirian pedagogy, as the constructivist assumption of why prefiguration can lead to social change are based in ideas of consciousness raising closely related to Freire's thoughts on conscientizaçáo. Conscientizaçáo is a mutual learning process where ends and means correspond, and that all prefigurative practices are instances of (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 77, 79–85; Luchies, 2014, pp. 102–104, 120–121). Moreover, the idea of agroecology lighthouses, or demonstration farms or plots which allow people to experience agroecology first hand (Casado et al., 2022, pp. 5–7, 16; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 12–13; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–251; Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, p. 3; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 902–903) shows how this prefigurative pedagogy is a fundamental part of agroecology movements, even though the concept does not take up any space in the literature. The concept of prefiguration helps crystalize the theory of change motivating these tactics. The KPL's approach of *leading by example* assumes that every single KPL household can act as a lighthouse, which makes it important that the values and practices of agroecology and peasant feminism are exactly scaled deep within every single household. Leading by example is, thereby, important for the KPL both to maintain credibility – that people can see them practicing what they preach – and because they believe that prefigurative pedagogy is a powerful teaching tool.

And these are the overarching three lessons the KPL taught me about why prefiguration is a strong pedagogical strategy: 1. it gives the movement credibility that they are not just talking the talk but walking the walk. 2. Prefiguration is a tactile argument that allows people to experience the realization of the movement's values and aspirations, and 3. Prefiguration allows each member to be an example from which others can copy, or they become inspirational lighthouses for peasant feminism and agroecology. This allows for participatory informal learning processes. Scaling deep becomes both the means and the end, which of course is the very definition of prefiguration.

Lastly, this chapter shows how leading by example, is not only a pedagogical practice and theory of how to scale deep within the KPL but is also a way of practicing internal critique within the movement. When members such as Margret H. asks the men of the KPL to bring their wives to meetings, or Joseph A. asks that people with disabilities are given the same support as widows whose land is grabbed, they are asking the other members to actually lead by example, and to actually prefigure the agroecological peasant feminist world the KPL says it wants to create. As LVC, the KPL focuses on the marginalization and discrimination of women and youths when it comes to decision making and land ownership, however, as Joseph A. points to there are also other marginalized groups in the KPL members' communities that are in need of support, specifically people with disabilities. In Kenya there is a large stigma on people with disabilities and they are often shunned, or left locked in a room with no support (UN, 2014, pp. 13, 20–21, 30–33, 46–52).

Again, this project became an example of the KPL's practices. In the first few FGDs young women were underrepresented, often because the FGDs were at times of the day where many young women would be

busy with reproductive work as many had small children and bore the majority of the reproductive work. I addressed this explicitly, asking the next clusters I visited to be mindful of this dynamic and make sure that more young women would be able to attend – I asked them to lead by example, and they did. As you can see in table 8-10 in the appendix, the gender and age parity for young women was perhaps overcorrected. However, it should be noted that Joseph A.'s ask for more focus on the plight of disabled people has at the time of writing not developed into any actual campaigns or projects, in the same way the KPL has with youth and women. This could be because there are both youth- and women's collectives that can take charge on those issues, and perhaps a collective of members with disabilities would be needed to take charge on such work, something I problematize in the next chapter.

Summing up, the KPL is an example of a movement that uses their prefiguration of agroecology and peasant feminism intentionally as learning opportunities for their members, and in this way every member that leads by example becomes a lighthouse of agroecology and peasant feminism. Which in turn makes it important that each member is leading by example and imparting the right lessons. In the following chapter I look at how leading by example combined with *preaching what they practice* is also the KPL's strategy for scaling out. So, the next chapter focuses on how they KPL use these strategies outside of the movement.

8. Scaling out, by scaling deep

Bringing agroecology to scale, is a big concern in the literature, as expanding agroecology is crucial to creating a more climate friendly food production (C. Anderson et al., 2020; Ferguson et al., 2019; Gliessman, 2018b; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015; Nicol, 2020). Most literature on scaling agroecology, focuses on scaling up or on the, very important, task of how to organize the outreach of scaling out to already interested farmers (McCune et al., 2017; McCune & Sánchez, 2019; Mier y Terán et al., 2018; Nicholls & Altieri, 2018; P. Rosset et al., 2019). In contrast, the KPL members focused a lot of their attention on convincing farmers that were either unsure or outright against agroecology, which adds a valuable contribution to the literature with examples of how one movement in the East African context deals with pushback and the un-learning process many farmers go through before adopting agroecology. We should not take this un-learning process for granted and should expect resistance in such scaling projects (M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, p. 81). It can be difficult for farmers to untangle themselves from industrial agriculture, particularly because of the heavy modernist narratives supporting it, as shown in chapter 6. So, the KPL adds a much-needed micro perspective on scaling out focusing on how to untangle peasants from this narrative, while also showing how scaling both agroecology *and* peasant feminism is possible at the same time, which is something other agroecology movements still struggle with.

In the previous chapter I showed how the KPL uses prefiguration as a teaching tool, by leading by example: they are prefiguring a different food production by practicing agroecology, and they are also prefiguring different age and gendered relations inside the movement through their organization. Through all of these forms of prefiguration they are teaching each other that a different world is possible and that a different world can be a better one. In this chapter, I focus on how the KPL uses this same approach, mixed with what I call *preaching what they practice*, outside of the movement to scale out both agroecology and peasant feminism. This chapter is, therefore, a further expansion of the KPL's political theory of pedagogy, as it relates to scaling out, and achieving social change.

The KPL turns otherwise informal interactions with their neighbours, with people in their churches and other civil society groups into intentional, informal, teaching moments as they try to convince others about the benefits of agroecological farming. This intentional informal teaching is one of the main ways the KPL scales out, by taking advantage of the networks that the members are already in, and making sure they are actively bringing them the good word of agroecology. This is in line with much of social movement research that shows how crucial networks are to people joining and remaining in social movements (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 117–121). This is also in line with the literature on scaling agroecology, as this chapter underlines the importance of the *movement* part of agroecology, as the movement is instrumental in using critical pedagogy to spread both the science and practice parts of agroecology (McCune et al., 2017, pp. 15–19; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, p. 596; Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 7–13). Continuing from the last chapter,

the KPL is not content on only relying on the *lighthouse effect* (Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 3, 7–11), of their prefigurative practices, as they not only lead by example, but also preach what they practice. They want to be lighthouses, and actively guide people towards the lighthouses in case they did not stumble upon them on their own.

Luchies, De Vita and Vittori point out how prefigurative practices are related to critical pedagogical thought and specifically Freire's thoughts on conscientizaçáo, a mutual learning process where ends and means correspond, and that all prefigurative practices are instances of learning (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 77, 79–85). However, a combination of clear prefigurative tactics with that of preaching is also something few global north prefigurative projects do as it is often more inwardly focused (Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 177–178; Luchies, 2014, pp. 101–103). If anything prefiguration is seen as a pedagogical practice *within* movements through informal learning (Luchies, 2014, pp. 102–104, 120–121), or as mostly accidental learning outside of the movement (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 86–87). In this way, the KPL's approach to scaling out also adds examples to the literature on prefiguration and critical pedagogy of a movement that *intentionally* uses informal and incidental learning *outside* of the movement. Prefiguration is often touted as experiments that can show the way towards the future, but it often refers to this almost accidental learning and it is rarely meant in this literal sense of *teaching* people *outside* the movement, but that is what the KPL is doing. They are scaling out, through their scaling deep strategy.

The chapters start by presenting the KPL's motivation for wanting to scale out, based in their analysis of neo-agro-colonialism and the KPL members' position herein. This analysis highly colours the KPL's way of approaching reluctant or sceptical peasants, and such an analysis is crucial for scaling agroecology (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 13).

Next, I show the clusters that I encountered were started to illustrate how this scaling strategy has looked in the past, which illustrates the importance of networks. This explains why the KPL aims to *actively* preach what they practice, and not just rely on people being drawn to their prefigurative lighthouse practices on their own, as the KPL's positive view of knowledge shown in chapter 6 might suggest. Then I dive deeper into exactly how the KPL preaches what they practice, through slow, patient, practical place-based teaching. Finally, the chapters end with four critical questions I have for this strategy of scaling out: Does the burden of teaching fall on the most marginalized? Can everyone effectively preach what they practice? Does the KPL, and other agroecology and climate movements, have time to teach slowly? And finally, does this kind of teaching require physical proximity?

Teaching slowly, preaching respectfully

The KPL is motivated to share their knowledge based on their optimistic view of knowledge explained in chapter 6, where they often identify the problem for many communities as being a lack of knowledge, both

in terms of practical agroecological knowledge, and the larger knowledge of an intersectional analysis of their situation. So, one might assume that his optimism would lead the KPL to assume that this good knowledge they have would spread on its own without their intervention through the lighthouse effect, exactly because it is good and useful (Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 3, 7–11). However, that is not the case, as most KPL members are not waiting around for people to be inspired but seeking out people to inspire them through their prefiguration of agroecology and peasant feminism.

These approaches to prefiguration as a teaching and scaling out strategy, is of course heavily dependent on people being able to see your prefigurative praxis organically as neighbours or passers-by, which of course limits the amount of people who can learn from it, especially if you do not *preach* it.

The importance of physical proximity is very visible within the KPL. One of the main reasons knowledge exchanges, would not happen in the KPL when I visited, was because of lack of funds to cover travel expenses for people to travel between clusters as most members could not afford to do that for KPL events or even for private events like funerals or family emergencies. If you have a cluster in your area, you will have an opportunity to interact and learn, but if you do not it becomes a matter of access to resources that not all peasants have. This is evident in how new clusters start.

Most new clusters grew in neighbouring areas to already existing clusters, where people easily visited another cluster or met KPL members who inspired them. The other main way clusters began were by people who had the opportunity to travel to a KPL cluster and learn, or by members living in Nairobi going back to where their family was from upcountry and starting clusters there.

Of the clusters I visited these are their origin stories: The first KPL clusters was Mulo and Mariwa clusters in Migori county, started by the activists who had been inspired by LVC mobilization in 2015 in Nairobi. Both Kurutyange and Rabolo clusters started after people from those villages met members in Mulo, as they are also in Migori County (even though Kurutyange is on the periphery close to the Tanzanian border). When I visited Rabolo, it was one of the youngest clusters, since then many more clusters have sprouted. While I was in Kenya Mariwa cluster was not active, so I did not visit as I had no one to host me, but it has since become active again.

In Nairobi County, Kangemi is the original cluster, founded by some of the same people who founded Mulo and Mariwa, and from there people from Utawala, Dandora and Mathari met people in Kangemi and started their own clusters. In Machakos County, a member of the now Kalianni cluster, started their own cluster after meeting someone from Kangemi cluster. They soon started discussing this with the already existing women's group Mwende Munyanyau, which is in the neighbouring village to Kalianni Cluster. Mwende Munyanyau then decided to also join the KPL and has quickly become one of the most active clusters with a very active youth collective consisting of both young women and men. This is of course a story of success in

scaling out, but physical proximity and the lack of funds for transportation for many peasants outside of the KPL limits further scaling out to other counties. I cannot speak to the clusters that were started after I left Kenya. Reaching other communities often happens by chance, with peasants from other communities being in the area of a cluster for other reasons and being inspired, as happened with Kalianni Cluster. The origins of the different clusters of the KPL, shows how important these informal interactions with community members and visitors are to the scaling out of the movement. Many members would often tell me that it is important to share knowledge with as many people as possible, because you never know what it might lead to.

So, just as the KPL is intentional with the informal and incidental inside the movement, as shown in chapter 7, the KPL is also intentional about the informal and incidental learning outside of the movement.

Foley points out how informal learning is not inevitable (Foley, 1999, p. 51), and the KPL seems keen to catch and create every informal learning opportunity they can, as the teaching process often requires more than just one interaction. They talk about making *"several knocks"* and bringing the other person *closer, and closer*, which is crucial to their pedagogy. Moreover, they also need to *actively* seek out people, because that is what the industrial agriculture companies are doing, and many members see themselves in a *war* with industrial agriculture. As mentioned in chapter 6, the modernity narrative created by these companies acts as a demobilizing narrative, and what the KPL is doing is countering this with their own mobilizing narrative, which is crucial to scaling agroecology (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 13). So, who are on the sides of this war?

War on neo-agro-colonialism

Intuitively this notion of war seems at odds with a more empathic critical pedagogy approach, however, this is tempering the optimism on the miraculous nature of good of knowledge for the KPL, without tempering their optimistic view that everyone can change and learn. Knowing that they are up against deep rooted colonial narratives of indigenous knowledge being backwards and companies using all their resources to offer loans, the KPL is aware that knowledge needs to be mobilized to scale out, and that they cannot take for granted that people will listen.

Most members would speak of being at war or fighting with industrial agriculture, and fighting for agroecology, positioning themselves against *neo-agro-colonialism* as explained above in chapter 3 (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, p. 21). While this of course is figuratively in the sense of fighting through activism, they are also literally fighting for their livelihoods, and through that, their lives. Shiva sums up how environmental and climate activism in the global south is essential: "*In the Third World, ecology movements are not a luxury of the rich; they are a survival imperative for the majority of people whose life is put at risk by the market economy and threatened by its expansion.*" (Shiva, 2005, p. 44). Fighting for the environment

is fighting for survival. And I just want to make it clear that the KPL uses this language in the same way many other activists talk of fighting for what you believe in, and not implying actual physical violence.

Following this narrative of war, the discourse against industrial agriculture is quite strong throughout, both KPL and LVC and this is where the mobilizing discourses mentioned by Mier y Terán et al., as important in scaling up/out agroecology, is located for the KPL (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 541, 2020, pp. 6–8; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 13; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, pp. 76, 81). For Kennedy G. the question of agroecology is a war:

> Kennedy G.: Climate change is real.
>
> SW: And you said it was a war
>
> Kennedy G.: Yeah
>
> SW: Who is on the other side of the war?
>
> Kennedy G.: This is a war between the evil forces, yeah and the Godly forces.
>
> SW: Who are on the side of the evil forces, if KPL and the LVC is a part of the
>
> Kennedy G.: Peasants! Peasants are on the right track of it, on the evil part I see the multinational companies
>
> SW: Only?
>
> Kennedy G.: And maybe a few people from the government who benefit from that trade, or even the government it-self, yeah. [takes phone call [00:51:20] - [00:51:39]]
>
> SW: So, the government it-self can also be part of the evil side, but it's mainly the multinational companies?
>
> Kennedy G.: Both
>
> SW: Both
>
> Kennedy G.: Yeah, but the multinational companies are the real perpetrators. The African governments, especially the Kenyan one is only bowing to that pressure from the multinational companies.

Kennedy G. describes a very dichotomous world with either being for industrial agriculture, or the evil forces, or for agroecology, or the godly forces. He also describes how companies are pulling the strings, while governments cannot withstand their pressure, and how he wishes people would hear this message, which of course leaves the door ajar for both governments and people to change their minds and leave the companies behind. Historically, the multinational corporation is a colonial creation, as the first private multinational corporation was the British East India Company, and today’s corporations are not identical, but very similar

to the original (Robins, 2012, pp. xii–xiii, 23–25, 30–40). Using that term, is therefore, an interesting way to insist on the neo-colonial relationship present between private companies and countries (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 16–17, 23–25). Once again, this demonstrates how important it is to stress that the KPL's class position is also shaped by their neo-colonial global south context.

This narrative of *war* gets to the KPL's analysis of the global economy, as one of exploitation and neo-colonialism. Such an analysis of the global economy goes quite well with the peasant feminist intersectional analysis of the KPL, as it puts the responsibility on the global system and the corporations who back and benefit from it. This aligns with the literature on scaling, which highlights how important it is to tie the practices you want to scale out to a larger analysis of the world, and how changing behaviour will benefit more than just you – a mobilizing discourse (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 13–14; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, pp. 76–78). Moreover, it goes to explain why the very optimistic view of knowledge, explored in chapter 6, does not lead the KPL members to assume that they can just lean back and expect agroecology to spread without any active work. Knowledge is power, and power will not be redistributed without a fight.

Kennedy G. continues discussing this metaphor, after I ask him to explain what happens to all the people who are not peasants or part of a multinational corporation:

> SW: Right, right. So, if you have the peasants on the one side, and the multinational companies on the other side, there is a lot of people who don't fit into either category, there are lot of people who are not peasants, where do you see them in this?
>
> Kennedy G.: And you see, in this war here, nobody will be left sitting in the middle. Ultimately, nobody will be left sitting in the middle. You will have to join either side, either you be for the evil forces, or you be for the right forces on the peasant side, yes. Because this is, as I said, this is something that affects everyone, yeah. And that is why I was saying, if wishes were horses, I would wish that this message gets or sinks into every person's mind in Kenya or in the whole world. Just was it two days back now, we had a whole village that was buried in the land slides, in the Rift Valley, that is in West Pokot. […]

Kennedy G. doubles down on the dichotomy of this war by linking this fight to climate change – everyone is, or will be, affected by climate change, so you cannot be neutral, and will have to decide whether you are fighting climate change or be part of the problem. Kennedy G. highlights a village in the Rift Valley in Kenya that was buried in mudslides, due to unseasonal rains brought on by climate change, to give an example of how serious of a threat climate change is to peoples' lives. Below, Caroline E. supports this view, as she succinctly describes both the motivation for expanding her cluster and having more people grow agroecologically, while also highlighting that the national government is on the side of multinational companies, by supporting chemical fertilizer:

> SW: But we, and we've already talked a little bit about this, but what are your, your dreams or your goals for the KPL or for [place] cluster, in the future?

Caroline E.: In [place] I just want us, the [place] cluster, to enlarge! So that we can convince others. You know now we are; I can say we are now two tribes. So, it is us, we are being fought. So, I'm, my prayer or my goal is just to enlarge so that we can achieve this, the indigenous crops growing, and also to encourage others to use this manure, from the livestock keeping.

SW: So, when you are saying that you are now two tribes

Caroline E.: Yeah

SW: So, the one tribe is the KPL

Caroline E.: Yeah

SW: Who is the other?

Caroline E.: The other is those who are, I can say government, yeah, the government. Because government is encouraging the use of the manure that is being bought[chemical fertilizer, ed], yeah. And the crops. And that one, there are some weaves, the weeds
[…]when you use that, I remember my grandmother used it [manure, ed], when she was growing the maize, for around two years there was after using that manure, which are being bought, after was it, around five years, now the maize could not grow beyond this size [indicating small size]. And there was a time when we were walking with [name] and I ask him why do you think the maize now cannot grow beyond this size? And before, that farm was producing a lot of sacks. When I came here the first time, I got married, that place was producing a lot of maize sacks, but right now maize sacks, you can even get one sack, until she has left that place now growing sugar cane instead of maize, because maize cannot do very well in that farm. So, they have told me that she should use the, leave that place for around two years, but putting manure.
[…] Putting just manure, I think you, yesterday you saw some manure placed there at the nini, at the banana plantation

As Kennedy G., Caroline E. also describes a dichotomy of the KPL supporting agroecology, and the government supporting industrial agriculture, and she uses the example of the proposed ban on manure from 2019, which would have made chemical fertilizers the only legal fertilizers. Caroline E. is also explaining how chemical fertilizers damaged the soil quality in her farm, and her area, which resulted in smaller crops and harvests, and has now forced them to not plant anything for two years while they are restoring the soil quality with manure. Caroline E. continues explaining, the other benefits to using manure over chemical fertilizer:

Caroline E.: Yeah. So that is what we are trying to do. Because that place now, we cannot grow maize. […]right now the sugar canes are there, after that we will leave it for around two, one year, two years.
[…]We only put the, the manure. Then after that we will plant. I think, that is what he told us, but we are trying. We are also trying.

SW: So, in order to restore the soil

Caroline E.: Yeah

[…]
SW: Yeah. And why is it important to expand [place] cluster? Why do you want to win over the other tribe? [both laugh]

Caroline E.: You know, first, these things that are being bought are very expensive. And here when I looked around the school fees are also there. So, I'm just imagining in five years to come, how are, how will our people be? The school is here, food is also, yani everything will be money
[…] So, I just want the, this to enlarge so that everybody can be enlighten, you can know that if I use this one, I will spend less money, and the rest I can even take to school fee. 'Cause I'm seeing in two years to come everything will be money, even those crops that are there growing
[…]
So that's why I want everybody, so that the [place] can be enlarged, so that people can spend less money in farming. At least the rest we can take to school fee, or anything else. You look at where we are living [points to the room we are sitting in]. Look at the floor. So, that the money that is being spent in buying those crops can be used for something else.

So, Caroline E. is motivated to expand the KPL, and her cluster, because she believes it will lead the new members to have better livelihoods and be able to afford school fees when they no longer have to spend money on farm inputs such as expensive chemical fertilizer which quickly can lead to debt spirals while also stripping the soil of nutrients (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 14–15; Shiva, 2016, pp. 16–17). Caroline also touches on the narrative of *war* or *conflict* between those fighting for agroecology and those fighting for industrial agriculture. This is of course related to the dichotomy of analog and digital described in chapter 6. While most use the rhetoric of war, Caroline E. here uses the more subtle language of *tribes*, which still connotes the feeling that they are up against another cohesive group fighting them.

In this way, the narrative of war restrains the extremely optimistic view of knowledge within the KPL – that if you are just given the right information, you will change your mind – with a more pessimistic analysis of power structures and monetary incentives that influence whether you will be introduced to this knowledge in the first place.

Penina E.: Number one, that the indigenous seeds you can plant and replant it the seeds as you get them, just keep on replanting. But the commercial seeds once you plant it you try the second one, maybe from the harvest, it won't do so well. So that is one benefit that I see

[…]

Translator: And maybe on manure

SW: But also, why is that important, why is that a good thing?

> Penina E.: That this is important because it doesn't enslave you to keep on buying from agrovet, but you can have your own seeds here. Then, it can also happen that when it comes to planting season you don't have money so, if it is a matter of buying commercial seeds, you might plant late after people have planted as you still look for money. But on these other ones you'll make your own seeds and put them ready together with manure, so when people plant you also plant early, and get a good harvest.
>
> SW: So, you are less dependent on how much money you have?
>
> Translator: Yeah
>
> […]
> Penina E.: [Penina E.] That indigenous seeds are easy to get and even manure.
>
> SW: And the manure is also easy to get? Even
>
> Penina E.: Yes, because I have animals here.

Penina E. is here summing up the problems of neo-agro-colonialism's approach to seeds – it locks farmers in to buying expensive seeds and fertilizers each year, which necessitates that you have money which often means that farmers end up taking loans, locking them into never ending debt spirals (Bunge, 2016; Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 25–25; Shiva, 2016, p. 5), as explained in chapter 3. As Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior explains, the colonial aspect of exploitation within neo-agro-colonialism is done by mainly corporations, but often with the backing of governments (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 16–20).

The other side of this war was sometimes *only* identified as corporations and at other times both corporations *and* the government, as the government would often be in support of these large companies and encourage the use of chemical fertilizer, for example by proposing the earlier mentioned ban on manure. However, many highlighted how the government *should* listen to them and "come down" and see what their lives are really like, and what would actually help them.

> Joseph E.: And we are also looking a way, if possible, there can be a way in which we can preach to our government, if there can be assistance and protection that they can give us, to succeed in our goals then we'll appreciate it. Because there are things that we are opposed to, but now the government is encouraging, there are things that we are encouraging the government can also be encouraging them but now, sometimes they don't involve us. So, if, if we'll be involved and maybe there is such kind of discussion based on agriculture, agricultural practices, we are called, we share our views, we check which one can do better, then it will be possible for many people to adopt this. Yes.
>
> SW: And why is it important that they include, or evol, involve you?
>
> Joseph E.: Because there is good that we do, or way of practice that the government doesn't do. There are policies that they can formulate that are against our agendas, you know this kill

> our morale, we tried to do something, then the government says something opposite to what we are advocating for, yes. So, this sometimes give us a challenge.
>
> SW: And if they listened to you that would not happen?
>
> Joseph E.: If they listen to us, it will be very, very easy for more people to understand, yes. Because once you may say let us do this, but somebody may question "what do you think the government say about this?", what if you do it, what will the government say about it? […]Yeah. So, if they are also aware of what we are doing and they encourage us, then we could reach very far, we can reach very far.

There is a consciousness in the KPL that what happens on a government level affects their ability to scale out, which is why they also engage in efforts of scaling up, which is not the focus of this thesis. Here I highlight it to underscore how the KPL, like other food sovereignty movements, advocate for participation and democratic decision making at all levels when it comes to food production and insisting that they are heard when the government makes laws that affect them. As mentioned above, the KPL does aim to scale up, and engage in lobby work, but this is not the focus of this thesis, as the data focused on the day to day, farmer-to-farmer work.

So, can you use slow respectful teaching methods with people you are fighting a war against? Yes, you can, when you are fighting the system and not the people existing within it. Members of the KPL shift between earnestly identifying anyone practicing industrial agriculture as on the wrong side of the war, while also earnestly believing that people will change sides if they are given more information and can see and feel the benefits of agroecology for themselves. In this way, they make clear that they are fighting against neo-agro-colonialism rather than the people existing within neo-agro-colonialism.

Going back to the idea of formation, presented in chapter 7, fighting this war is exactly about re-valuing indigenous farming practices, and indigenous species. These are often viewed as being of less value, or analog as described in chapter 6, because they want and *need* a different world as explained in chapter 9. In other words, it is necessary to scale deep to scale out, and it is necessary to scale out, because neo-agro-colonialism are threatening the livelihoods of peasants, and the livelihoods of us all through climate change. So, from this, both pessimistic and optimistic position the KPL aims to scale out through their strategies of leading by example and preaching what you practice.

Trust the process, trust the learner

Again, through their spiral learning model, the KPL trusts the learning process and the learner, as described in chapter 5 and 6. A big part of how the KPL uses prefiguration as a teaching method outside of the movement, is to trust the intellectual capacity of the person you are speaking with, while at the same time recognizing that trust needs to be built over time. It is part of teaching slowly, and respectfully, which is the final important tenant of the KPL's pedagogical theory: it is important to teach with respect while also

actively trying to "preach" what you believe in, not only practice it. Thereby, not just practicing what you preach, but actively preaching what you practice making sure more people will have the opportunity to be in contact with these ideas, and actively counteract the demobilizing discourse of industrial agriculture. This is part and parcel of the KPL's leading by example praxis when it comes to scaling out:

> Michael E.: So, this is one thing that made me start growing napier grass. If you look up here, you'll find that we have got a lot of terraces like maybe some kind of ridges with some vegetation on them. So, this is one thing that help in reducing surface run of. So, alongside practicing this at home, where not so many people are coming to see this, I also have to integrate this in my everyday talking. To an extent that some people these days some of them scall me agroecology or whatever [SW laughs]. But I like that because whenever they call me that somebody will ask why. Then that is now the starting point of the discussion to get other people learn about this. […]

Here Michael E. talks about how he grows napier grass to prevent soil erosion, as he lives in a very hilly area, and that he tries to bring practices such as these into everyday conversations as much as he can, to the extent that some people now have nicknamed him agroecology. In this way, the KPL is using a combination of prefiguration, as explained in chapter 7, and purposeful dialogue-based teaching to scale out their movements similar to other agroecology movements (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 533). However, the KPL focus a lot more on the process of convincing sceptical farmers through their particular brand of critical pedagogy which stresses that this happens at the pace needed by the learner, which is often *slow*.

The reason it is slow, is because of the un-learning that the KPL points out people need to do before they can learn, which research into how humans learn confirm (National Research Council et al., 2000, pp. 10–11, 14–16). Moreover, this assumes that the people who are practicing industrial agriculture does so because they honestly believe it is the best mode of agriculture, which is quite an empathic approach, rather than assuming they are doing it despite knowing it is harmful. Again, the KPL is trusting the learner, which is at the heart of critical Freirian pedagogy (Ollis, 2014, pp. 517–519, 525–526). At the same time, the KPL recognizes that that simple arguments will not be enough to convince sceptical farmers, not because they are not smart enough to understand the arguments but because they need to unlearn before they can learn (McCune et al., 2017, p. 16), and as Joseph E. points out in chapter 7, sometimes we need to feel and see something for ourselves before we trust it, because we are thinking critically about the world around us. One of the ways the members do this is, by encouraging people in their communities, who are sceptical about agroecology, to do their own experiments as part of their pedagogical approach to scaling out. KPL members would often suggest that their neighbour could plant GMO crops next to indigenous crops as a way of having them experience the difference themselves, appealing to this experimental side of farmers. That is farm-based research as both a knowledge creator and a teaching method, again connecting to critical pedagogy and PAR, agroecology and Freire's idea of problem-posing as teaching, where the focus is on teaching critical thinking and trusting the learner, not depositing knowledge (Freire, 2000, pp. 79–81, 84, 92–95; McCune &

Sánchez, 2019, pp. 603–604). Moreover, in line with PAR, Freire and the KPL's own internal participatory pedagogy, the KPL members also take their outset in the needs and interests of the people they meet – if they are interested in maize, the members are not going to preach to them about bees, because we are better learners when we are interested. In the following, I show how the KPL focusses on unlearning in their teaching.

Unlearning with the KPL

So, what are the ways in which the KPL informally teaches their surrounding community? In the FGD's and the individual interviews we often talked about how people teach others, and one of the recurring themes were how everyone learns at a different pace. This was often coupled with the observation that in order to learn about agroecology, the people they talk to first have to un-learn the view of agriculture they have adopted from the industrial approach (McCune et al., 2017, p. 9). In the quote below Diane O., Esther N. and Mary N. use the example of farmers believing that their soil is not fertile and that they cannot grow anything without chemical fertilizers. However, the truth is often that the reason soil becomes more acidic and less fertile is exactly because of the use of those chemical fertilizers (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 7, 14–15, 28).

> SW: So sometimes it can be hard to think what to say, like you said, sometimes it's hard to know, sometimes it's easier to think what not to say, so, if you were to go to a village like this, and talk to these people, what would we be the wrong way to convince them? What would be a, what would be a mistake?
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> Mary N.: The biggest mistake would be to tell them what they are doing is not right. That would be the first biggest mistake. You must, in my view, the first mistake is to tell them what they are doing is not right, because they already have the notion that their soil is not fertile, and they have their set mind that for the soil to be fertile, they have to use
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> Diana O.: Fertilizers
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> Mary N.: The fertilizers, alright, that's the wrong way first. Okay, I'll ask my-self a question, then what approach would I take, to try to erase their mindset, and maybe convince them that they actually do not need to use the fertilizers that they are going to buy using their little cash, and instead they use the manure that they only have, within their homesteads, from their own cows. So, it will be like a journey. Try to agree to their wrongs and try to right the wrongs at the same time. [translation of question and answer]
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> SW: And are there other mistakes you can make when you are trying to convince people?
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> Mary N.: Maybe there is, [not using, ed.] the simplest language
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> Esther N.: Like for example a mistake, is like going there to tell them, that whatever they are doing is very wrong, and you are not showing them by example, like for example you are suppose to tell them, now, like this portion you plant with whatever you have been planting with, give me just a small portion, we plant organically, we don't use those fertilizers, and then we compare and contrast the results, yeah.

> SW: So, showing by example is important
>
> Esther N.: Yeah, by example

Diana O., Esther N., and Mary N. discuss what would be the *wrong* way to try and convince someone to switch to agroecology, and they all agree that you should not tell someone what they are doing is wrong outright. Rather they aim to slowly understand why the other person thinks chemical fertilizers are good and then counter with why manure is better for soil quality and in terms of avoiding debt. Here the group is discussing the unlearning process, which for many can be uncomfortable as they are unlearning things, they have taken for granted. For many it can feel like the world is turned upside down. This is why the KPL members almost unanimously state that you cannot start a learning dialogue by saying the other person is wrong outright. This related to Foley's work, as he highlights how often learning is contentious and conflictual as people will sometimes be uncomfortable when they realize the harmful things they have believed and need to unlearn (Foley, 1999, pp. 13, 50–52; Ollis, 2014, pp. 523–524). In a way many of these conflicts is what the KPL is trying to avoid through their tactic of first letting the other person talk, and then slowly countering them with specific examples of why they are wrong:

> David D.: According to me, the good way to teach people the first thing that you need to do, if you are approaching an individual that you want to bring new idea into his mind, you can't just force that you are right in the first case, the best thing that you can do, you just give him time or give her time to explain his perspective, view, how he is seeing this thing, then from there is when you start telling him, though you are seeing this thing in such a way, but to me I think this is the best way on how to do it. So, you give the learner podium for conversation, yes. That is the best way and use all means possible to convince him that what you are saying is the right thing to do. But you don't, in the first case, you don't force that you are very right, yes. That is one thing that you can do, yes.
>
> Hawi D.: You should be a role model, such that you grow these indigenous crops and when the person come, he can see the importance. You are healthy because you are taking food from, I mean you are taking indigenous food, again your farm is full of indigenous crops, not that you mixed them, so you lead as an example, so he can learn from you.

Hawi D. again connects convincing others, or scaling out, back to leading by example, and how without the KPL's prefigurative practice acting as informal lighthouses none of this informal intentional learning could happen, while David D. underlines how you cannot force others to agree with you, that you need to respect their learning process. You have to wait and listen for the other person to share why they believe what they believe, so you know where to challenge their knowledge. This is backed up by research on how we learn:

> "A logical extension of the view that new knowledge must be constructed from existing knowledge is that teachers need to pay attention to the incomplete understandings, the false beliefs, and the naive renditions of concepts that learners bring with them to a given subject. […] If students' initial ideas and beliefs are ignored, the understand-ings that they develop can be very different from what the teacher intends." (National Research Council et al., 2000, p. 10)"

So, for teachers to make sure the students understand what they are saying correctly, they need to first understand what the students already know. The knowledge we learn always build upon the knowledge we already hold, which research has found even to be true for very young children who it was assumed did not hold a lot of knowledge already (National Research Council et al., 2000, pp. 10–12). While this study and book is based on the more hierarchical relationship between student and teacher found in most public school systems (National Research Council et al., 2000, p. vii), this is still relevant in the KPL context. When a farmer wants to pass on information to another farmer that the latter does not have, they will need to know which misconceptions the other farmer might hold that might make them misunderstand the knowledge they want to share, which is then also a less confrontational approach.

This also relates to the quote of Horton in chapter 7, on how the Highlander Folk School taught racial integration through prefigurative practices (Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 166–168). This is the continuation of the quote from chapter 7:

> "They [the students at Highlander, ed.] had experienced something new, so they had something positive to build on. When we started talking about it [segregation and integration, ed.], it wasn't to say: "Now, look you've changed. We were right and you were wrong." We said: "Now you've had an experience here. When you get back, you'll be dealing with people in your unions who haven't had this experience, and they're going to know you've been to an integrated school. How are you going to explain it to them?" So they started, not ever talking about how they had changed or how they had faced this problem, but with how they could explain to other people." (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 135)

Here Horton speaks to how the experience of living and studying in an integrated environment, during segregation in the US, changed the participants minds without telling them they were wrong, rather letting them experience it for themselves. This very much mirrors the KPL approach, of slowly allowing people to learn through proximity or participation in prefigurative practices. However, while Horton continues to highlight how the participants changing their minds never was made a topic of discussion, this was something the KPL members would often mention, to exactly show that they themselves had changed their minds, to reassure others that they were not judging their learning process. So, where Horton was afraid that such conversations could stigmatize the people who had their minds changed, the KPL actively talks about it to avoid stigmatization.

What not to do

As I continued asking what *not* to do when teaching others, as I did with Esther N., Diane O. and Mary N. above, two other points kept coming up: that it is wrong, and counterproductive, to force people and to judge people's learning process, which of course relates to the slow teaching. Here the KPL's prefigurative pedagogy shines through – they want to prefigure a democratic agroecological participatory food system, while treating people with the respect and care that they want reflected in their peasant feminist future. Their ends and means align because they believe this is the best way to reach those goals, just as Maeckelbergh outlines (Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 4–6). Below Margret H. is telling a story of how not forcing and not

judging is crucial. A group of people, who were initially sceptical about KPL's work, came to another meeting to hear more and were visible afraid of being turned away from the meeting because they had been critical in the past:

> Margret H.: Okay, you know you cannot force somebody, you know not everybody will agree with you, you might agree with me, she may not agree with you, you, see? So, we give them time, but maybe slowly, like there was a day, some of them disagreed, but they remembered we had a meeting and then we were surprised to see them, they just came, so they were sitting far, you see, [both laugh] they did not want to sit where we were sitting, so it was like no you should not sit far, why don't you come nearer so that also you can hear what is
>
> SW: Being said
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> Margret H.: Yes.
> […]So, it was like they were guilty, some sort of guiltiness like "ah maybe we will be chased away", but no, you know we are here to teach farmers about the organic farming, so they came, and we started teaching them about the food sovereignty, and agroecology, and now they were understanding "oh, so this is how it is supposed to work", yeah. So, they were getting it, and then after the meeting, you could hear them saying "you know so, and so didn't give us the clear about, we didn't get it clear, but now I'm getting the information more clearly", yes."

So, Margret H. also underlines how you cannot force anyone, rather giving people time to learn at their own pace, in keeping with the KPL's participatory pedagogy, and as others have outlined above. Moreover, she explains how the group of farmers afraid of being turned away because they had been critical in the past, were welcomed exactly because the KPL recognizes that everyone learns at their own pace. Most of the KPL members practiced industrial agriculture before they switched to agroecology and joined the KPL, so the movement would not have most of their members if they had turned away or judged anyone who had been initially critical.

The recognition that everyone comes to it in their own time, and that there is no guilt to first disagreeing, and then coming around, is again in line with Freire: "*Liberating education consists in acts of cognition, not transferals of information*." (Freire, 2000, p. 79). By this Freire points out that learning is not a linear deposit of knowledge and then your mind is changed, but rather a process, or as the KPL puts it is a *spiral learning* process.

Moreover, you have to meet people where they are, not to condescend but to make sure you are understood, as it is a simple fact that the less familiar you are with a topic prior to being taught about it, the more information you will need to understand it (hooks, 2010, pp. 19–21; Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 99–100), as Joseph E. points out below here. While talking about how best to space out seeds while planting, Joseph E. touches on why it is easier for some people to understand what the KPL teaches, and how practicing agroecology can feel like taking a big risk for many:

> Joseph E.: And this [spacing for planting, ed.] we tried to talk to the parents about […] they will not want to copy and they were saying "maybe that is his own thing's" they are used to planting two seeds in one hole. Until the time that the person harvested for the first time and they realized that there was high yield and then the second season it was like almost everybody now has adopted.
> […] So, there are people who are having a well-calculated risk, they want to have a well-calculated risk. […] If somebody is going to suffer let the ones that are going to join for the first time suffer, but they will not be part of it. And then they take precaution, if they see you succeeding now they join. So [laughs] and majority are such like people. If you come with something which is new, you will tell them, very few people will follow what you are doing. […] And if you teach them, and you do it now, they will wait. If it is a crop that is grown it may take a season or three months or four months, then they will just still stay there and wait to see. If they see it doing well, they copy immediately. And if they don't see it doing well, they don't.

Joseph E. is talking about how, in his cluster they teach people how to space out seeds and plant, which at first most people were very hesitant to do, as they were afraid, they would not get any crops, which is the same as no income and/or no food for the coming season. According to Joseph E., this hesitancy to new idea is normal and because most people are risk averse and will not copy new ideas until they have seen others comfortably succeeding before risking their own livelihoods. I ask Joseph E. why some people are more willing to take a risk on a new idea, such as he was when he joined the KPL, and he continues:

> SW: Right. But you didn't wait to see if manure worked or not, you have tried it yourself. Why do you think some people don't need to wait and see?
>
> Joseph E.: Well, in this my case it was a different scenario. I explained this by also telling you that, already I had a hint, from school because I did agriculture as a subject. […] Yes. So, when I did it as a subject, I had some hint on knowledge, of knowledge or practicing agriculture. So, when these people [KPL, ed.] came and they told me more about this I will easily adopt it [chasing away chickens [00:52:59] - [00:53:09]] I will easily adopt it as compared to somebody who has never heard it before, just like now, I have, some knowledge about KPL, now when somebody comes from out and now we bring a different, another person who has never heard something about KPL now you bring us together on board. […] Now, it, I will easily understand things about KPL as compared to somebody who has never
>
> SW: Heard anything
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> Joseph E.: Heard anything about it. […] Even if you bring with her something which is new it will be very easy for me to adapt it, and to understand it as a first of it, as compared to somebody who have never heard about it before
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> SW: Who have never heard of it before. So, in order to accept something new, it has to not be new? You have to have heard about it before?
>
> Joseph E.: No, again, I would like to say, it depends on the convincing power, or the ability to deliver. Because we have teachers, but we have different teachers. […]So, it depends again with how you explain yourself, to that person[…]. And people have got different ability even

> in delivering […]. There is such a teacher that he comes or a tutor that when he comes to class it is like he leaves the class, leaving you having understood almost everything, and there is another one if he comes to teach there are somethings that you may understand but some you, you get difficulty to do what, to understand. […] Yes, so this also may cause a problem. So, depending on how you explain yourself, can be convincing and it may make somebody to readily accept, but I was just trying to say that, that I did not mean that if you have never heard it, for the first time now even if it is explained to you, you cannot understand, no I never meant that. […] But I meant that it is easier for somebody who has a hint about something to understand it faster as compared to the other.[…] So the word is here, to understand faster than somebody who has never had a hint before.

Joseph E. explains that he was more open to the knowledge he met in the KPL, as he had already had an introduction in school, as mentioned in chapter 5, which had given him some prior knowledge. Moreover, he points out that we all learn differently and that all teachers have different skill levels when it comes to teaching, which is why it is always helpful to have prior knowledge of a topic when you start learning about it. It is not necessary, but it is helpful. The first time we encounter new information, we are more likely to be sceptical, but the more times we hear it, the more open we are to understanding it (hooks, 1994, pp. 42–43). This is true whether the first time the farmers hear about agroecology, or indigenous farming practices, is in school or through the KPL, and, if they have encountered it before meeting the KPL, it makes the work of the KPL easier.

This is another motivation for the KPL's to work with schools, colleges and universities, as described in chapter 5. Moreover, Joseph E.'s assertion that most people will want to see it for themselves, goes back to their use of prefiguration as a teaching tool – how it is highly effective as it can convince even the most ardent critiques through its tangible arguments of results. And these tangible arguments speak to the *need* of the community, to their livelihood, and these needs are often both the motivation for switching to agroecology *and* the reason that people are hesitant to switch as large changes feel very risky, as Joseph E. points to here. Furthermore, this again illuminates the power of the prefigurative pedagogy, as it can potentially set some minds at ease *and* inspire at the same time. So, scaling out requires the same kind of critical peasant feminist pedagogy that the movements uses internally to scale deep. Lastly, this points to, once again, that there is no universal approach that will work every time as people have different dispositions – sceptical or open – different levels of prior knowledge, and because teachers have different gifts, something several members focus on. Again, prefiguration as a teaching tool is something that works whether or not you have the gift of gab – the results speak for themselves, making it more accessible for members to teach their communities. But is it really necessary?

Is preaching even necessary?

Not everyone in the KPL thought that the preaching element was necessary or needed – could the members not count on the lighthouse effect of their prefiguration? Often, these were members who had neighbours who had come up to them without any prompting wanting to learn about their practices.

SW: So, when you teach this to others, how do you teach them?

Penina G.: I sometimes invite them to see for themselves.

Jaramogi G.: The people after seeing how beautiful my plot is will just raise and come to inquire from me the method I use in planting and growing the corn.

SW: So, you invite people?

Penina G.: I invite people, friends

SW: And you wait for people?

Jaramogi G.: Yes

So, Jaramogi G. does not have to preach, as people come to him voluntarily because they see his fields and are curious about which planting techniques he uses for growing corn. At the same time Jaramogi G. was one of the few people who never experienced negative reactions when talking about agroecology, of course most likely due to selection bias, as he only talks to people who approach him because they are already interested in learning more. And prefigurative movements that I have encountered in the past in Europe (Aamand & Wathne, 2017, pp. 116–120) have this exact approach exactly because they want to avoid forcing their agenda on anyone. Looking at the above account of how the KPL approaches this teaching – letting people talk and understanding their situation and their previous knowledge – could very easily be portrayed as manipulative salesmanship, which disregard the autonomy and intelligence of the person they are talking to.

And is preaching necessarily only good? Can it not be invasive? Yes, without a doubt it can be done in invasive ways, however, trying to convince someone to change their mind does not inherently mean you believe they are any less intelligent, quite the contrary it can mean you do trust that they will be open to seeing the world another way. Not engaging can be a way of giving up, and exactly thinking people will not be smart enough to understand. Freire exactly argues how changing society has to happen in dialogue with the people that you want to support, because, if you do not trust the people to be capable of change why do you support the people?

> "Denial of communion in the revolutionary process, avoidance of dialogue with the people under the pretext of organizing them, of strengthening revolutionary power, or of ensuring a united front, is really a fear of freedom. It is fear of or lack of faith in the people. But if the people cannot be trusted, there is no reason for liberation; in this case the revolution is not even carried out *for the people*, but "*by*" *the people for the leaders:* a complete self-negation."(Freire, 2000, p. 129)

This of course is not to say that there can be no critique of the way the KPL *preaches*, rather it is to say that simply by trying to convince others they are not forcing or disrespecting anyone as long as they live up to their own pedagogical approach. Quite the contrary, they preach *because* they want to involve the community, and trust that people can learn on their own. Over and over again it is reiterated that you cannot

and should not *force* anyone, which is why they exactly see the learning process as slow, making sure to centre topics that people are interested in, which then ends up shaping the practices of the KPL. However, Peter E.'s experience with napier grass as described above, leads me to two more critical questions about this strategy: Who can effectively preach what they practice? And does the KPL have time to teach slowly?

Who gets to preach what they practice?

While leading by example can be a good motivation, inside and outside of the movement, it is of course not a neutral method which will have the same effect regardless of who employs it. The actions of certain people in the community will carry more weight because of their position – if a respected elder man of the local church speaks out on an issue, he will be listened to more than a young woman who is not married, as an example. To be clear, this is not to set up an either-or dichotomy – I also met people who were listened to despite of not holding "traditional" authority and the other way around, but simply to point out that this methodology will not be used by everyone to the same effect.

Below, Peter E. talks about how his neighbours did not listen to him about planting napier grass to prevent soil erosion, until they experienced serious mudslides on their farms, and saw that he avoided mudslides because he planted napier grass. So, for him leading by example was not enough, he also needed an external crisis – serious mudslides – to be taken seriously:

> Peter E.: Yeah, previously I used to teach people about growing napier grass and that they should not also burn the remains of plants, crops after harvesting. So, after harvesting normally I lined the remains at the same time plant napier grass, so by good or bad luck it has been raining heavily so my farm is not affected by the surface run of but those other people who used to burn or who are not growing napier grass their farms have been destroyed by soil erosion. And initially they used to say that I, maybe whatever I am doing is outdated, but currently they trust and believe what I am saying and they are even going for, for seeds from me. So that is also one way of how to convince these people with the negative attitude towards what we are advocating for.

As described above, Peter E. grows napier grass to prevent soil erosion, and he has tried teaching this to his community, as he lives in a very hilly area prone to soil erosion. However, most of his community did not listen to him, until they were then severely affected by soil erosion, and he was not. Even though Peter E. is an adult married man with children, he could not just assume that people would copy what he was doing. This demonstrates the necessity of *preaching what you practice*: without Peter E. talking about *why* he planted napier grass, his neighbours might not have known to make the connection between his actions and his farm being safe from the mudslides after the fact. The main tenant of what the KPL terms leading by example is again the practice part of it – the actually lived experience of practicing agroecology and allowing their neighbours to follow along with their journey. And unfortunately, sometimes people are not open to the lessons until something has gone wrong for them, even when the lessons are coming from a married adult man with children.

It should be noted of course, that while agroecological methods can protect farmers from some of the issues mentioned above, like all other practices, agroecology has its limits, and other factors of course are also important. Holt-Giménez et al., make this exact point exactly about farmers using agroecology to prevent soil erosion in Central America. While the farmers using agroecology where more likely to be protected against soil erosion, they point to how access to land in secure areas plays a big role as well;

> "The steeper the hillside, the greater the difference in agroecological resistance between the two farms – until the combination of rain intensity and steepness became so great that the differences in resistance between the two farms collapsed. Agroecological farms were destroyed just as thoroughly as conventional farms. The lesson was not lost on villagers: If you farm on slopes that are too steep (because you are poor), agroecology will not save you." (Holt-Giménez et al., 2021, p. 2)

Agroecology is thereby both the strategy of the dispossessed to make up for lack of access to good land or other resources, while at the same time being a conscious value-based decision about what the best strategy is to solve these problems. But as Holt-Giménez et al. point out in the quote above, there are limits to how much these strategies can compensate for structural inequalities, such as access to land that is not at risk for soil erosion, which is why addressing these inequalities also needs to be part of the solution. However, as I have mentioned earlier, this thesis will not go into depths with the KPL's strategy for scaling up, rather the focus here is on scaling out and scaling deep.

So, the point is not that napier grass will protect against soil erosion 100 % of the time, rather the point is that Peter E.'s neighbours were not willing to listen as they considered his solutions *backwards*. Unfortunately, what in the end convinced them was losing their crops, and in the face of such destruction, it begs the question – do the KPL members have time to teach slowly?

Do they have time to teach slowly?

One of the first questions on my mind about this strategy is whether, with all the crises and concrete everyday problems the world and the members of the KPL are facing, do they have time to teach slowly? While teaching slowly definitely makes sense from a critical pedagogy, participatory, approach, it can be critiqued for exactly being slow. The effects of climate change are already destroying the livelihoods of so many peasants in Kenya, and while agroecology of course cannot fix all that damage, especially as much of it is also caused by pollution in other parts of the globe, it can help peasants become more resilient in the face of it and mitigate it in the long run. For example, soil erosion was a big problem in one cluster as mentioned above, partly due to extreme rainfall, and a remarkably simple practice that helps is growing and planting napier grass, mulching harvested plants, mixed with using organic fertilizer based on cow manure.

As Peter E. explains above, many in his community saw his agroecological practices as backwards and did not take it seriously until they saw how it protected him from surface run of. Often members would hear their practices being called analog, and compared to the industrial agriculture, which was often considered digital, as shown above in chapter 6. Learning through the success of others can be a valuable way to learn, but it did

come at the cost of those families' farms. And on a larger scale, many of the practices that are causing climate change need to stop as soon as possible, so we globally can start mitigating the damage done and prevent further damage.

However, what was the alternative for Peter E. here? To force his neighbours to grow napier grass, mulch and use manure? Even setting aside how this would not be respectful of the agency of his neighbours, and how he would even go about forcing them, this would most likely also not lead to sustain changed behaviour. As Mier y Terán et al. show, top-down teaching, through extension officers, often did not yield as good or strong results as farmer-to-farmer methods, as the extension officer approach did not *mobilize* the peasants in the same way (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 539–540; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 20). And while we do need urgent climate action globally and locally, we also need *sustained* climate action globally and locally. And again, the prefigurative nature of the KPL means that they both believe it is *wrong* to force people to believe something *and* that they believe it is not *useful* as it will not yield good results. So, even if they could force others to do so, it would not be in keeping with the KPL's own critical pedagogy and their emphasis on participation. This leaves a dilemma for climate activists in general, and for the KPL in particular. They need to bring people onboard which takes time, but they also need to move fast to prevent the climate crisis from worsening – how do they do both? I do not have an answer to this, but I think it is an important conversation to have honestly. So, who are these people that the KPL is trying to convince?

Who are they teaching?

When the KPL is creating these informal intentional learning opportunities, the members are mainly focusing on their close physical communities (e.g., neighbours, villages, neighbourhoods), their religious communities, and the different associations and communal groups they are a part of (e.g., mutual support groups, women's groups). Of course, these are not three distinct groups, and often people are both neighbours, in the same church and in the same women's group.

Again the importance of networks is key in the KPL's context, in terms of scaling out (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 117–126). Moreover, all of these networks are important to the KPL members, which could further encourage the care and respect they show through teaching slowly. Consequently, in these settings, the respectful slow teaching approach described above might be even more crucial *because* this is informal learning, where the KPL members are trying to insert the ideas of the KPL into these contexts, sometimes relentlessly. As mentioned above Michael E. was even called *agroecology* by some of the people in his network, because he would always bring it up when he was given the chance, and it was the same for many members.

> Jane A.: Since I joined this KPL I have taught very many, especially on the use of local vegetables, that, how good they are […]. Before I had, I joined this KPL I have been using the commercial vegetables, like the bought, purchased kales, but I have changed the mind and I

> am teaching women, many people to go back to the indigenous vegetables. And how I have found these people and able to teach them is I have met some in the church, and I have integrated the KPL knowledge to them. Before the coming of KPL, we had no knowledge on this, but since it came, we have really changed and back to the indigenous food. The emphasis is on the local vegetables because they have medicinal value that are very important to our health. We have all along met either one or two, and I've met one or two, then to teach them the same, the good use of these local vegetables. And I am sure the more we continue to learn we shall also do the same to teach them.

Jane A. uses herself as an example of the learning process, as she used to practice industrial agriculture before joining the KPL and learning about indigenous crops. Now she teaches others what she has learned through the KPL and through this teaching aims to exactly scale out the KPL. Being persistent while respectful means you have to be prepared to have these conversations several times, for a long time, as Mary A., a women's convener in her cluster, can attest to:

> SW: Okay, so this is the second interview [laughing] with you. Uhm, yesterday when we finished, we were talking about, the power of examples and I was thinking because as the woman convener, you were talking about also going to a funeral, and whether there is also a need for examples of how we treat the women?
>
> Mary A.: It's good to harmoniously speak to these women for you to be able to convince them, because they don't quickly respond to anything new that comes about. So, one way of winning them, you have to take your time to talk to them, elaborate, and you must also be able to prepare them psychologically in relation to what you are going to tell them, because most of the time whenever you do approach them in form of convening a meeting, the first that, they have got a number of questions for you to answer. And if you are not patient, patient and tolerant enough, you may not be able to convince them, so I am taking much of my time, and I am talking to them when in a relaxed atmosphere that is when at least I am able to pass the idea, and also the information to them.
>
> SW: So there needs to be informal meetings, before you can have a formal meeting?
>
> […]Mary A.: Ok, what I do is, during the church service, that is when I meet them and maybe during, at times like the burial time, and also women in our community we have what we call self-help groups, so I normally meet them and I belong to one of those self-help groups, whereby I am able to integrate the viva [KPL, ed.] issues in those particular groups and those faith based organization like the church.
>
> SW: And the self-help groups they are not church based? What, what are they organized around?
>
> Mary A.: They are not all church based, just actually women collecting themselves together, and come up with their own ideas and proposals on how to better their lives, yeah. We have a self-help group that normally meets twice a week, and whenever we meet at least we have what we call a remitting of shares in form of money, with a common goal of assisting and also the uplifting the standards of our members.

[…]
SW: And has anyone from the self-help group joined the KPL?

Mary A.: Okay, there are six already who have joined from the self-help group

SW: Wow! Hongera [laughing]

So, Mary A. talks about taking every opportunity she can to speak to the women in her community about their rights, and the KPL, but that this requires patience and tolerance. She speaks of having to *prepare the women psychologically*, in line with Joseph E. quotes above, on how prior information eases learning. But, since these women have not learned about peasant feminism or their rights before, Mary A. does the preparing work and the teaching work all at once. So, first, this quote highlights how their scaling out is both aimed at agroecology, *and* on the connections between agroecology and peasant feminism, as Mary A. teaches these women about their rights and about agroecology and how it can help support gender equity. Second, Mary A. also highlights exactly the slow process of scaling out in this manner, and how the KPL members tries to use every opportunity they get to lead the conversation onto agroecology and peasant feminism, as she aims to scale out both, which there are more examples of in chapter 9. It is this relentless preaching of what they practice, not just practicing what they preach, that is key to the KPL's strategy for scaling out.

So, a lot of the KPL women's focus on scaling out is motivated by gender equity and peasant feminism and reaching the women in their communities. Moreover, as mentioned in chapter 5, one cluster has focused on eradicating FGM, by hosting information events. And a lot of the more formal movement teaching that the KPL Women's collectives do outside of the movement, are these workshops on the rights of women and girls, the pitfalls of microcredit, or the risks of FGM. The latter are usually arranged with the girls at risk of FGM, for their parents to try and convince them not to force their daughters. In their study of the drivers behind scaling agroecology, Mier y Terán et al. did not find any explicit focus on including women in their five cases (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 21), and case studies in Spain and Colombia have shown a lack of focus or difficulty in having conversations on gendered issues when scaling out (Vispo & Romero-Niño, 2021), while others have begrudged the lack of a feminism analysis within the academic literature (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 1–4). The KPL provides an interesting contrast to these movements.

This could be contextual. Since the new constitution in 2010, there is a more general focus on gender parity in Kenya. So, while there for sure is not gender parity in Kenya currently (State Department for Gender, Kenya, 2019), there is a general sense that it is something important to strive for, by actively prioritizing it through for example quotas. It could also be that Maathai and the Green Belt Movement has made the connection between gender and environmentalism more mainstream in Kenya, or that the KPL is a quite young movement, which started while gender was a major focus within LVC which then influenced the KPL. As I have not done intensive case comparison, these are of course only educated guesses. Moreover, it

should be noted, that Mier y Terán et al.'s work is from at least 5-6 years ago, so this might have also changed within those five movements since then. However, it is interesting how central gendered issues is for KPL in their scaling out, which both demonstrates that it is possible to combine the two and encourages more research on agroecology movements in Eastern Africa to see if it is a larger trend. However, the members of the KPL talking to non-members about gendered issues were often the women of the movement, which brings me to the weaknesses of the strategy of leading by example and practicing what you preach – does it leave an undue burden on certain marginalized groups, to be the ones teaching?

The burden of preaching

When the teaching process is slow, this results in weeks, potentially months, of listening to the arguments against agroecology and peasant feminism, which when it comes to industrial agriculture might not be such a burden. However, whether this is a bearable experience for issues that are more closely tied to people's lived experience is a doubt that has arisen in my mind. Can you as a woman or a disabled person cope with, and more importantly should you be expected to cope with, listening to people explain over and over again all the ways in which they view you as unworthy of rights and respect, before you can then plead your case? Moreover, can you as a member of the affected group expect that people will actually be truthful with you about their opinion or even listen to you?

Both having men tell other men how women deserve to be treated equally, and having everyone witness women being respected and their rights protected within the KPL, seem to be the strategy within the movement in terms of scaling peasant feminism deep as explained in chapter 7. In other words, it is a mix of allies who talk to other people like themselves and visible people from the affected group prefiguring a different role. However, it does seem like the burden of this teaching, especially when scaling out, still mainly falls on the women within the movement, not exclusively but overwhelmingly. Also, this could be based on the standpoint approach to research described in chapter 6, where the affected group are seen as the most powerful advocates for a cause and the ones that should be leading it. This does, however, not answer the question of whether this is an undue burden on this group, which remains open as I was not able to return and ask this of the large number of women of the movement.

Concluding remarks

The KPL gives a great, East African, example of a theory and practice of how to scale out agroecology and peasant feminism to sceptical farmers through their place-based, participatory prefigurative pedagogy. First, the KPL aims to have every household in the KPL act as a lighthouse, as explained in chapter 7, and secondly, the members also *intentionally* create informal and incidental learning opportunities for their neighbours and community members. They both use the lighthouse effect while also actively bringing people to the lighthouses that they create. The KPL not only practices what they preach, they also preach what they practice. This is a theory of scaling out that both expects resistance and assumes that agroecology and

peasant feminism can be scaled out at the same time, something other agroecology movements struggle with. Scaling out on the micro level to sceptical or even hostile peasants through farmer-to-farmer teaching, is something the literature rarely addresses explicitly, and it is a main focus in the KPL and one of the main contributions of this chapter. The three main tactics of the KPL's strategy of scaling out are, first, leading by example, second, preaching what you practice, and third encouraging their surrounding community to do their own experiments. Sometimes, one of the three is enough for people to be convinced, other times all three are needed for people to be convinced. KPL members would for example encourage their neighbours and wider community to experiment by planting GMO and indigenous seeds side by side and seeing the difference for themselves. The KPL is trusting these teaching methodologies, they are trusting the techniques of agroecology, and they are trusting the learner to honestly and competently engage with both (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 539). This theory and practice of scaling out, is thereby, both an important part of the KPL's pedagogy and a natural extension of it. Below in table 5 I summarize the main take aways from chapter 8 and show how their practices and political theory shape one another when it comes to scaling out.

Table 5 Main take aways from chapter 8, self-made

Main take aways from chapter 8		
	Practice ⟺	**Political Theory**

The work of the KPL featured in chapter 8	• Encouraging non-members to do research
	• Preaching what you practice to every community member or group they get the opportunity to talk to about agroecology and peasant feminism
	• Teaching in a dialogue based and participatory way that is empathetic
	• Prefiguring and teaching both agroecology and peasant feminism
		• A pessimistic analysis of the world economy as neo-agro-colonialism. They cannot rely on the lighthouse effect and must intentionally create informal and incidental learning opportunities for their communities
		  • Some members did think it was enough to rely on the lighthouse effect
		• Unlearning is an important part of learning, and can be a slow process
		• A recognition that learning processes are individual and that they cannot happen through:
		  • Simply stating the other person is wrong
		  • Forcing the other person to learn
		  • Judging the other person's learning process
		• Using the same critical, place-based dialogical pedagogy inside and outside of the movement is the only ethical and best approach to scaling out

Contributions to the literature	• **Agroecology:**
	  • Adding more East African cases to the literature
	  • The KPL highlights that it is possible to scale out both agroecology and peasant feminism at the same time
	  • The KPL shows how to scale out on the micro level to farmers who are uninterested or hostile to agroecology and peasant feminism
	  • The KPL demonstrates the connections between pedagogy and prefiguration
	• **Social Movement literature**
	  • Adding more East African cases to the literature
	  • The KPL demonstrates the connections between pedagogy and prefiguration
	  • The KPL is intentionally creating informal and incidental learning opportunities for people outside of the movement

Remembering the KPL's optimistic view of knowledge as empowering, described in chapter 5 and 6, some readers will probably be surprised that the KPL does not believe that agroecology and peasant feminism will simply spread naturally like light emanating from a lighthouse (Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 3, 7–11). However, because of the KPL's structural analysis of the global economy as being constituted as neo-agro-colonialism (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, p. 21), and the demobilizing narrative presented in chapter 6, about how agroecology is backwards and analog to industrial agricultures digital, is a narrative that is propped up by huge financial interests. The KPL sees themselves as being in a war with industrial agriculture which profits heavily on the exploitation of peasants, the earth and the denigration of indigenous knowledge. And when the companies selling GMOs and the chemical fertilizers that are made to match aggressively market these with loans and narratives of modernity, it requires the KPL to actively counter them. From their position of critical traditionalism, they do not have a simple linear idea of history and do not expect history to naturally move in a linear progression.

However, this pessimistic view of the global economy allows the KPL to be optimistic about the individual farmer they are trying to convince, as the enemies are the larger structural issues not the individual farmer who was convinced by the de-mobilizing narrative. This is in line with the literature on scaling, which underscores that it is important to have a mobilizing discourse that connects the work to larger structural issues (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 13–14; M.-L. Moore et al., 2015, pp. 76–78). Moreover, from such an analysis it seems naïve to expect that all farmers will be automatically interested in agroecology as the messaging against it is so strong, which is why it is crucial to have a scaling out strategy that is prepared to deal with push back.

In this sense, the KPL aims to scale out by scaling deep, using the same place-based, peasant feminist pedagogy they use within the movement, while adding the layer of actively seeking people out just as the industrial farming companies are. Another reason why the KPL considers it important to preach agroecology and peasant feminism as well as practice it, is that learning is a slow process that requires us to *unlearn* what

we already know. As described in chapter 7, the KPL uses prefigurative pedagogy to create a formation process which changes the consciousness of the people they come in contact with, through both processes of learning an unlearning (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 79–85; Freire, 2000, pp. 65–67, 93–95; Luchies, 2014). These processes are dependent on building trust, and they all happen at different speeds depending on the individual they are engaging with.

In the FGDs and interviews we often talked about what *not* to do, when trying to convince sceptical farmers and the three overarching points were: First, you should never start by saying the other person is wrong, because it will simply make them defensive since they honestly believe they are right. In line with Horton's approach to teaching integration through prefiguration at the Highlander Folk School, the KPL lets the experience speak for itself. One of the reasons that *leading by example* is seen as such a strong pedagogical strategy within the KPL is exactly that it allows people to learn (and un-learn) at their own pace while following the progress of the KPL members. At the same time the *preaching what you practice*, strategy makes sure that people are seeing the progress being made. A good example is Peter E. teaching his community about how growing napier grass and using manure can prevent soil erosion. None of his neighbours listened to him until they all experienced severe soil erosion and he did not, and because he had been preaching about these agroecological practices they all knew what to attest his success to, and what to copy going forward.

The second thing KPL members would agree one should never do when teaching is to force anyone, as it is disrespectful and will not work. Teaching requires building trust and allowing people to learn at their own pace. And third, do not judge other people's learning process as it is shaped by their experiences and life circumstances. According to the KPL, how quick we are to adopt new practices all depends on how risk averse we are, how much prior information we have and how well it is explained to us. And because learning can be such a slow process, convincing sceptical farmers can require several interactions before they are convinced, and in all these interactions a non-judgemental approach is important. Margret H. tells a story of a group of farmers who had been critical in their first interaction with the KPL, but then had changed their minds and showed up to a meeting after some time had passed. However, these people who had initially been critical were nervous about showing up to another later meeting as they feared being ridiculed for their earlier criticism. Margret H. told this story to illustrate how the KPL does not judge farmers who were initially critical. Moreover, most of the members of the KPL are farmers who previously practiced industrial agriculture and then switched to agroecology, so if the KPL would shun or judge such farmers they would have very few members. So, while the KPL tries to avoid initial conflict, in the same way as Horton, by not confronting people with how they believe they are wrong, they differ from Horton when it comes to explicitly acknowledging that people have changed their minds. While Horton saw it as potentially stigmatizing to bring attention to how some people changed – in this case changed from being against to

being for integration – the KPL sees talking about how people changed their minds as a way to avoid shame and stigma: they show that there is no shame in changing your mind, when presented with new information. Moreover, the KPL members would take their outset in the situation of the person they were talking to – are they a young woman looking to have an independent income? Are they a crop farmer? Do they have livestock? Are they struggling with soil erosion? This interest into the lived reality of the people they were trying to convince is deeply rooted in their participatory pedagogy and purpose of the movement: to prefigure a peasant feminist food production. And as mentioned in chapter 5 and 6, the only way that agroecology can be a tool which can best serve the communities in which the KPL exists, it must be anchored in the context. And the only way to find out how to serve the community, is to engage with the community. In this way the KPL uses the ethics of PAR in their scaling out efforts.

The people the KPL aims these efforts at are their neighbours, people in their religious communities, people in their self-help groups, and people in the wider local community. This highlights again how crucial the movement aspect of agroecology is to scaling agroecology, and networks are crucial to the scaling out efforts of the KPL (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 117–126). This is especially visible in the origins of the clusters that existed when I visited Kenya in 2019 – the clusters were either started by a person local to that area who had purposefully or accidentally visited an already existing KPL cluster and become inspired, or they were started by a person who was already part of an existing cluster in one region who wanted to start a cluster in the region where their family lived.

However, the experience of Peter E., raises some critical questions of this strategy. First, it questions whether the strategy is too closely tied to the social standing of the person preaching, in terms of getting people to listen. And second, while Peter E.'s neighbours learned to appreciate agroecology, their farms had to get destroyed before they listened, which also begs the question if the KPL has time to teach slowly when the problems facing farmers have severe consequences. Especially the last question is also relevant for other social movements fighting climate change, and unfortunately there are no easy answers. Because, as the KPL points out, forcing others to adopt agroecology is not possible and will not result in long term change, and then how do you rush a learning and unlearning process?

Lastly, a particularly important point and contribution to the literature from this chapter is that the KPL aims to scale out both agroecology and peasant feminism, at the same time. While the KPL sees the oppression members face due to their gender, or age or ability, as intimately tied to their fight for a different food system, other similar movements struggle with that, and are often criticised for forgetting gendered issues (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 1–4; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 21; Vispo & Romero-Niño, 2021). As mentioned above, this could be explained by the prevalent focus on gender equity in Kenya since the 2010 constitution, or that the KPL is a young movement born into LVC during a time where peasant feminism was at the forefront of the struggle. Moreover, and as shown in chapter 6, having an intersectional

peasant feminist analysis at the heart of the work means that the KPL does not compartmentalize gender to one struggle, and agroecology to another as they fundamentally look at the world as interconnected. But it should be noted that it was mainly women scaling out, and scaling deep, peasant feminism, which raises the question of whether this strategy places an undue burden on the most marginalized groups within the KPL. However, to answer why the KPL manages to do what others cannot requires further comparative work.

This chapter and the previous chapter thereby, shows how the KPL uses prefigurative pedagogy to both scale deep and scale out the movement. As mentioned above, the data this thesis is based on, cannot speak comprehensively to the KPL's approach to scaling up, and therefore, this is of course not a comprehensive picture of the KPLs approach to scaling agroecology. Moreover, this thesis never aimed to assess the outcomes of the movement, rather it aims to illuminate the strategies that the KPL employs to reach these goals, and the theory behind them.

Instead, these chapters add to the literature on social movements, by highlighting how the KPL exactly intentionally aims to create informal learning opportunities for their own members and for their communities, and that these are not simply "*unintended consequences*" (Bosi et al., 2016, p. 7). Rather the KPL is intentionally creating these informal and incidental learning opportunities for people outside of the movement. Of course, doing it, because they hope people will join the KPL, but they are mainly aiming for people to adopt agroecological practices, whether or not they end up joining the movement. Moreover, this refers back to the outset of this thesis which is to take the theories created by social movements seriously on their own terms. In the last chapter I dive even deeper into the political theory of the KPL by looking at how they define prefiguration from their class position as *low-income subsistence farmers in the global south*, and how this challenges the literature on social movements using prefiguration as a strategy.

9. Living the future, they want and *need* today

While some of the most famous prefigurative movements are in the global south, such as the Zapatistas in Chiapas, MST in Brazil, or the Rojava revolution, the literature rarely engages with prefigurative movements in the global south unless they reach the size, success, and fame of such movements. Moreover, the current literature on prefiguration skews towards movements in the global north that are predominantly white and middle-class (Monticelli, 2022a, p. 6; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 13–18). This skewed sample has led some of the critics of prefigurative movements claim that prefiguration is a strategy reserved for the wealthy with plenty of time to experiment (Monticelli, 2022b, p. 23). Prefiguration as a term, while coined in the 1970s did not really take up space in the academic literature until the rise of the alter-globalization movement and it's prefigurative protest events (Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 204–205; Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 181–182). The assumption is that if you are struggling to make ends meet you could not care less about endangered species or participatory democracy. For many, the experiences of the different square movements of the late 2000s and early 2010s cemented this belief:

> "Some critics, including Occupy activist Jonathan M. Smucker (2014), describe the prefigurative tendency within the movement as an expression of its middle-class status. According to Smucker, it is exactly the socio-economic background and privileged material circumstances of many activists in advanced capitalist nations that pushes them towards less contentious types of action, focusing more on what he calls 'a project of private liberation' than on 'the larger common realm of power and politics' (Smucker, 2014). […] Imaginative self-organizing and radical everyday practices are accused of being a luxury that only people with enough time, health, energy and wealth can afford." (Monticelli, 2022b, p. 23)

In this chapter, I claim that this notion of prefiguration as a plaything of the middle-class is something stemming from only looking at movements mainly consisting of people based in the middle-class. This chapter challenges this, rather simplistic, critique of prefiguration by showing how the KPL brings capitalism and class into their theorization of prefiguration. Additionally, this chapter adds the political theory of a rural global south based movement to the literature on prefiguration (della Porta, 2015, pp. 4–10; Monticelli, 2022b, p. 23). The KPL highlights this class aspect by showing how prefiguration can be aimed at exactly fulfilling basic needs while building a better world, and this chapter answers the question: How does the Kenyan Peasants Leagues's context affect their theory of prefiguration? In short, prefiguration for the KPL aims at creating livelihoods and organizing in ways that enable the survival of their members, moving the focus away from lifestyle and spectacle.

As highlighted in chapter 2, this thesis subscribes to the view that prefiguration is a strategy chosen by movements who believe that it is the best and most effective way to reach their goals of social change (della Porta, 2018, p. 15; Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 13–15, 2022, p. 204; Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 182–185). As shown above, the KPL is at its core a prefigurative movement. The core of the movement is of course the KPL's prefiguration of a new agricultural model through agroecology, based on their intersectional peasant

feminism. Moreover, the KPL prefigures different gendered relations within the organization of the movement (chapter 7 and 8), and they prefigure a different educational system in the way they teach inside and outside of the movement (chapter 5 and 6). So, the KPL prefigures a more sustainable, participatory and peasant feminist food production, and society, in the way they organize themselves, and in the way they interact with their communities. While the KPL members are living the future they *want* – a future that aligns with their ideals, hopes and dreams – being in the precarious position of small-scale peasants in Kenya, means they also *need* the world to change to be able to both survive and thrive, as they are fighting capitalism, (neo)colonialism and patriarchy. They are living the future they *want* and *need* today. As mentioned, I view class as the socio-economic position of a group or person, within the national or global economy (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 53–54), and I define the KPL's class position as low-income subsistence farmers in the global south. As mentioned above this definition points to the KPL member's everyday experience of struggling to make ends meet within an industrial agricultural model, and their position within the neo-agro-colonial economy.

Prefiguration is about both survival and resistance for the KPL, who in their political theory of prefiguration provide an intersectional framework that is adept at grasping these dynamics in especially social movements based in the global south. Complexities which theories produced in the global north tend to miss (Accornero & Gravante, 2022, pp. 196–197; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, pp. 1–4). The KPL's practice of prefiguration as one aimed at livelihoods and organizing is not a new practice, especially in the global south, as peasant and environmental movements have been using prefiguration in this way for decades. Rather the point is that this perspective has not taken up enough space within the literature on prefiguration in social movements. The best way for theory to catch up to activism, is to listen to the theories created by the people engaging in said activism, as it inherently allows it to be more contextually sensitive and relevant. Moreover, theories are, and should be, forever changing, just as the activism we are trying to understand through those theories (Horton & Freire, 1990, p. 101).

I start this chapter by describing the challenges and needs motivating the KPL's prefiguration of agroecology and peasant feminism, by giving concrete examples of how they prefigure, first, agroecology and second, peasant feminism. Then in the last part of the chapter I dive more into the KPL's political theory of prefiguration, which is exactly found in their motivation for wanting to build the future they want and need today.

Prefiguring climate friendly agriculture and stable livelihoods

Most KPL members live in rural areas, or *up country*, as most people call it. They live in villages that span many kilometres of fields, roads, forests and rivers, often connected to a small commercial area, with shops, markets, churches, schools and clinics of various sizes. Walking in these landscapes, going to the home hosting the day's FGD or visiting people's fields it was often pointed out how the surroundings were

changing. Depending on the number of peasants growing cash-crops the forests might be disappearing, the pesticides used might have brought more aggressive weeds like striker weed and depending on the local industry and planting of ecologically inappropriate trees, like eucalyptus, which is very popular with tree planting campaigns, the rivers could be completely dried up or too polluted to use. Climate change mainly wrought havoc through changing rain patterns that made planting harder to plan; in some areas that meant drought, while it meant excessive rain in other areas, leading to soil erosion and floods. So, for the members feeling the brunt of climate change mitigating future effects is not enough, they also have to adapt to the current conditions, while working to restore and prevent further damage.

> SW: And I, you are very passionate about climate change
>
> Michael E.: Yeah, climate change and climate justice. Now, you know that is one thing that when I looked at all the collectives that we have, I saw it as the, the main cause of all these other problems. Why am I saying this? Because of climate change, you'll find our government going out even to seek for loans, for maybe disaster preparation, and maybe to have some money in preparation for, in case of any disaster like floods, drought or whatever. But now, what is causing this? It is the climate change. So, I was seeing that if at all we can curb this issue of climate change, then we will be solving so many things. Then again, if there is hunger, you'll find that climate change is the main contributor.
> […]So, hunger will lead to going for loans. So, debts you find that it is like maybe a by-product of climate change. Okay, then you come to agroecology. So, in KPL we believe that agroecology is one of the ways that, to help in solving climate change. Then again, I am seeing that it is the climate change that has given birth to issue that of agroecology.
> […]Because if we can practice agroecology, we are seeing that now we are solving climate change. So, that's why I am so passionate on matters on climate change, because I am seeing that it is a very big problem.

Michael E. explains that climate change is at the root of many of the problems that face farmers in Kenya. First, he lists the many disasters such as floods and droughts, and how it drives the Kenyan government to take additional loans to handle these crises. These loans then become a major motivator for the government to keep pushing export focused industrial agriculture, as explained in chapter 3. Second, the same crises that lead the government to loans, can cause hunger, which Michael E. explains will also lead farmers to take out loans to be able to buy food, or agricultural inputs. This is why Michael E. sees climate change as one of the central challenges the KPL faces, and why he considers prefiguring a different food system through agroecology to be the answer, as it can both provide stable livelihoods for farmers, and mitigate climate change. So, prefiguring an agroecological food system is crucial, especially considering that most of the members of the KPL are low-income subsistence farmers in the global south.

Some members of the KPL would refer to themselves, as poor, while others did not, clarifying that poverty is more than a lack of money, and that they were often quite resourceful in other areas. Therefore, I think it is more accurate to use the term *low-income subsistence farmers in the global south,* when referring to the class

position of the KPL, as many members did not have a lot of money available but did have access to other resources such as land, agricultural-inputs, knowledge and social connections. The KPL would often help its members mobilize these resources in a different way than they had before, for example through agroecology and subsistence farming rather than growing cash crops. Subsistence farming is not derogatory, rather subsistence farming is seen as a powerful resistance tool in food sovereignty movements as it makes the farmers less dependent on the market economy (P. M. Rosset & Martínez-Torres, 2012, p. 17). Therefore, low-income subsistence farmer in the global south excellently mirrors the complex class position of the KPL members.

Young people also face considerable challenges when it comes to access to land, access to further education, and being able to find jobs that can sustain themselves, and potentially their young families, in the absence of access to land. Young people move to urban areas looking for white collar jobs, but often coming up empty handed:

> SW: Do you think it's true that the youth don't like farming, or do you think that it's a misunderstanding?
>
> Paul T.: Yeah they have told the truth [phone rings [01:24:15], Mildred T. picks up and leaves the group], because there is difference, okay, this area you can see some of the youths they have gone to towns, the other village you can find there are youth, so those, these youths you see, who remain here, they are united. And if they are not, those youths, you heard them saying there is no youth, they are not united, yeah. So, you find some, like two youths here, and then they go fishing or they go to market stay there, yeah.
>
> Thomas T.: Okay I can support that idea of those wazees [elder respected men, ed.] who told you so, because you find that due to climate change in this area, you find that when youth finish their schools instead of just coming back to the farms and start grow some foods, for the village and for the other people, they just go search for white collar jobs, because the climate itself is not good, due to climate, you may find that there is rain now, and the rest of the year, maybe 2020, we are heading to 2020, there will be no rains.
>
> David T.: Yeah
>
> Thomas T.: So even they cannot predict the rains, so they will rush to towns to look for jobs in the offices, that's why the wazee say so, those old men say so, because of it. While the youth, while the youths see, for example now the youths who are here in this area, they have not gone anyway, who have completed school, they have rushed to the shambas because the rain is good now, they will assist their parents, and they will grow a lot of food in their families. But next year, if the rains fail, they will just rush to look for jobs, yeah.
>
> SW: So, you think it's climate change
>
> Thomas T.: Yeah, climate change
>
> SW: That is pushing people towards white collar jobs

> Thomas T.: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah

Paul T. and Thomas T. explain how they see young people being pushed to the larger cities by climate change, as climate change makes it harder to make a living from farming with unpredictable weather patterns, also discussed in chapter 5 and 6. Thomas T. gives the example of how many young people rushed back to his village as soon as the weather was more conducive to farming, to illustrate that the youth are willing to work in agriculture, if it is seen as a viable livelihood in the long term. The members here link climate change and (youth) unemployment, with the devaluation of farming and indigenous knowledge described in chapter 6, to explain the precarious situation for many young people in Kenya at the time. Here, the re-valuing of indigenous knowledge through the prefiguration of an agroecological food system based on indigenous knowledge, is both part of the solution to climate change and the social consequences it brings for young people.

Adding to the challenge of climate change are the social and economic challenges facing low-income subsistence farmers in Kenya. As an economic system, industrial agriculture favours the large corporations and leaves the farmers in precarious situations, as they are encouraged to only grow one crop to maximize the yield (Mkindi et al., 2020, pp. 5, 13–15), which is then a very fragile economic situation to be in, as you are dependent on both international markets and the companies buying the produce locally. Below, John H. explains how in Migori county most of the farmers growing sugar cane would sell to South Nyanza Sugar Company or SonySugar (SonySugar, 2022), and they had not been paid at the end of 2019 when I was there, for their 2018 harvest:

> John H.: Imagine people who harvested, people whose [sugar, ed.] canes were harvested in 2018 November, are supposed to be paid next year [2020, ed.] in January, so you look at that period. […] So, such frustrations are also helping us to push more farmers to abandon the cash crop, so other challenges that we are facing is now we are seeing campaigns to push farmers to grow tea. […]And coffee […]. And we are also trying to tell the farmers that we have areas that grow tea and coffee, who are also struggling, yeah so, it's a way of trying to pass the information to the farmers […]. We even had farmers who were benefiting from the One Acre Fund, which is basically a scheme to give farmers seeds, farm inputs, herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, on credit, but they are abandoning it because it's becoming expensive, they have to buy them, so many of the farmers who initially were in the One Acre Fund scheme, now they are coming to join the KPL, because they see it's a sustainable process.

One of the main economic benefits of shifting from an industrial agricultural model to an agroecological model that the KPL members mentioned over and over, was removing the dependency on having cash in hand when starting the planting season. In an industrial agricultural model, having money is necessary to buy the central agricultural inputs, seeds, seedlings and manure at the start of every planting season. Moreover, this is also a great argument for subsistence farming, as having diverse food crops will secure farmers a livelihood even if other crops fail and they have no money income – and you cannot live on coffee, tea or

sugarcane. Prefiguring a different economy and food system, less dependent on the international market and more focused on producing food is, thereby, a powerful and concrete solution to many of the profoundly serious issues facing farmers. Additionally, polyculture farming is more climate change resistant as you exactly are not putting all your eggs in one basket – if sudden shifts in weather patterns affect one crop, others will probably still survive.

Everyone shared with me how growing cash-crops, often meant for export, like sugar cane or tea had left them food insecure, in debt and often unable to pay for their children's' school fees. In a capitalist economy not having access to money is a problem. Not being able to pay school fees, and thereby not being able to provide an education for one's children is a serious problem, as it is one of the things keeping families in generational poverty. Earning a money income was, thereby, seen as means to certain ends, not the overarching goal, and again, as in chapter 6, 7 and 8, members pointed to how it really is the sharing of knowledge that leads to a better life:

> Mary A.: […] So, my idea is okay, beside majoring on the widows, I am also concerned with the well, whereabouts [wellbeing, ed.] of these other women who are maybe, they are living in, they are languishing in poverty, you know, yeah. The women, they are still, okay they are married, but if you look at their life standard back at their status, it is not good. So, if KPL can come up clear on, just have given these people and empower them, and plus, with the government, then we'll have a society that is really focused, and people will live very okay.
>
> […]
> SW: Uhm, so how does the KPL help with poverty? How does the KPL empower women out of poverty?
>
> Mary A.: Okay, knowledge is power. If these people are given, okay the way I have been given that knowledge, they are empowered. And some people tend to just relax and say that things will just be achieved on, will be achieved easily. But with the kind of knowledge the KPL is giving them, they will get themself, important to practice their ideas into how their, the shamba [garden or field, ed.], grow this produce. And if at all it materializes then they will be able to sell and, after some time, or by the end of it, they will have something besides eating, or bettering their life, I mean their health they will also sell their produce and earn income through that. Yes, so actually basically it is the knowledge, they are, when they, everybody is given this knowledge they will be empowered.
>
> Translator: Yeah, and you know poverty does not necessarily mean having money, or not having money, no, even when you don't have good health. […]When you don't have at least something that

> can support you, you know, if for example if we have ready market for this local food, they can sell and be self-supportive.

Mary A. believes that knowledge is the key to empowering women out of poverty, and she is clearly concerned with the well-being of women in her community, and she highlights how being married is not a guarantee of a stable livelihood. Rather the knowledge given within the KPL about how to grow food and grow food for your own consumption is what Mary A. believes will empower women to escape poverty. This goes back to chapter 6, and the notion of knowledge as a tool, and the method of preaching what you practice described in chapter 8, as the intentional sharing of information is just as crucial as the prefigurative praxis.

What the KPL is aiming to do is, not to change the lifestyles of the people they meet, rather they want to make sure they have stable *livelihoods* that correspond with their values in terms of peasant feminism and food sovereignty by prefiguring a different food production. This speaks to what motivates the prefiguration of the KPL which is fighting for people to survive, thrive and make a living despite neo-agro-colonialism, climate change, and patriarchy. It is not about making lifestyle changes to express your values, it is about building new societal structures, based on your values, which enable more people to survive and thrive. What Alice C. here describes is a completely different bartering economy, that not only fulfils basic needs but also allows people to enjoy life:

> SW: What does, how would you explain food sovereignty to someone who has never heard it before?
>
> Alice C.: [hard to hear words 00:23:03] can explain food sovereignty, it's just to have enough food to keep for your living, yes. Enough to eat for your family to sustain your living, yes. Adequate food to use to sustain your living family.
>
> SW: And do you think the KPL has achieved food sovereignty
>
> Alice C.: Yes, not the KPL, as me as [name] maybe I've achieved it. Because I have the vegetable, I have the maize for consumption, I only buy what I can't make like cooking fat, yes, the fish I don't have a fish pond, the meat I can't keep on buying meat, but for the chicken I have in my house plus eggs, I don't buy, yes. Yeah.
>
> SW: So, you feel like you have food sovereignty?
>
> […]
> Alice C.: Yes, yes. Right now, I have maize enough for me up to February [this interview was in November 2019, ed.] [SW laughs]
> […]I'll harvest that one still we'll find when I have some maize, yes in my house, yeah. I've achieved it. The vegetables is just besides there, yeah
>
> SW: Right, and like you said the seeds are your own so you can keep growing them for, for many years.

Alice C.: Even in my house there I have some seeds, I'll show you

For Alice C. food sovereignty is having enough food to sustain your own and your family's life, and not being dependent on buying food, but growing most of what you consume, except the few things she cannot grow or raise her-self, like cooking fat. Having enough maize for the following four months after the interview, having her own chickens and having her own seeds meant that Alice C. felt like she had everything she needed. And she dreams of every member in the KPL experiencing this:

SW: Ah okay, yeah, I would like to see that. Uhm, so we uh, we have discussed the dreams But maybe what are your dreams for this group?

Alice C.: My dreams for this group, for to achieve the food sovereignty, yes. Total! Now total food sovereignty, yes, because if I need fish I'll take one chicken to the market, then I buy the fish. If I just need meat from the beef, the beef, I'll just take one chicken and buy two kilograms of meat. When I need cooking fat, I'll sell my vegetable because if they are just well I can't consume them all, I have to achieve, I have to sell some.
[…]Yeah. And for flour, maize that one I can't talk about it's a lot, it's more than nini, even just this third term I took three sacks to school, to pay my school fee. Yes.

SW: And you could pay with the sacks?

Alice C.: Yes, I took maize to the school, three sacks, and those three sacks it was 40 tins pr. sack, yes that 40 tins pr. sack is 120. By 100 is how much, that is 12.000, I paid for school fee, I'm done [laughs]
[…]So, I harvest more than my consumption, I harvest and sell some. So, instead of selling there at the village at 80, I take to school I sell at 100, yes, because we are given as parents, we are given some more, over charge, because our sons are there. So instead of selling it at 80 in the village here I take it to school they take it at 100

SW: Yeah, so what do you need to, how does total food sovereignty look like?

Alice C.: Total food sovereignty looks, there is no day a mother like will take a, a basket to the market to buy vegetable, to purchase maize for children to come and eat here in the house there is no day, instead I'll do the better trade just exchanging my goods to what I need to have.

SW: So it's a society where everyone has something to trade?

Alice C.: Yes, to eat! Yes. To sustain life, yes. And additional to [laughs] do some other luxuries, yes

SW: Like what?

Alice C.: Like even taking your children for a picnic, just from the, your, your energy, yes.

SW: So also enjoying life, or?

Alice C.: Yeah

Alice C. is describing how for her, food sovereignty is having enough food to sustain yourself, trading the surplus for the things you cannot produce yourself, such as her example of cooking oil. She also shares how she has paid her children's school fees with sacks of maize, as an example of such a bartering economy. The school gives a favourable price to parents, and then the parents can more easily pay the school fees and the school now has the maize they need to cook meals for their students and employees. Lastly, Alice C. points to how this is all an effort to both survive and thrive – she does not want everyone to just have the bare minimum, but also to be able to enjoy themselves with their loved ones, for example by having a picnic with their children. So, by not being as dependent on the market economy Alice C. is already prefiguring what a food sovereign, peasant feminist, household can look like. It is clear, that the KPL members want to both survive and thrive by building new systems that challenge the current. Again, prefiguration is about being a good example, solving problems that threaten the livelihoods of their communities in a way that creates a better world, by living the future today that they *want* and *need*.

As mentioned in previous chapters, these needs also are different for the different members of the KPL depending on their gender, age and whether they are able bodied, and as shown in chapter 8, prefiguring, and scaling out, peasant feminism is also a big part of the work in the KPL.

Prefiguring peasant feminism in the fields

Just as the KPL's prefiguration of agroecology is motivated by needs, so is their prefiguration of peasant feminism. As mentioned in chapter 8, it is not always easy for movements to prefigure and teach peasant feminism alongside prefiguring agroecology, but this is central to the KPL. The KPL approaches its peasant feminism as practically and needs based as it does all its other prefigurative practices. The peasant feminism of the KPL is based on an intersectional analysis of the lived reality of women in Kenya in general and peasant women specifically, as shown in chapter 6. Exactly because the KPL's peasant feminism is class conscious and actively separates itself from more bourgeois feminism, it has an emphasis on action that will concretely benefit the everyday lives of these women. Also, in their peasant feminism they emphasise leading by example. This means prefiguring different gendered relations and creating new expectations for women, regardless of their marriage status, through their organizing and teaching around agroecology, as described in chapter 7.

There are many gendered challenges facing peasant women, and I outlined the many ways in which gender-based violence affects women's access to land in chapter 6. Once again, the main work of the KPL on this is the fight for the widows who have their land stolen by their in-laws after their husbands pass away. Being in rural areas and being low-income subsistence farmers in the global south means most of these women rarely have access to legal support or women's shelters, one of which the KPL is building at the time of writing in Migori County, with the money collected in the crowdfunding we collaborated on in 2022. Gender inequality also shows up in many other subtle and not so subtle ways, that the KPL aims to challenge through their

organizing and by insisting women are heard in decision making processes, as outlined in chapter 7. This both requires a larger structural change of society, of which the KPL is aware, while also needing immediate addressing of the precarious situations these women find themselves in.

In this respect, for many of the women in the KPL, agroecology provides the foundation for gaining this recognition, as it gives them the opportunity to be economically independent by for example having kitchen gardens, which Alice C. explains can prefigure a way of having a household less dependent on the reproductive labour of the mother:

> Alice C.: […] the next plan I have, […]if they [her chickens, ed.] are housed, at least the waste you can collect to the garden
>
> SW: Ah you can collect the waste, that's true, for composting
>
> Alice C.: Yes, and it will even be easy for my children when I'm away to do that. Yes, now if they [her chickens, ed.] are just in the kitchen and, so I'm mixed up [laughs] so the project can't go so well. But I'm praying in future, I get a good house for the chicks, the chicken
>
> SW: You also mentioned this before that the kitchen garden was important, so that if the mother is away
>
> Alice C.: Yes
>
> SW: The kids have it. Why do you want to make sure that the mother can go away?
>
> Alice C.: Meaning of going away, maybe I may go to the market, yes, I may go to church, I may go to a funeral, but when I'm there at the funeral, I don't have to think about my children because they have local available food to consume, yes.

Alice C. here talks about the added importance of having a kitchen garden, as it means her children will have access to food, even when she is not around, which frees her up to also leave the home for meetings, funerals, events or other things. In many ways this is the essence of the KPL peasant feminism, as mentioned in chapter 6; it is an intersectional analysis of how class, age and gender affect peasant women in Kenya – for example in terms of decision making – and finding practical ways of getting to the root of the problem, that speaks to their concrete struggles.

When the needs of the women are centred, this might of course mean that some men will lose certain privileges or have to do more labour than they previously did. In this way, the argument here is more centred around rights and justice and is often more about showing how different gendered relations are not as scary as people think and will actually lead to a better society. Joseph A. points to this in chapter 7, as he explains that prefiguration is exactly the pedagogical strategy that can quell the fears of men who think giving up privileges or doing more labour will result in oppression. Through prefiguring peasant feminism the KPL can show their own members and their communities what a peasant feminist world could look like.

Not enough cooks in the kitchen

A very informal example of peasant feminist prefiguration, I noticed in every single household I stayed in was that the mothers were insistent that all their children learn to cook, not only the girls. This was highlighted as important because they wanted their children to be able to sustain themselves in general, and specifically it allowed the mothers to attend meetings or trainings and leave the children with their father, and then the children would be able to cook for the family – of course the children in question are larger children and teenagers. This allows a sense of freedom for the mother who does not then need to rush home to cook, which happened to a few of the young women I met, who had to hurry home from an FGD to do reproductive labour. As I mentioned in chapter 7 this is something I made the KPL aware of during my stay, as it initially effected the participation rate of young women in the project. This is, first a prefiguration of different gendered relations, where a woman can have the freedom to leave her home for her own interests and not always be responsible for reproductive work. Second, it also views cooking as an essential life skill that all children, not just girls, should learn and would benefit from learning. This goes back to what Alice C. was highlighting with the kitchen gardens, and how it could allow mothers to be less tied to the home.

It is of course interesting how the emphasis was on teaching the next generation of men to cook, and not their current partners. Although some of the women I stayed with were widows, and so it was of course not relevant. I only met one man who cooked for his family, freeing his wife up to be busy during the day, while another man described himself as a *family man*, and explicitly stated that he did not want to travel far because he had obligations to his family. So, while, the mothers, and some fathers, of the KPL are working on making the next generation more equally qualified to do reproductive work, it seems that there is no focus on the current generation of adult men, perhaps because it is easier to focus on the future generation. However, I do not want to minimize the strong message that these women are sending, not just to their children, but also to their community, by insisting that also boys should learn how to cook and clean and be expected to also know how to perform reproductive work.

Many of the mothers exactly framed these lessons as necessary life skills for their children to learn and wanted them to be able to take care of themselves in the future, regardless of whether they found a partner or not. On top of re-valuing cooking as a valuable life skill that *everyone* should know, not simply work to be taken for granted, it also affirms that it should not be taken for granted that their children will chose to get married, regardless of their gender. And it is very much part of the leading by example strategy of the KPL, which encapsulates both the KPL's pedagogy and prefigurative strategy overall while also being distinctly peasant feminist. And in many ways peasant feminism is a practical feminism. As sketched out in chapter 6 the peasant feminism of the KPL is about the concrete everyday ways women face violence, discrimination, and repression, and is very much also part of the prefigurative strategy of the KPL.

This is reminiscent of the ecofeminism of the Green Belt Movement, which took its outset in the needs of rural women, realizing how tree planting campaigns – focused on native species that the women could collect the seeds for themselves – would both support the women's livelihoods, the environment and the climate (Hunt, 2014, pp. 240–246; Merton & Dater, 2008; Muthuki, 2006, pp. 84–88). The prefiguration of the Green Belt Movement and of the KPL is not experimentation for the sake of experimentation, this is prefiguration aimed at surviving in a better world. Consequently, the KPL's political theory of prefiguration is at the heart of the movement, because without prefiguration there would be no movement.

Without practice there is no movement

At its core, the KPL, like other peasant movements, aim at improving the livelihoods of their members. The current global capitalist system and the climate change it has caused, is actively harming the KPL members' ability to sustain themselves as low-income subsistence farmers in the global south, as shown above. And as mentioned in chapter 6, this class position affects the members of the KPL differently depending on their gender, age and physical disability. The KPL is a prefigurative movement, as there would be no movement without the practice of agroecology. Mier y Terán et al., mention how demonstration plots and cross visits are important to learning, and in all of this it is taken for granted that there is a strong praxis of agroecology in such movements (Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 2–10). The class-based motivation for prefiguration of agroecology is therefore the motivation for the movement, and central to the KPL theory on prefiguration.

In this final part of the chapter, I dive deeper into the KPL's theory of prefiguration expressed in their motivation for using prefiguration, in order to demonstrate how *wanting* and *needing* a different world is the same thing for the KPL and informs how they equate ends and means.

The heart of the movement

So, the KPL has two motivations for prefiguring the world they want and need. First, they want to survive and make sure their communities live to fight another day. Second, they believe that to be effective teachers they have to be good role models who lead by example, as highlighted in chapter 7 and 8. The ability to use prefiguration to ensure survival, was seen in opposition to protest activism, which asks, and waits for, change rather than building that change in the present. John H. for example solely engaged in more classic protest activism before the founding of the KPL:

> John H.: But then after interaction with LVC, that's when we realized that, we need to go beyond just advocating food rights, but also ensuring that we are taking practical steps, to ensure that we mobilize farmers, so that they can be able to bank their own seeds, as in to take the control of the food process, yeah.
>
> SW: So, for you the KPL is something more than the activism you were already doing?

> John H.: Yes because you see, like most of the activists that we were engaged with, most of them are not farmers, and we were just advocating for the food rights, like sometimes we were saying no to GMOs, but we didn't have alternatives, because when I say no to GMOs for example, you need to, the farmers need to have alternatives, and that's when we started by saying, we need to go beyond the sloganeering, and by having practical, I mean steps to ensure that when I say no to GMOs for example, then we have a system of banking our own seeds.

John H. distinguishes between the time before and after he met LVC activists, as something that changed his activism from solely advocating against and protesting GMOs, to *also* starting to create alternatives to GMOs by saving and sharing indigenous seeds. It is important to understand the nuance of what John H. is saying, because he is not saying that there is no need for protesting, rather he is saying that the KPL needed to go *beyond*, what he calls *sloganeering*, and start creating the solutions they need. There are two lessons from this quote: One, the KPL wants to put action behind their words, and two, that they want to do that in a way that supports the needs of their community. This is one of the main reasons the KPL exists; to support the peasants, and a goal for many is to achieve food sovereignty and not be in precarious economic or social situations, which means they need to prefigure a different food production. While John H., and the KPL, are not denying the power of protests which they still engage in, this quote highlights how it is important to focus on the less visible every-day organizing rather than getting lost in the spectacle of protest if the goal is to build a different food production.

When it comes to prefiguration the focus is often on the *spectacle* of protests rather than the more mundane everyday activism of organizing, or as Maeckelberg puts it we focus more on event-time than process-time (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, pp. 44–45; B. L. Hall, 2009, pp. 66–68; Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 205–208). We are used to thinking of prefiguration as being expressed in ways that are practical in a limited way – a camp on a square for example has a clear practical side but is not necessarily meant to be sustained as permanent new infrastructure. Maeckelbergh points out that focusing too much on event-time and not enough on process-time is why many of the square movements fell apart (Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 209–211). Looking beyond this focus on event-time is, therefore, also interesting for social movements, and as John H. highlights it has a different political strength to provide the alternatives rather than asking politicians to provide them. Especially, when the KPL is motivated by a sense of urgency and the needs of their communities.

And this motivation is not just aimed at the people already in the movement, but rather towards everyone affected by these issues.

> SW: So, why do you spend your time trying to convince other people [who are not members, ed.], trying to bring them closer?

> Aweno J.: I take my time because I would like all of them to have decent lives.
>
> Stephen J.: Okay, why I also try to talk to them is because the fight for climate justice, should involve everybody I can't do it on my own. So that is why it's important for both of us, for him for me, for any other person, so if I do it on my own, I will still not reach the goal, so together we'll reach the goal.

Aweno J. wants to expand the KPL out of concern for the surrounding community, and wanting to improve their livelihoods, while Stephen J. also highlights how without collaborating with the wider community the KPL will not achieve its goals. Members of the KPL are motivated by a sense of care and responsibility towards their community and their environment because they see the world as interconnected – working together is the only way to make sure we are all doing well, and our fates are intertwined, which returns us to the connections between agroecology and decolonial thought. This of course also relates to the motivation for scaling out the KPL and agroecology, as members wanted to support their fellow peasants to improve their livelihoods and their health by creating this informal and incidental learning opportunities described in chapter 8.

Other goals such as expanding their network to get access to more seeds and more knowledge are also very prevalent motivations for joining the KPL or expanding the movement. The two are of course mutually supportive, as the expansion of networks also potentially improves the livelihoods and health of both the existing members and new members, which is exactly the point – wants (a solidarity based economy) and needs (having enough food) can co-exist in their prefiguration strategy.

This challenges the notion of a sharp dichotomy between personal interest and communal interest, which often seems to be the assumption in westernized societies. Instead insisting that there can be a convergence need and want, and perhaps even a mutual interdependence between them.

> Michael E.: […] So, that's why we want to produce not only for the family but also for the other people, because when the nation, if everybody is healthy then you are also healthy, but if I'm healthy and he is sick I can easily get that, yeah. [Just a reminder that these interviews were done in 2019, ed.]

—

> John H.: […] But you see when I am saying I don't want to use chemical fertilizer and then my neighbour is using it, when it rains it contaminates the [laughs], so it's in my interest to ensure that we change the neighbours, such from the family, can you have family meetings, engage them and then from that family you go to the neighbour, so then we will have a liberated community and a liberated county or country. So, it's, that is actually the logic of spreading, so that it beats logic to have only one person in a sea of 20 people, who are doing the different thing.

Michael E. and John H. here gives examples of how misfortune to your community, can result in your own misfortune. With an extremely prescient example on the other side of the Covid-19 pandemic, Michael E. gives the example of disease, saying that making sure your community is healthy also will protect your own health. John H. uses the example of how pollution from chemical fertilizer from a neighbouring field will seep into your own field, to explain why it does not make sense to only care about washing your own hands of chemical fertilizers, as any use of them will still affect you. As Michael E. points out, when your neighbour is sick you might get sick, so can the collective be well when the individual is not? And can the individual be well when the community is not? The KPL would answer no to both those questions. This is based in an ontology that sees all life as fundamentally connected which the KPL shares with decolonial feminist thought (Alonso, 2008, pp. 264–265; Maathai, 2010, pp. 14–17, 65–67, 110; Shiva, 2005, pp. 59–60, 83–84, 99–104; Smith, 2012, pp. 16–17; Todd, 2015, pp. 244–249).

The KPL's conception of climate justice is a great example of this interconnected epistemology: For the KPL, climate justice is very concretely about doing justice to more-than-human-life and through that the humans living in those environments:

> SW: Asante! So now you have picked these cards, so there are two that overlap, where you talked about the same. If you had to prioritize these, would you translate, how would you prioritize them and why, from most important, first priority, second, third, fourth, fifth priority. For you as a group.
>
> Alice C.: This one is the family to everything; it is concerned with climate change and justice.
>
> SW: The tree?
>
> Alice C.: So, when the climate is interfered with even these other ones won't do well, yes so, I'll prioritize this one as the first, so that we maintain the climate justice.

For Alice C. climate justice and climate change are inextricably linked, as climate justice is caring for the environment, and she gives the example of planting trees. So, to Alice C., maintaining climate justice is the same as maintaining a good environment, a sentiment which Kennedy G. echoes in a different interview:

> SW: You mentioned the term climate justice, how does that relate to these other concepts?
>
> Kennedy G.: Okay, now climate justice, like the concept of organic farming, you see, as we practice organic farming that is also another way of advocating for climate justice, yeah, because when we, for example when we encourage our peasants or rather farmers to use compost manure, but just by doing that they shall have been advocating for climate justice because the material that they use that is the compost manure itself, is environment friendly, and that in itself will be doing justice to the climate.
>
> SW: So, what is climate justice for you?

Kennedy G.: Climate justice for me, again I would say, I'll use very simple terms to define it, I'll not use big scientific words, so to me climate justice is when we have or we use, organic manure, which is climate justice.

SW: Why?

Kennedy G.: Because it doesn't do harm to the climate, yeah. As I said it is environment friendly.

SW: So, climate justice is about preventing harm?

Kennedy G.: Exactly, yeah. And again, I would say when we encourage to plant indigenous trees, that is climate justice.

SW: Because?

Kennedy G.: Indigenous trees are nature friendly, nature friendly, the indigenous trees we use them in very different ways, some conserve and preserve our water systems, they also cool the earth or rather the environment around. They conserve the mother earth.

Kennedy G. explains climate justice as actions which cares for or prevents harm to the environment, which is why he considers agroecology as an important part of creating climate justice. Just as Alice C. above, Kennedy G. also relates climate justice to more-than-human-life and how we treat *mother earth*. Preventing harm to life around you – whether they be humans or more-than-humans, is crucial because life deserves respect and because life is interconnected. Here we again see the connection between the KPL's political theory and decolonial feminist thought in terms of understanding the world as fundamentally interconnected and valuing care for all life, and how they are connecting social and environmental justice (Maathai, 2010, pp. 115–117). This allows the KPL members and aspiring members to both ask, "what is in it for me" and "what is in it for the community" at the same time, by centring the needs of the community *through* the needs of the individuals they talk to, making it relevant for them, as explained in chapter 8.

While there is a higher degree of loyalty towards other members of the KPL and their immediate community, all the members I talked to emphasized a responsibility and a concern for the nation or the environment and the globe in general, as shown above, through their fundamental ontology of all life as interconnected.

SW: And why do you want to reach more people?

John D.: So that we expand this idea to many people, and they know the importance, of all this.

Hawi D.: The reason as to why, it's good to reach many people with this information that even though we are not using that chemicals in our farms, but when other people use them on their farms, when they don't have information, this chemical will be carried by flood or running water into our river, and we will consume that water from those points and actually with us,

> who are not part of that farm we are also affected, so when we reach, when the information reaches many people, with us, also we are protected.
>
> David D.: Yes, to add on that, main reason why we want to reach other people, is that those people some of them are our friends, some of them are our relatives, but when they continue using this chemicals, these people will be affected with some serious diseases, such as cancer, so when a friend is suffering from cancer, even you personally you will suffer mental and we are not happy for that, so that's why, we are seeing that it is good that we proclaim this message to them, for them to be aware to adopt this issue of growing indigenous crops to salvage the situation, yes.

Echoing the quotes above, David D. and Hawi D. use the example of chemical fertilizer and disease to explain why it is not enough for the KPL to only worry about what happens inside the confines of their fields or their homes. Hawi D. uses the example of chemical fertilizer polluting water sources, which means that reaching more people and convincing them not to use chemical fertilizers will protect water sources for large areas, while David D. uses the example of people getting il from using chemical fertilizers. Again, this ontology of fundamental interconnectivity of all life, means that what benefits me environmentally will also benefit you, and what harms you will also harm me, directly or indirectly. Moreover, as David D. highlights there are also social and emotional ramifications to seeing the people around you are suffering.

So, they are prefiguring a different agriculture, and different view of the environment, without the use of chemicals because they *need* to protect themselves and their community from harm, and because they *want* to as their ontology of fundamental interconnectivity makes them believe it is also wrong to create this harm in the first place. Their ends and means align with their values. Moreover, and returning to prefiguration as a strategy, as shown in chapter 7 and 8, the KPL also sees prefiguration as a necessary strategy to scale agroecology and create larger systemic change. In chapter 7 and 8 I show the pedagogical reasons for this, and above I showed why it is also necessary for the KPL members to survive and thrive: As low-income subsistence farmers in the global south, they cannot count on neo-agro-colonialism, so building alternative infrastructure is crucial to survival. A big part of this is also taking over, and prefiguring ways of providing for people's basic needs, also the needs that perhaps should be provided by the state.

Militant organizing

As mentioned in chapter 8, the KPL's analysis of who they are at *war* with is shaped by their economic and political landscape. This is largely shaped by large corporations who, due to large government debts, have a lot of power over the Kenyan government, which means the government is both a potential ally and a potential foe, and in general an entity that would often let people down. Both in terms of continual services and support, as exemplified through the plight of the widows and people with disabilities, and in terms of dealing with large disasters caused by for example climate change.

To mitigate such disasters, civil society often takes over as a service provider (Mati, 2014, pp. 224–226), and this was also something seen as a need for the KPL. John H. several times expressed a need for *militant* organizing as a solution. As John H. explains below, this has nothing to do with soldiers and physical violence, but more to do with communities being organized and prepared in case of emergencies so they are not reliant on state services, which often fall short:

> SW: And you called the youth, like the militant, is that what you mean by their militant action
>
> John H.: Yes
>
> SW: That they like organize
>
> John H.: Organize, like responding to emergencies […]for example you find that a bridge has collapsed now it's affecting transport between the community, we want to have a team that can be able to go and say okay, as we are waiting for government, […]. The government is pushing, public-private partnership, but we want to push what is called community-government partnerships, so, that we say as a community we have this government who also need to provide this. Let's improve our lives. If people don't have, if the local market doesn't have a toilet, who will suffer, it's not the government, it is the people, […] that's why the spirit of volunteerism, if we have people who can come out, because you will still go and buy food in that market, that doesn't have a toilet, you will die of, or you will get sick. So, the militants, the militancy here is taking control of our systems, if it is water provision let's sink our own boreholes, yeah, let's start that process, let's, if there are families that don't have toilets, let's build the toilets. […] the militancy here, basically is, first of all ensuring that we reconstruct our own villages, and that's how we take control of governance for example. […] Because when you see a company coming from US for example, theoretically, […] to develop a water project, they take ownership, because they have invested, it means if we as a community invest in improving in water, it will be our project, yeah, so it means that's one of the ways, so you could have community-community partnerships, we could have community to government partnerships, we could even have household to household partnerships[…]

John H. gives several examples of what he considers *militant organizing*, which is basically focused on providing services that the state perhaps should but cannot or will not prioritize. He uses the examples of the community providing water through wells they themselves dig or rebuilding a bridge instead of waiting for the government to assist. Moreover, John H. focuses on how the KPL wants to have community-government partnerships rather than the classic neo-liberal public-private partnerships, which means government-corporate partnership. John H. stresses that the ownership of for example water projects is crucial, not just that for example water sources could be literally owned by corporations, but also that the communities take control of their own fate. John H. continues:

> John H.: […]Let's have labour, young people sink a borehole, or buy a tank that is going to serve the two communities, instead of waiting for a company, like there is a company from Sweden that brought up water ATM's in [place], so you, imagine you have to load money and then go and, you see it becomes their project, because they are the ones who

> SW: Will be making the money
>
> John H.: They didn't come with water, the water is ours, they only came with, they only organized themselves, so how can we organize this labour? How can we organize this expertise? […]I organized a meeting at my village, and the idea was, there was a local primary school that I, I studied, and the school didn't have window panes, so I said, we need to come together, so people were surprised, somebody said "I'm working in a company that make glasses", the guy said "I'm going to bring all the glasses", just one day, people were surprised and one of them said no, I'll bring desks, somebody said I'll bring books, somebody said I'll bring… so these are resources that are there, but they are lying idle because they are not being mobilized. Yeah, so the militants here is not war, but it is basically to take control of our own systems, because when the bridge has collapsed, or when the bridge is shaky,[…] the kids find that the school is up there, but the kids have to walk three kilometres to go around, and we are all living in this village[…]. So, the militancy here is, militants are not, actually militants should not be leaders, they should not be interested in leadership, they should be interested in, once they understand the dynamics how we are losing our resources, how do we stop that? Then they are people who work for the community now.

John H. provides further examples of how *militant* community organizing could look. First, he gives the example of a Swedish company setting up a water ATM, essentially privatizing a common, that could have been freely accessible if the community had done the labour the company provided. Second, he uses the example of a run-down school in his home village, and how the community pulled their resources together to restore the school; his point being that the resources are there they just need to be mobilized. So, John H. touches upon many things here. First, his consideration of community-government partnerships as preferred to public-private partnerships, challenges the idea that the "private" in public private exactly refers to corporations and not the population at large. Second, his example of a water project in a village either done by the village themselves or one done by a Swedish company or NGO, is a critique of neo-agro-colonialism. As John H. points out, the water is not created by the Swedish company, and if the community pulled their resources together, they could accomplish the same thing, and get rid of the need for water ATMs where you pay for using a freely accessible common. Third, the idea that KPL needs to build alternative infrastructure based around the needs of their members and their communities, guided by their values of food sovereignty, is the basic tenant of the KPL. The idea of the *militant* as someone who works *for* the people and fights through organizing a different world together, underscores how their prefiguration is not experimental for the sake of being experimental. Their prefiguration is guided by the *need* of their specific community, while addressing larger systemic issues, harkening back to the KPL's staunchly PAR approach to research as outlined in chapter 6: the research should always benefit the community. The KPL will not ignore the needs of their members in their activism, *and* at the same time this is very much value led activism.

While, scholars who study prefigurative politics often have to highlight that choosing a prefigurative strategy is not only idealistic but also pragmatic (Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 13–15), it seems the reverse is needed to understand the praxis of the KPL. To understand the KPL we have to remember that the pragmatic is also

idealistic in a prefigurative praxis, as means and ends align. The KPL's *prefigurative* praxis expands on the pragmatic aspect – as not only being pragmatic in terms of reaching the future goals of the movement, but in the sense that they are motivated by basic survival and the reproduction of life (Maathai, 2010, p. 32; Mies & Shiva, 2014, pp. 12–13; Shiva, 2005, p. 44). Prefiguration for the KPL becomes the refusal to dichotomize pragmatism and idealism, and the insistence that we need to merge the two when fighting for those most marginalized by current systems because they need a new world today. For the KPL their prefigurative praxis is the foundation that makes all their other activities possible, not in spite of but because of their marginalized socio-economic standing. This also opens interesting questions towards the literature on new social movements, and the importance of middle-class activists in the longevity of movements (della Porta, 2015, pp. 4–10; della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 36–38, 55–63).

Values are material, and practical

I would venture to guess that many, if not most, other prefigurative movements are also motivated by different *needs* as well as *wants*, and this is centred in the literature on agroecology, while not being as present in the literature on social movements and prefiguration, perhaps because of the main focus on movements with specific class backgrounds in urban settings. This connects to the extensive focus on event-time over process-time, as the literature on prefiguration is more focused on the spectacle rather than the mundane organizing that builds movements (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, pp. 44–45; Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 205–208).

As mentioned above, agroecology is both a practice, a movement and a science, and the *practice* part of that is exactly about prefiguring a different food system, so it is an integral part of these movements (Gliessman, 2018a). It is, therefore, interesting that there has been little to no focus in the literature on prefigurative social movements on these quite large movements. I am not suggesting that rural movements should be studied instead of the urban ones mainly studied now, as they are also important, but I do think that it is interesting that rural prefigurative movements do not take up more space in the discussion about, especially environmental prefigurative movements. Yates & Moor point out that a lot of research on prefiguration use the term too loosely by designating any movement that is horizontal and left-leaning prefigurative, even if they do not consider prefiguration necessary for social change, while it is underused for conservative movements (Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 183–185). I would add that the term is also underused in movements that are motivated by survival on top of believing that prefiguration is the way to create social change.

As an important note at the end, I want to make clear that I am not saying that global north based movements are never *needs* based or only focus on spectacle, rather that they are often not framed as such. Schlosberg and Craven point to the fact that there is a growing number of prefigurative movements in the global north that insist, that addressing material concerns is tied to values, and that they aim to address those concerns through their prefiguration (Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 25–28). Moreover, I have an academic gripe

with the notion that fighting different kinds of oppression is an expression of "post-materialist" or solely value-based mobilizing, and thereby not material in the first place. Fighting misogyny is not post-material to the widow who had her land stolen by her in-laws after her husband passed, or to the countless women who are beaten by their partners. Fighting ableism is not post-material to the disabled person who is denied an education or a number of other services due to lack of accessible buildings or prejudices. While many of these forms of oppression are mainly visible to the wider public through discourse, these are material problems that affect people's material living conditions and put hurdles in their way. This is what Sara Ahmed describes as *brick walls* of institutionalized power, or "[…]*those hardenings of histories into barriers in the present: barriers that we experience as physical; barriers that are physical.*[…]*Walls allow us to think about how obstacles can be physical, in the world, and yet how these obstacles are only obstacles for some bodies."* (Ahmed, 2017, pp. 135–136).

The struggles against racism, sexism or ableism are of course value based, but they are also material struggles (Ahmed, 2017, pp. 143–148; Fernandes, 2019, pp. 394–395; Mies & Shiva, 2014, p. 13). Just as union activism is both value based and material – there are plenty of employers who are guided by a different value set than unions, and unions who disagree with one another. The only vantage point from which these issues could appear as not being material in any way, are for those who do not feel personally effected by these issues (Ahmed, 2017, p. 142).

Moreover, the idea of struggles being post-material seems to be based in a Cartesian world view, where the problems of others are assumed to not affect us – that something which affects you materially is immaterial to me. As Michael E. mentions above, if your neighbour is sick, you might also get sick, so even if it is not material for you today it might be tomorrow. And seeing your neighbour suffer is also painful for you. The KPL is thereby, reminding us that they are fighting for their values because they *need* a different world, and that this does not make their struggle any less values based or political.

Of course, our embodied experiences colour our understanding of *need* and perhaps the general level of wealth in the global north is exactly why people have lost sight of the fact that *wants* are coupled to *needs*. Climate change is a fitting example: While the KPL and other rural people in the geographical global south have felt the consequences of climate change for a long time, people in the geographical global north are only recently starting to face the obvious harsh consequences of climate change, such as floods, droughts, and other extreme weather events. But climate change has been an existential threat to all humans, also before it started to be overtly visible in the geographical global north. So, preventing it, and treating the planet better is both a *want* and a *need,* also for those who have yet to feel it in their everyday life, because life is interconnected (Shiva, 2005, p. 63). A lesson that the Covid-19 pandemic also underscored.

Talking about her duties as goodwill ambassador for the Congo Basin, and describing the plight of the Aka people who live there, Maathai eloquently describes this interconnectedness:

> "Many people such as the Aka, who are very connected to the natural world, aren't necessarily connected by choice; close to the earth and directly reliant on its resources is where they happen to be. In the industrialized world, on the other hand, many people have become disconnected from nature. They may be equally dependent on natural resources, but the chain that connects them to the resources has many more links in it." (Maathai, 2010, p. 32)

Here Maathai touch on two crucial points; first, we are *all* dependent on the resources of this earth, regardless of how far removed we are from them and how processed our food is. So, even when these issues do not feel pressing in our immediate life, they do still concern us. Second, and more importantly to the KPL, the closeness with the earth is not *only* based on values and choice but *also* based on necessity, which comes from living in closer proximity to it.

To sum up, I am not saying that movements in the global south are needs based and movements in the global north are want based, I am saying that in the literature on prefiguration we should remember that needs and wants are not necessarily dichotomies, just as our bodies and our minds are not. This is exactly an example of how theories made from the provincial westernized epistemologies are ill-equipped to explain activism based on different epistomologies, which makes it all the more important to listen to the political theories born in the movements, which often get overlooked (Accornero & Gravante, 2022, pp. 196–197; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, pp. 1–4; Cox et al., 2017, pp. 4–5, 10–12, 24–25; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 71–72; Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 74; Osterweil, 2013, p. 600; P. Rosset, 2020, p. 50; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 15–18). And in this way the KPL writes its political theory of prefiguration into a longer decolonial feminist tradition, through their shared epistemological foundation of fundamental interconnectedness.

In many ways the praxis of the KPL is reminiscent of the Black Panther Party's notion of *survival pending revolution*, highlighting how centring needs in a prefigurative strategy necessitates a larger intersectional analysis of at least class. While the Black Panther Party is most infamous for its more militant tactics and affinity for guns, berets and leather jackets, survival pending revolution was shaped by their survival programs rather than defence programs for poor black communities in the US. Narayan suggests that Huey P. Newton was Newton was one of the first theorists of neo-liberal resistance and one of the Black Panther Party's leaders who spearheaded the transition from militancy towards the tactics more aligned with survival pending revolution, or their survival programs (Brown, 2019, pp. 9–10; Narayan, 2017a, pp. 4–8; Opperman, 2020). The most famous survival program was the free breakfast programs for school children that ran from 1969, and similar programs were implemented in all public schools in the US in 1975 (Newton, 2019, pp. 243–245; Pien, 2010). Through a deep analysis of the neo-liberal economy Newton and the Black Panther Party, went against the conventional wisdom on the left wing at the time and assumed that a sudden all-encompassing shift of the system through a revolution was not going to happen. Instead marginalized people needed to survive until tomorrow by building the new world they needed and wanted step by step (Narayan,

2020, pp. 5, 8, 10–12; Newton, 2019, pp. 199–200, 215–216). To me it is also clear the survival programs of the Black Panther Party had a prefigurative decolonial element, in the sense that the Black Panther Party was providing neighbourhoods with services they believed they had a right to access; free food, free clothes, free healthcare, in the hopes of creating *liberated territories* (Narayan, 2020, pp. 2–3). The Black Panther Party was living a small slice of the future by solving their problems in a way they saw as just. This is just one of, I am sure countless, examples of other decolonial movements centring needs in their prefigurative strategy, and I highlight this movement from the 1970s exactly to show that the KPL has not invented anything new. Rather it is the literature on social movements that has not been paying enough attention to these crucial aspects of prefiguration and to the political theories of social movements. For future work it would be great to contrast and compare the prefigurative theories of several social movements, especially movements without members that were as prolific writers as the Black Panther Party was lucky enough to leave for posterity.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have shown how the KPL theorizes and practices prefiguration as a way of both surviving and thriving in a world that is built on the marginalization and exploitation of low-income subsistence farmers in the global south. In table 6 below I once again summarize the main take aways of this chapter, by showing how the practices and political theory of the KPL interact and inform one another, and how these contribute to academic literatures.

Table 6 Main take aways from chapter 9, self-made

Main take aways from chapter 9		
	Practice ⟺	**Political Theory**

The work of the KPL featured in chapter 9	• Prefiguring stable livelihoods through agroecological farming, focusing on needs, surviving, and thriving
	• Prefiguring different gendered relations through the organisation of the movement
	• Prefiguring different gendered relations through insisting that women have their own source of food/income
	• Organizing community resources to respond to immediate community needs
		• A refusal to dichotomize material concerns and values, and a refusal to dichotomize personal and communal needs
		• A focus on livelihoods, organization and building new structures/institutions based on community needs
		• Understanding the world as fundamentally interconnected and seeing the climate justice as relating to both human and more-than-human life
		• Their prefiguration is based on the ontological assumption that all life is interconnected, which
		  • Gives us a responsibility towards each other
		  • Explains why prefiguration works as a scaling strategy

Contributions to the literature	• **Social Movements literature**
	  • Adding more East African cases to the literature
	  • The KPL contributes a class perspective to the literature on social movements and prefiguration by:
	  • Demonstrating that prefiguration is a powerful strategy *because* of, not in spite of, the KPL members' precarious economic position as low-income subsistence farmers in the global south
	  • Challenging the notion of prefiguration being mainly used by middle-class based movements
	  • The KPL reframes prefiguration as a strategy of creating livelihoods and organizing rather than one of lifestyle and spectacle

In this thesis prefiguration is understood as living the future you want today, or equating means and ends, which is a strategy chosen by the movements because they believe it is the best strategy to achieve their goals. Often the research into prefiguration assumes a dichotomy between values and material concerns, by labelling many prefigurative movements as "post-material". In this perspective it is clear why prefiguration could be viewed as mainly a plaything of the middle-class.

However, being in the class position of low-income subsistence farmers, in the neo-colonial context of Kenya, building a different food production is both about values and about survival for the members of the KPL. Their prefiguration is powerful, not despite their class position, but because of it. When the KPL members are sharing seeds freely, encouraging polycultural farming, and teaching each other how to make manure, they are prefiguring a food production that solves a lot of the day to day problems facing peasants using industrial farming methods. Through their prefiguration the KPL members are no longer forced to spend money buying inputs, which often led to debt and lack of income for expenses such as school fees for their children. They have more stable livelihoods as they can eat what they grow, while also not being dependent on *one* crop doing well, or *one* company paying them for their harvest, meaning they go hungry less often. And they mitigate the effects of climate change, such as soil erosion or droughts through different agroecological practices.

The KPL's prefiguration is not about experimenting for the sake of experimenting, and it is not about *lifestyles*, rather, it is about creating stable *livelihoods* that also reflect and support the values of the movement. They engage in prefiguration because they cannot rely solely on protest activism to, for example secure them access to indigenous seeds. John H. highlights how after meeting LVC activists at the WTO protest in Nairobi, the first KPL members decided to create the KPL, because they wanted to move from protesting GMOs to actually providing farmers with alternative seeds. The KPL moves the focus from spectacle to organizing, and from lifestyles to livelihoods. The focus is on not just talking the talk but actually leading by example as mentioned in chapter 7 and 8. While the KPL still engages in protest activism and lobby work, prefiguration is the backbone of the movement, combining values and needs. John H.

continues later in the chapter to elaborate on the importance of organizing the resources of the community and becoming less dependent on the global neo-colonial economy, and less dependent on the state which often disappoints. This prefiguration of a different, community run, infrastructure of basic services such as roads, plumbing, schools, or water supply, is motivated by values, as the KPL believes that the people affected should be the ones making the decisions, as shown in chapter 5 and 6. And this prefiguration of different community structures is also motivated by the practical needs of communities who do not receive promised government services or who cannot afford to pay impossibly high costs to private companies for the same services.

Moreover, without the KPL's prefiguration of agroecology there would simply be no movement, and the motivation for this prefiguration is the motivation for the movement: to practically support peasants in Kenya to improve their livelihoods. The KPL is at its heart a prefigurative movement, not despite the class position of their members, but because of it. It is not a question of lifestyle and expressing yourself through spectacle, it is about building new societal structures that are less hostile to low-income subsistence farmers' ability to survive and thrive in the global south. The KPL members cannot wait for the world to change for the better, they need to act and build it now to survive and thrive until tomorrow. Alice C. highlights how for her food sovereignty is about not worrying about your next meal, and *also* being able to enjoy yourself and take your children out to a picnic. So, the KPL prefigures a different food production not just to make it to the next day, but also aiming to make the next day better.

This also goes for their peasant feminism, and the KPL aims to prefigure different power dynamics in ways that will directly change the lives of the women and other marginalized groups within and around the movement. As shown in chapter 7 the KPL prefigures different power dynamics within the movement by assigning certain roles to women and youths and making sure to be aware of having women partake in decision-making. At the same time, the KPL members are prefiguring peasant feminism when they encourage members, and community members, to grow kitchen gardens that will enable them to be financially independent of their husbands. Here the KPL is not fighting for women to have the right to work, rather they are fighting for their right to fruits of their labor. This is a nuance easily missed coming from what the LVC sees as more white, urban and middle-class mainstream feminist conceptions (LVC, 2021a, pp. 23–26). The notion of the *right to work* as the essential feminist cause mainly makes sense from such a global north middle-class feminism, for example, hooks points out how

> "When white women's liberationists emphasized work as a path to liberation, they did not concentrate their attention on those women who are most exploited in the American labor force. […]While it does not in any way diminish the importance of women resisting sexist oppression by entering the labor force, work has not been a liberating force for masses of American women." (hooks, 1982, p. 146)

hooks points out that while many white feminists in the US were fighting for the right to work, many non-white women were already working because they had to and for them the work in itself did not equal liberation. hooks goes on to assert that for these women were not the right to work but the right to fair wages and reasonable working conditions (hooks, 1982, pp. 146–148). In the same vein the KPL is not focusing on how the women in their communities have a right to work – they are already working – rather they focus on how the women should be able to benefit from the work they are already doing. This again speaks to the KPL's position within the global economy, and how the peasant feminism of the KPL is related to black feminism.

One of the more informal ways of prefiguring peasant feminism, was how mothers in the households I stayed at would teach all their children, regardless of gender, how to cook, thereby, reframing cooking as an important, and valuable life skill expected of all adults.

As mentioned in chapter 7 and 8, prefiguration is also important to the KPL for pedagogical reasons, both internally for scaling deep, and externally for scaling out. The KPL, thereby, views prefiguration as a necessary strategy in the fight for a different world, which is one of Yates and Moor's definitional requirements for whether a movement is prefigurative or simply alternative (Yates & Moor, 2022, pp. 184–185). As many other prefigurative movements the KPL has a holistic view of society, which motivates their view of how to change society through prefiguration (Monticelli, 2022a, p. xxiv, 2022a, pp. 17–23). The KPL thereby adds to Maeckelbergh's work on prefiguration as a *strategy* (della Porta, 2018, p. 15; Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 10–12, 16–17), and as a strategy to address social concerns now and in the future.

And in this chapter, I show how this view of prefiguration is based on a view that all life is interconnected, which ties the KPL's intersectional peasant feminist epistemology closely to the decolonial thought. When all life is understood as fundamentally interconnected, you understand that polluting one field with chemicals does not just affect that farm but poses a risk to all life in that community. And conversely, convincing one's neighbour to stop using chemical fertilizer and adopt agroecology will not just positively affect the life of your neighbour but everyone in that community.

The KPL's conception of climate justice, as avoiding doing harm to the environment, is exactly an expression of this fundamental interconnectedness. Moreover, *because* life is fundamentally interconnected creating that kind of harm is also seen as *wrong*, both for the individual and the community. In this way the broaden the scope of what and who climate justice is for and connect it to social justice, just as other environmental justice movements before them (Maathai, 2010, pp. 115–117) Thereby, it becomes even more crucial to scale out the KPL, as they are not only helping themselves. Scaling out, thereby, becomes a way to prevent others from doing harm to themselves and others, motivated by self-care and community care. The KPL, thereby, collapses the strict dichotomy of the individual's needs and the collective's needs, because what we need individually will benefit the collective, and vice versa, moving us towards a less Cartesian understanding of the world. So, while much of the research on prefiguration in social movements focuses on

middle-class movements in the global north, the KPL shows how prefiguration can be more, and is more, than a plaything of the rich, and can entail a quite strong class perspective, when approached from a decolonial perspective.

Lastly, this is by no means a claim that this is the first movement to prefigure based on *wants* and *needs* (Schlosberg & Craven, 2019), rather my point is that the literature has missed it by mainly focusing on middle-class, global north movements. The clearest example in my mind of a historical movement that took a similar approach is the Black Panther Party and their strategy of *survival pending revolution*, which exactly aimed at creating the world their communities needed and wanted today. So, this is a reminder to consider the importance of intersectional positionality, here in terms of gender, class and colonial positionality, when theorizing about social movements in general (della Porta, 2015, p. 4; Fernandes, 2019, pp. 393–395) and prefiguration specifically. The KPL's theory and practice of prefiguration is one of livelihoods and organizing, and it is intimately tied to their class position as low-income subsistence farmers in the global south.

10. Conclusion

As we are facing several global crises, it is important that we as researchers *both* understand the causes of the crises, *and* the many proposed solutions already being prefigured. However, many of these alternatives cannot be grasped through westernized epistemologies, which is why we need to not only look at these alternatives but look at them through the lens of their own epistemology. If we are going to address how global issues affect different contexts, we need to have theories made in more of those contexts – we cannot explain what happens to movements based outside of the limited context of the global north with epistemologies tailored to the global north (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991, pp. 71–72; Grosfoguel, 2013, p. 74; Osterweil, 2013, p. 616; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 15–18). We need more political theories made by the social movements who we are trying to understand and recognize social movements as knowledge and theory creators in their own right.

Rural social movements in the global south, and on the African continent, are vastly underrepresented in the social movement literature even though many of them are prefiguring solutions to crucial problem such as climate change, gendered oppression, poverty and food insecurity. Agroecology movements are such movements.

Agroecology is both a movement, a praxis and a science, and has by many scholars been highlighted as one of the necessary solutions to climate change, as it is a more climate friendly food production, which also provides sustainable livelihoods for the many people living in rural areas negatively affected by climate change, especially in the global south (Gliessman, 2011; McCune & Rosset, 2021; Mkindi et al., 2020; Pimbert, 2022; P. Rosset, 2020; P. Rosset et al., 2019; Val et al., 2019). Studying how social movements are both prefiguring an agroecological food production and how they are bringing it to scale, is, therefore, important for mitigating climate change and creating sustainable livelihoods. While there is more work done on movements based in the global south in the relevant and related literatures of agroecology, adult and popular education and decolonial feminism, most of the work covers movements based in the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean and Europe. Once again, African movements are underrepresented.

In this thesis I contribute to this reorientation through the work of the Kenyan Peasants League (KPL), and their practice and theorization of pedagogy, peasant feminism, agroecology, scaling and prefiguration. These are not theories that I have discovered, but theories that were taught to me by the KPL through our collaboration. The political theories of the KPL speak to these struggles through their cognitive praxis. Their cognitive praxis, a term coined by Eyerman and Jamison (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991), is expressed by the KPL through their internal discussions and organization, through their teaching inside and outside of the movement, and through their practice of prefiguring agroecology and peasant feminism through all of the above. The theories of the KPL, thereby, address some very crucial aspects of how to solve some of the looming global crises facing us today.

The theoretical framework of this thesis is built around the argument that social movements prefigure political theories through their cognitive praxis, as you can read in chapter 2. Just as the mothers of the KPL who are teaching their children that cooking is a vital human skill that should be accessible to everyone, regardless of gender, I am arguing that theorizing is a fundamental human skill that all activists partake regardless of their attachment to academia. And when we ignore the theories made by social movements we are missing out on some nourishing and delicious theoretical meals.

Based in the decolonial feminist outset of this thesis (Dalmiya, 2016; Grosfoguel, 2013; hooks, 1991, 2015; Shiva, 2016, 2016; Smith, 2012; Tallbear, 2014; Teasley & Butler, 2020; Wylie, 2003), political theory is understood to be contextually anchored and something that all movements prefigure through their cognitive praxis (Bevington & Dixon, 2005; Cox, 2019; Cox et al., 2017; Eyerman & Jamison, 1991; P. Rosset, 2020). It is *political* theory due to its inherent orientation towards shaping society according to the movements' values and believes. The theoretical argument of this thesis is, therefore, first that social movements make political theory, and second that the theories by the KPL presented here are valuable additions to the different literatures addressed in the final five chapters.

In the final five chapters of this thesis, I present the KPL's peasant pedagogy, how this connects to their approach to scaling deep and scaling out, and their political theory of prefiguration, all of which contribute vastly to both academic and activist discussions. I hope that this documentation of the KPL's work can be an example of the rich theoretical work we miss out on, when we do not engage with the political theories of social movements. In the following, I sketch out the major contributions of this thesis and finish the concluding chapter by going through the methodological limitations, and suggestions for further research. Overall, this thesis highlights how the work of the KPL is similar to many other agroecology movements, while also challenging the literature on agroecology and scaling, the literature on agroecology and teaching and the literature on prefiguration and teaching in different ways: They provide a more class focused perspective, a perspective more grounded in peasant feminism, and a perspective on scaling in a micro farmer-to-farmer approach. Moreover, as mentioned throughout, most of the work on rural movements in the global south are done in the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean and Europe, and it is important to look beyond these regions to show how agroecology takes form in an African context (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 532, 534; Casado et al., 2022, p. 3). The KPL can of course not be a stand in for all rural African movements, or even all rural East-African movements, as there are vast differences of which issues farmers face in different African countries.

The final five chapters take the reader through the practice and theory of the KPL, guided by the overarching research questions,

- How does the Kenyan Peasants League teach, and what is their theory of pedagogy?

- What is the Kenyan Peasants League approach to scaling agroecology?
- How does the Kenyan Peasants Leagues's context affect their theory of prefiguration?

Chapter 5 and 6 address the first question, chapter 7 and 8 address the second question, and chapter 9 answers the last question. Pedagogy, prefiguration and an intersectional peasant feminist analysis is what binds all of the KPL's theories and practices together, and the divisions into chapters and topics are mainly heuristic to, hopefully, create clarity for the reader. Through this final concluding chapter, I first situate the reader in the context of the KPL and the methodological approach of this thesis, before presenting the main contributions from this thesis.

Context and methodology

There is a history of political activism in Kenya, and while the most famous is probably political movements such as the Kenya Land and Freedom Army (KLFA), better known as the Mau Mau (Calatayud & Moore, 2016), there has also been strong political social movements post-independence. A movement related to the KPL in spirit and practice was the Green Belt Movement which was founded by Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai. The Green Belt Movement was first and foremost an afforestation campaign, born out of the needs of rural women, who needed protection against soil erosion and access to firewood (Hunt, 2014, pp. 240–246; Maathai, 2010, pp. 21–24). Additionally, Maathai was one of the loudest critical voices of then president, and de-facto dictator, Daniel Arap Moi, and faced severe police violence, threats of death and sexual violence for her work for political prisoners and free and fair elections (Hunt, 2014, pp. 235–236, 243–244, 246–247; Merton & Dater, 2008; Muthuki, 2006, pp. 84–85, 88). From Maathai's ecofeminist theorization, she aimed at not just treating the symptoms of the problems facing rural women, but fighting the systemic causes that lead to deforestation in the first place – for example corrupt and unchecked political power (Maathai, 2010, pp. 20–22, 132–133). Since Moi was ousted in 2002, Kenya has returned to a multi-party democracy with a new constitution in 2010, which was fought for and shaped by many different social movements (Mati, 2020, pp. 16–22, 136-138,150-162). The new constitution has provided a much more open political climate for activism and protest. However, activism can still be risky in Kenya, and especially activism centring on land grabbing and industrial agriculture risk repression, violence or threats of violence (Amnesty International, 2022; Global Witness, 2022b, 2022a). At the time of writing the around 23 protesters have been killed by the police and hundreds arrested during the so-called Azimo protests against President Ruto's tax hikes, which has exacerbated the cost of living crisis (OHCHR, 2023; Rukanga & Irungu, 2023; Wandera, 2023). At the time of writing the situation is still developing, with no sign of a agreement or solution.

Independent Kenya chose the capitalistic route during the cold war and maintained a good relationship with its previous colonial power. While industrial agriculture still does not have as strong a foothold in Africa as in the rest of the world, consecutive Kenyan governments have supported more export-oriented agriculture,

often at the expense of local environments and livelihoods, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's failed project Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) (Mkindi et al., 2020; Walton, 2022). Today Kenya still produces and exports many of the same commodities as during colonial times for many of the same customers, such as tea, coffee and sugar (Fibaek & Green, 2019, pp. 3–4, 29–30; Wamalwa & Were, 2021, pp. 3–4). Kenya is, thereby, still performing the same (neo)colonial role, of providing the global north with quality raw materials. In this sense, the KPL is a great example of resistance to neo-agro-colonialism within a neo-colonial context.

From her anti-colonial ecofeminist perspective, Maathai was acutely aware that social justice is linked to environmental justice, and that we need to protect the earth to protect ourselves challenging this nature-culture divide (Maathai, 2010, pp. 115–118; Merton & Dater, 2008). Almost 40 years after Maathai founded the Green Belt Movement a new, rural, peasant feminist movement was born in Kenya.

The KPL was founded in 2016, by a group of peasant activists who met La Vía Campesina (LVC) activists protesting the 10th ministerial WTO meeting in Nairobi in December 2015. Mirroring the founding of LVC, the KPL was created by peasants organizing against neo-agro-colonialism in general and WTO in particular (Desmarais, 2007, pp. 74–76, 92–93; Sandoval & Wathne, 2022), and the KPL is part of LVC. Faced with climate crises, gendered oppression, neo-agro-colonialism and the day to day struggles of putting food on the table, the KPL and its members are fighting battles on many fronts. Just as the Green Belt Movement, the KPL was born out of the needs of low-income small scale peasants, and this also informs the way the KPL engages with researchers such as myself.

As you can read in chapter 4, in my collaboration with the KPL we decided to use a Participatory Action Research approach to make sure that this project would also be influenced by and benefit the KPL (Manzo & Brightbill, 2007, pp. 39–40; Redman-MacLaren & Mills, 2015, pp. 5–6; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 23–25). The goals that we set where to co-create teaching materials that can be used within the KPL, document the knowledge of the KPL, and to use this data in this thesis and, thereby, add the KPL's knowledge to the literature on agroecology movements. Moreover, my goal is also to insist that we within academia start seeing activists as colleagues that we can learn from and with, rather than subjects to be studied and that we appropriate knowledge from.

I visited Kenya in 2019 where I conducted 15 FGDs and 15 individual interviews, with a total of 92 participants, see table 7 and table 8 in the appendix. In all of these interviews and FGDs the focus was on the knowledge of the KPL, how they teach it, who they teach it to and why they teach it. Both the choice of topics and methods was chosen collaboratively between the KPL and me. The KPL was mainly interested in teaching, while I was interested in the theorization of food sovereignty. However, as with all other iterative studies the focus of the thesis developed slowly throughout my stay in Kenya, from a focus on the theorization of food sovereignty, to the many different theories that the KPL was teaching me through our

discussions and through their practice: Theories on pedagogy, scaling deep and out, agroecology and peasant feminism, and prefiguration. While many things went well in this project, it of course also has its limitations, and I outline them briefly below, before presenting the contributions of this thesis.

Methodological limitations

The main methodological limitation of this thesis was the failed goal of creating a truly consistently participatory PAR project, which included participations in all parts of the work. The PAR collaboration with the KPL consisted of two parallel tracks – one focused on co-creating teaching materials to be used for the KPL, and a second focused on producing this thesis. The first track of creating teaching materials, was by necessity more collaborative, however, it was ultimately unfinished as it is still ongoing. The current draft of the materials has mainly been used as a database of knowledge, while the prompt-cards that I made for the FGD's have been much more useful for the KPL, and that they still use them in trainings. In this sense, the first track was, if not a failure, at least unfinished at the end of the academic second track of this project.

Meanwhile, the second track, focused on this thesis, was not very participatory at all, although this track was successful in the sense that this thesis exists. In the beginning of 2022, I had an online meeting with the KPL members who were able to join, where I briefly presented the main conclusions of the thesis, and asked for their input. I had also sent them the thesis in a full version and an abbreviated version. The members expressed that they agreed with the conclusions, however, we did not have much time, and I did not have the resources to offer compensation for people to take time out of their lives to read the 200+ pages of this thesis. So while this meeting was encouraging for me, I do not consider it more than a tentative approval from some of the KPL members, and I expect and hope to be able to engage more critically with them in the future. However, a PhD thesis requires me to be the sole author of this work, regardless of how participatory the project potentially was, which both speaks in favor of not involving the KPL too much in work they cannot be credited for, while also raising the question of whether a PhD project can ever truly live up to the expectations of a PAR project (Janes, 2016, pp. 76–78). Hopefully, I have been transparent enough for the reader to assess this for themselves.

Both these failures – unfinished teaching materials and low participation in the academic process – were due to the Covid-19 pandemic which prevented me from returning to Kenya and also meant that the KPL members were very busy with pandemic related activities, which took precedence over participating in this thesis. As explained in chapter 4, due to the KPL's busy schedule, the lack of stable internet for many, and because peasant activism is very place-based, I was not able to conduct in-depth conversations with more than a few of people after 2019, which severely limited the amount of participation I could facilitate online. This thesis is of course also limited by me as a person, as I am limited through my own positionality as a researcher within the global north, which needs to travel long distances to be in Kenya. It can be questioned whether doing PAR is a good idea as a researcher based in the global north with limited resources and time.

Even if there had been no pandemic, my time in Kenya would still be limited by my obligations as a PhD student, and the need to travel long distances. Moreover, perhaps a person with a different background for example in agroecology, either as a scholar or a farmer, could also have been more beneficial for the movement and for the cohesion of the text.

In terms of representation of members, I never visited the newest clusters in Baringo, and now also in Siaya, counties which could have had different perspectives on the KPL, as they were both newer and more geographically isolated from the already existing KPL clusters. It would also have been interesting to be able to include the activities of the KPL during the pandemic, especially in terms of scaling out, as the KPL has really expanded over the last two years.

While the collaborative elements of this thesis failed, the *action* part of this PAR collaboration was not completely unsuccessful. The goal of a PAR project is to facilitate the kind of change that the movement is working towards, not only to co-create research data (Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1402–1405). I managed to collaborate and stand with the KPL in different contexts outside this project, the most concrete and recent being the successful crowdfunding campaign in 2022 to raise money to buy land for women affected by land-grabbing and gender-based violence (KPL, 2022b; LVC, 2022). At the time of writing, the KPL Women's Collective have inaugurated the KPL's Rescue Centre in Migori on the 25th of November 2022, which is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Lastly, it is important to highlight that this thesis was never meant to be generalizable, as it is a single case study (Earl, 2017, pp. 131–132). The hope is that in its specificity this thesis can speak to other contexts, as it is clear what needs to be translated for it to apply to another context. Contributing with the practices and political theories of the KPL is both a way of insisting that political theories are inherently contextual, and a way of showing what delicious theoretical meals we are missing when we do not take social movements seriously as knowledge and theory creators. In the following, I go through the main contributions to the literature from chapter 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, while also showing the connections between those contributions.

Practicals, place-based teaching and intergenerational learning

In chapter 5, I answered the question *how the KPL teaches*, by sketching out the many different ways that the KPL teaches formally inside and outside of the movement. In this thesis, I consider it formal movement teaching when it is a learning situation where everyone agrees ahead of time that this is a learning situation. Informal learning refers to situations where learning is either a by-product of an interaction, or initially only pursued by the KPL members. I use this distinction as both forms of teaching situations are intentional for the KPL and the main difference between the two is whether it was an expected learning situation and the degree of planning and organization. While the formal movement teaching of the KPL is not formal in the sense that it happens in an institutionalized educational setting, it is formal in the sense that it is very

organized and structured. Only designating institutionalized education as formal, seems to only make sense viewing movement education from the perspective of institutional education, while from a social movement perspective what the KPL does is clearly formal *movement* teaching. In chapter 7 and 8 I address the informal teaching of the KPL. Chapter 5 is mainly descriptive, adding the example of the KPL, a rare east African movement, to the pantheon of work on teaching and learning in agroecology movements and setting the stage for the following chapters.

As the KPL subscribes to what they call the *spiral learning model*, they take a critical pedagogy approach to teaching, where they do not see sharp hierarchies between teacher and student. Instead they emphasize horizontal farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchanges, as many other agroecology movements do (Bernal et al., 2023; McCune & Sánchez, 2019; P. Rosset et al., 2019; Val et al., 2019). For many members of the KPL, this farmer-to-farmer training started as intergenerational learning, when they as children were taught by their parents, grandparents or other family elders, about farming through what the KPL calls *practicals*. Practicals are very simply the opportunity to practically try out new knowledge, and for many members they first came into contact with agroecological practices in this way. A lot of the intergenerational learning was done by elder women, and specifically grandmothers were often the source of knowledges, while some had also learned lessons from their grandfathers. A significant minority had also encountered practical lessons on agroecology in primary and secondary schools (Casado et al., 2022, p. 2). These experiences highly inform the work of the KPL as they taught the KPL members, first the importance of practical place-based learning, second, that indigenous knowledge has value and is often held by women, and lastly, that a lot of learning takes place outside, and sometimes just outside, the physical classroom.

The main forms of formal movement teaching inside of the KPL are their internal workshops and seminars, with their yearly summer school being the largest event. The summer school is hosted by different clusters each year, where members host members from other clusters in their homes and use their farms as classrooms. Like many other agroecology movements, the KPL deconstructs what a classroom is, viewing the farm as both a classroom, research site and teacher through their place-based pedagogy (Gruenewald, 2003; McCune & Sánchez, 2019; S. S. Moore, 2017). Place-based knowledge is understood as knowledge which is anchored in the political, cultural and *physical* context of the place, where both the human and more-than-human life shape the learning process (Gruenewald, 2003, pp. 4–10). The summer schools are very participatory, and before each summer school the KPL hosts a pre-summer school with the participants to decide on which topics to cover in the summer school. So, the KPL challenges student-teacher hierarchies, as they insist on basing *what* is taught on *who* is taught and *where* they are taught, which is closely related to their view of PAR – the people affected should be the ones making the decisions.

In the summer school, and the other workshops and seminars of the KPL, the knowledge shared were not just on farming practices but also more abstract concepts and analyses on gender, age, and the global economy.

These more abstract lessons would, however, still be taught in a more practical way through roleplaying and what the KPL calls *African meditations*, which are an appropriated version of the Latin American *místicas* (Hammond, 2014, p. 372). Both the spiral learning model, PAR and místicas are related to a Freirean critical pedagogy (Fals Borda, 1999, pp. 13–17, 22–23; Levkoe et al., 2018, pp. 1390–1393; Manzo & Brightbill, 2007, pp. 39–40; Wakeford & Rodriguez, 2018, pp. 23–25), whose influence has clearly come to the KPL through LVC. However, as pointed out earlier, these approaches to teaching were also part of many members' peasant upbringings so these are not only to Freire's credit, rather it seems his pedagogy of the oppressed resonates because it is the pedagogy created by the oppressed.

The members of the KPL also engage in formal movement teaching outside of the KPL through their different collaborations with learning institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities. David C. for example, teaches about the indigenous passion fruit in collaboration with many different institutions who come and visit his fields for practicals, while other members help set up gardens on school grounds in their local school bringing the practicals to the students. Overall, the main point is once again deconstructing the classroom, prioritizing place-based practical teaching, and levelling the student-teacher hierarchy. Even though David C. was a recognized expert on indigenous passion fruit, he went into every lesson knowing that he would also learn something from the students who came to learn from him. In these ways, the KPL is prefiguring a different, practical, more democratic and participatory education system in which indigenous knowledge is both respected and shared freely. In chapter 6, I extrapolated the KPL's pedagogical theory from these practices as a place-based, critical peasant feminist pedagogy.

Intersectional Peasant Feminist Epistemology

As presented in chapter 6, the pedagogy of the KPL challenges neo-colonial patriarchal knowledge hierarchies through a peasant feminist epistemology, where in the farmer is recognized as a researcher and their indigenous and generational knowledge is considered valuable (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 533–534; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, p. 597; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, pp. 11–13; S. S. Moore, 2017, pp. 250–251). This chapter, thereby, answers, the latter part of the first research question, *what is the KPL's theory of pedagogy?*

The KPL's pedagogy is similar to other agroecology movements, who are directly inspired by Freire, while the KPL is indirectly inspired as stated above (McCune & Sánchez, 2019, pp. 603–605; P. Rosset et al., 2019, p. 900). The KPL's pedagogical theory, is crucial to the movement and is also evident in their prefiguration and scaling efforts as shown in the later chapters. It is an inherently decolonial peasant feminist theory of pedagogy, anchored in the Kenyan context. The two main contributions to the literature from this chapter are; first, that the chapter adds an important example, to the growing group of examples of African agroecological pedagogy (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019; Bezner Kerr, Young, et al., 2019), which are still underrepresented in the literature. Second, this chapter highlights how re-valuing indigenous knowledge,

through their critical traditionalism, is more central to the KPL's work than LVC method of diálogo de saberes. In the Kenyan context, indigenous farming knowledge is not valued in the mainstream, and the KPL's theory suggests that to engage in a dialogue of knowledges, both sides need to value their own knowledge first. Moreover, this indirectly supports the critique of diálogo de saberes as a practice mainly focused on the farmer-to-researcher relationship, rather than the farmer-to-farmer relationship, as the latter is the main focus for the work of the KPL (Júnior et al., 2019, pp. 4–6).

As mentioned above, the KPL's pedagogy is fundamentally place-based and centres practical teaching while they deconstruct the classroom and the teacher-student relationship through participatory teaching based in the needs of the participants. Through the contextual anchoring of the teaching, the environment is not simply a backdrop but an active participant. The environment is seen as a teacher in its own right, showing the farmer what works and what does not. The farm also becomes the laboratory for the farmer, who is both the teacher, the student and the researcher, which is why agroecology conceptualized as both a movement, a praxis and a science, challenges academia's monopoly on knowledge creation (C. Anderson et al., 2019, p. 542; Brem-Wilson & Nicholson, 2017; Levkoe et al., 2018). And the KPL challenges academia's monopoly on knowledge as well by viewing all their farmers as inherent researchers. Through this project and others like it, the KPL encourages its members to write small reports in the different WhatsApp groups to encourage members to practice writing reports, and also demystifying what it means to do research, while also allowing all members to participate in their different research projects.

Whether the environment teaches kind or violent lessons depends on how we as humans contribute to the reciprocal cycles of the environment around us. The recurring example was the fig tree which contributes to the hydrological cycle when planted, making rain patterns more predictable, and the reverse being the case when areas are deforested. Climate change has made the environment an unpredictable and rough teacher, while caring for the environment will turn it back into a caring teacher. As Moore puts it, this type of place-based learning is about "[…]*learning from rather than about a place*." (S. S. Moore, 2017, p. 249). Consequently, more-than-human life plays a big role in the KPL's pedagogy. In the KPL, as in other agroecology movements, seeds are seen as both carriers of knowledge and culture (Koch, 2021, pp. 13–15; Meneley, 2021, pp. 6–7; Shiva, 2005, p. 30, 2019; Shome, 2019, pp. 204–205). Moreover, the KPL members see a connection between protecting bio-diversity and protecting indigenous knowledge, as they would often point out how the devaluation of indigenous knowledge can lead to the extinction of indigenous species. Knowledge is thereby, something that is created and held by people, and something that is too valuable not to be shared freely, as more indigenous knowledge leads to more indigenous species (Shiva, 2005, pp. 59–60, 83–84, 126–127). David C. teaching people about indigenous passion fruits is the perfect example. Not only does he value getting this knowledge out too as many people as possible, he also freely shares seeds and seedlings, as it is the only way to protect the almost extinct species. Seed exchanges are a big part of why

many people join the KPL and are, consequently, just as much an exchange of seeds as it is an exchange of knowledge. This also ties in to the KPL's critical traditionalism and their intersectional peasant feminist analysis which is at the root of it. As in LVC, the KPL's brand of peasant feminism is an intersectional, class conscious feminism which challenges the limited scope of urban, middle-class feminisms (LVC, 2021a).

It is crucial to underscore that the knowledge and the seeds mentioned above are traditionally held by women, which is one of the reasons they have been undervalued (Shiva, 2005, pp. 124–127). Even in seed exchanges the labour and knowledge of women get erased, as with the example of a certain maize variety shared mainly by the wife of a married couple, but the community still nicknamed the variety after the husband. This is a clear example of how the re-valuing of indigenous knowledge and species is not an automatic re-valuing of the contribution of women, and why the KPL also sees the re-valuing of the contribution of women as an important part of their agroecological practice. From their intersectional peasant feminist starting point, the KPL has a more holistic view on the challenges faced by their members, not viewing age or gender discrimination as separate struggles to the struggle for agroecology, but as common struggles towards the same goal. Examples of issues the KPL address when it comes to gendered oppression are the land-grabbing from widows, FGM of young girls and being mindful of including women and youth in decision making processes within the movement, as I explain in chapter 7.

At the heart of the KPL's pedagogy and teaching is their intersectional peasant feminist epistemology. The KPL views knowledge as powerful, in the sense that gaining access to agroecological knowledge has changed the lives of all the members and can change the lives of their communities for the better. Moreover, knowledge is seen as co-created and contextual, challenging the Cartesian mind-body dichotomy of westernized epistemologies (Berger & Kellner, 1981, pp. 25–26; hooks, 1994, pp. 137–139, 193–199; Mies, 2014, pp. 38–40; Steager, 2013, p. 174). Moreover, as many scholars, the KPL stresses that agroecology needs to be based in an intersectional analysis as farmers are facing not just capitalism, but patriarchy and neo-colonialism as well (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019; Martignoni & Claeys, 2022; Milgroom, 2021; Seibert et al., 2019). Only by challenging patriarchal structures, can the KPL truly begin to value the indigenous farming knowledge traditionally held by women, which shows how related the KPL's peasant feminism is with decolonial and intersectional feminism (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 533–534, 537-; Gliessman, 2018a, p. 600; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 896–897).

Through their peasant feminism the KPL challenges the westernized dichotomies of regressive rural and progressive urban, which is very much tied to the narrative of a linear modern progression of history (Bhambra, 2007, pp. 30–31; Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 5–6; Copeland, 2021, pp. 455–456; Maldonado-Torres et al., 2018, p. 73). Instead, I describe the KPL's peasant feminism as critical traditionalism: they re-value indigenous knowledge, held by women, while also challenging patriarchal and neo-colonial traditions. Faced with the de-mobilizing narrative – a play on what Mier y Terán et al. call mobilizing narratives (Mier y

Terán et al., 2018, p. 13) – of agroecology and indigenous knowledge as analog, opposed to industrial agricultures digital modernity, the KPL instead insists on re-valuing indigenous knowledge. This leads the KPL to focus more on re-valuing indigenous knowledge, rather than having it engage in a diálogo de saberes.

Consequently, the KPL challenges neo-colonial knowledge hierarchies while highlighting how there is a close connection between agroecology and intersectional feminist thought and decolonial thought, through their common aim of re-valuing indigenous knowledge (C. Anderson et al., 2019, pp. 533–534, 537-; Gliessman, 2018a, p. 600; P. Rosset et al., 2019, pp. 896–897). The KPL is neither digital nor analog, neither modern nor regressive, rather they are critical traditionalists. I define critical traditionalism as a decolonial focus on re-valuing indigenous knowledge, while challenging different power structures such as patriarchal and gendered oppression. This approach is crucial to the KPL's strategies for scaling deep and scaling out, as they focus on scaling both agroecology and peasant feminism. Chapter 7 and 8 focused on the KPL's strategy for scaling deep and scaling out respectively, on the micro-level, and the next two chapters answer the research question: *What is the Kenyan Peasants League approach to scaling agroecology?*

Scaling deep through prefigurative pedagogy

As presented in chapter 7, in order to scale deep inside the movement, the KPL uses prefiguration as a teaching tool through intentional informal and incidental learning opportunities, mainly focused on peasant feminism. Prefiguration is understood as equating goals and means by living the future today (Boggs, 1977, p. 100; Leach, 2013; Maeckelbergh, 2011, p. 4; Yates, 2015, pp. 3–4). Foley decried the lack of focus on the inevitable informal and incidental learning in social movements (Foley, 1999, pp. 6–9, 39, 45–51, 130–131), but this chapter shows how the KPL is very intentional about creating incidental and informal learning opportunities, for their members, through their strategy of leading by example. Most of the lessons focus on, first, teaching practical skills to all members which will help sustain the movement, and second, to scale peasant feminist values deep by prefiguring a peasant feminist organization that challenges gender and age disparities within food production. An example of both these types of lessons, is that each of the KPL clusters are expected to have a treasurer and a secretary and they are encouraged to give the role of treasurer to a woman (of any age), and the role of secretary should be a young person (of any gender), in order to allow the more marginalized groups to learn organizing skills and to centre them in positions of influence. The KPL wants to *lead by example*, making sure that they practice what they preach.

The KPL, and LVC, are aiming to *form* a new way of being, or to scale deep, and the concept of formation is again closely tied to the Freirian concept of *conscientização*, or consciousness raising (Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 220–221). This chapter thereby contributes to both the literatures on critical pedagogy and prefiguration, and especially the intersection of the two, where authors such as Luchies, De Vita and Vittori show the intimate connections between critical pedagogy and prefiguration (De Vita & Vittori, 2022;

Luchies, 2014). Prefigurative pedagogy, according to the KPL, works because it is a tangible lived in argument that allows people to experience that which they might have not been able to imagine.

In the KPL's place-based, participatory, practical, peasant feminist pedagogy, prefiguration is a powerful teaching tool as it can encompass all of the above. For the people most marginalized, they learn that their voices matter, while the ones holding more power and privilege learn that giving space to others is not as scary as they might think (Foley, 1999, pp. 24–26, 39; Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 134–135; Isaac et al., 2019, pp. 163–164). When the KPL is prefiguring peasant feminism and agroecology, they are allowing their members to get a taste of what a peasant feminist world with an agroecological food production might be like.

The KPL members are, thereby, creating *intentional* informal learning opportunities when they aim to lead by example, by becoming prefigurative lighthouses. Instead of creating classic demonstration farms, or agroecology lighthouses, as other movements do (Casado et al., 2022; Mier y Terán et al., 2018; S. S. Moore, 2017; Nicholls & Altieri, 2018; P. Rosset et al., 2019), the KPL aims to have every single household within the movement become a lighthouse for agroecology and peasant feminism.

So, overall, the KPL believes prefiguration is a powerful pedagogical tool for three reasons; first, prefiguration builds the movements credibility and allows people to trust that you are practicing what you preach. Second, prefiguration is a powerful practical argument that allows people to literally taste the fruits of a different food system. Lastly, prefiguration creates opportunities for participatory learning, allowing others to copy the practices of KPL members, both internally and externally through informal and incidental learning. This chapter shows how valuable the concept of prefiguration is to the literature on scaling agroecology, even though it is a concept more fleshed out in social movement literature. Consequently, chapter 7 and 8 illustrate the potential in cross-disciplinary work.

Lastly, leading by example also became a refrain used to be self-critical within the movement, and members would often ask others to lead by example. For example, Margret H. asked the men participating in the 2019 summer school to lead by example and bring their wives the following day, rather than assuming that their wives would not be interested. And the wives joined the summer school the following day. Joseph A. also used this project as a way of asking the KPL to also focus on the plight of people with disabilities in Kenya. At the time of writing this has not resulted in more specific campaigns on this area, perhaps because there are not a lot of members with disabilities yet within the movement, but perhaps more work on these issues could lead to more members with disabilities. However, for the KPL it is not only about practicing what you preach, but also about preaching what you practice, as they do not take for granted that their prefiguration will draw people in, as boats to a lighthouse. In chapter 8, I showed how the KPL scales out by scaling deep, by adding a layer of preaching what you practice.

Scaling out through prefigurative pedagogy

In chapter 8, I show how the KPL combines their prefigurative pedagogy of leading by example, with what I call *preaching what you practice*, in order to scale out the movement. Like other agroecology movements the KPL uses farmer-to-farmer exchanges to scale out their movement (McCune et al., 2017, pp. 15–19; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, p. 596; Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 7–13). However, while other movements focus more on scaling out to already interested farmers the KPL's focus is on convincing farmers who are not sure or outright against agroecology and peasant feminism. In this approach the KPL assumes resistance from farmers and lays out a micro-level strategy of how to convince farmers.

Moreover, KPL is an example of how scaling out agroecology can go hand in hand with scaling out peasant feminism, which other movements struggle with (Bezner Kerr, Hickey, et al., 2019, pp. 1–4; Mier y Terán et al., 2018, p. 21; Vispo & Romero-Niño, 2021). Moreover, the KPL shows how scaling out both agroecology and peasant feminism can be mutually reinforcing and can be done with similar techniques. Once again, this is a conclusion reached because of the cross-disciplinary work of cross-pollinating the work on prefiguration and pedagogy with the work on scaling agroecology. The KPL, thereby, contributes a valuable theory of scaling out agroecology and peasant feminism on a micro scale, in an East-African context, which addresses the inevitable push-back that such movements will face because of the de-valuing of indigenous knowledge. Overall, the KPL approach to scaling deep and scaling out is a very empathic and trusting approach, where they trust the intelligence of their members and communities, based on their optimistic view of knowledge shown in chapter 6. Trusting the people, the process and knowledge, again related to Freire's critical pedagogy and the pedagogy of agroecology, where the focus is teaching people critical thinking, rather than telling them answer (Freire, 2000, pp. 79–81, 92–95; Horton & Freire, 1990, pp. 120–124, 128–130; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, pp. 603–605). This optimism is tempered by their intersectional analysis of neo-agro-colonialism, which leaves them with a large distrust of industrial agriculture.

Preaching is seen as necessary because of the *war of agriculture* they see themselves in, where the other side has power and resources to make their case for industrial agriculture. Industrial agriculture upholds the narrative presented in chapter 6, where agroecology is positioned as backwards while industrial agriculture is positioned as modern. The KPL's intersectional peasant feminist analysis of the global economy and neo-agro-colonialism, thereby, complicates their optimistic view of knowledge and motivates their active strategy for scaling out.

As mentioned in chapter 7, the KPL members are not just creating a few demonstration plots for people to emulate (Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 3, 7–11), rather they view every member's farm, kitchen garden and household as a beacon of inspiration, that are leading their community by their own example. On top of this, the KPL members use every opportunity to talk to their surrounding community about agroecology and peasant feminism, being patient and teaching slowly, because they recognize that learning requires

unlearning, and that unlearning does not happen automatically (hooks, 1994, pp. 205–207; National Research Council et al., 2000, pp. 10–12). The larger take away is that these processes are slow and individual, and that it therefore requires both patience and persistence from the movement to convince farmers to engage in agroecology and peasant feminism.

The people that the KPL are reaching out to are their neighbours, members of their churches or other civil society groups, and general community members. Most of the clusters of the KPL were started because of this strategy, where someone from an area without a cluster met a KPL member and were convinced through these intentional informal interactions. The KPL thereby, highlights the importance of network in scaling out on the micro level as the social movement literature points to, while also showing how important it is that agroecology is not only a science and a practice but also a *movement* (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 117–126; McCune et al., 2017, pp. 15–19; McCune & Sánchez, 2019, p. 596; Nicholls & Altieri, 2018, pp. 7–13). Once again, we see how social movements literature can enrich the literature on agroecology, when they are engaged.

Moreover, when talking to their neighbours or community members the KPL try to address the specific concerns of that farmer – were they struggling with drought or flood? Deforestation or pollution? This illustrates how rooted the pedagogy of the KPL is in a PAR mindset, making sure that learning is not only participatory but that it is shaped by the learner and will eventually benefit the learner in concrete ways. In this way the KPL is approaching these interactions in the same way that they are approaching their summer school and pre-summer school. Moreover, there were also practical lessons on what not to do when scaling out.

While taking their neighbours and community members through these unlearning processes, all the KPL members agreed on three different things that one must not do; first, you should never outright tell the other person they are wrong, as it will simply push them away as they genuinely believe they are right. Second, the KPL members believe that forcing people to adopt agroecology and peasant feminism is both morally wrong and pointless as the values will then have not been scaled deep and lead to sustained change. Lastly, the KPL members think it is particularly important not to judge the learning process of others, as everyone learns at their own pace. The KPL members are not judging anyone who were first sceptical and then changed their minds, both as that would go against their epistemological understanding of learning, but also because most members of the KPL practiced industrial agriculture to some extent before joining the KPL. So, if the KPL turned away everyone who were initially sceptical they would have very few members.

They base all this in their pedagogy as described in chapter 6, where they trusts the process and the learner, which is why they encourage community members to do their own research, like planting GMO and indigenous seeds side by side and seeing the results for themselves. Using prefigurative pedagogy, the KPL members need not point out the problems of using industrial agriculture, instead they actively show all the

advantages of agroecology and peasant feminism. And this *intentionality* is very important as it goes against Foley's notion of incidental learning as being powerful but unintended (Foley, 1999, pp. 39, 45–46), and highlights how movements can be intentional about creating change outside of the movement (De Vita & Vittori, 2022, pp. 86–87).

However, whether the community members listen to the KPL members is of course limited by the members' social position, which is often affected by gender, age, and physical ability, and also sometimes limited by the fact that they practice agroecology, which is considered backwards. A good example is Peter E. whose neighbours did not listen to him, when he tried to teach them about how growing napier grass and using manure can prevent soil erosion. Even though Peter E. is an adult married man, potentially a person with a relatively high social standing, the fact that he practices agroecology made people take his suggestions less seriously, as they thought of him as too old-fashioned or backwards. Only after most of his neighbours' farms were severely impacted by soil erosion, and Peter E.'s was not, did they listen to him.

This raises the question of whether this strategy is useful without physical proximity and a strong social position. Moreover, there is the question of whether the KPL has time to teach slowly when faced with climate change and its consequences, and of course proximity limits the speed of which such a scaling out can happen. However, from the KPL's epistemological standpoint respectfully, insistently, and slowly engaging in dialogue with others is the only way to create lasting change.

From the KPL's peasant feminist epistemology it is quite clear that they do not believe they will create anything lasting by forcing people to do anything, but perhaps the answer is exactly to use more resources to expand the number of people who are able to interact with the KPL, to speed up the opportunities for people to learn slowly. Because as the example of Peter E. highlights, while slow learning is taking place, environmental destruction does not slow down. An argument could be made that a prefigurative movement could achieve the best of both worlds by being active on social media – allowing people to approach them on their own while transcending the limits of who can access them on a day-to-day basis. This does of course not give the same tactile experience as the one the KPL values in their critical place-based pedagogy but could for example still inspire people to do farm-based research of their own. However, this chapter does suggest that this prefigurative pedagogy approach to scaling out requires physical proximity, because their pedagogy is place-based as outline in chapter 5 and chapter 6.

A more place-based "solution" to reaching more people could be that the KPL should focus more on sending people out to their local villages to try and start new clusters, and this was actually something that was encouraged, but was again often not possible due to lack of funds for transportation costs. The question than is whether this prefiguration and preaching what you practice strategy only works face-to-face or whether the KPL has not invested enough time or energy into making it work in other mediums. However, this might be more of a caveat than a critique. Consequently, other movements who might be inspired by the KPL's

practice should simply remain aware that this work is built around the assumption that there is a physical proximity, a degree of visibility and accessibility of their prefiguration for non-members.

Lastly, an important critique that I cannot speak to, since I was not able to return to Kenya is whether this strategy for scaling out – clearly successful in the geographical sense, as seen through the cluster origin stories in chapter 8 – is also successful in keeping the members in the movement long term. I cannot speak to the abandonment rate of the KPL (Bernal et al., 2023, p. 24), and it would be very interesting to assess this strategy with members still inside the movement, and members who have since left the movement to see whether this critical pedagogy approach is also successful in keeping people engaged in the movement. To actually assess how deep they are scaling when they are scaling out.

So, the KPL's approach to scaling, both deep and out, is using prefigurative pedagogy and being intentional about creating opportunities for informal and incidental learning both inside and outside the movement. In chapter 9, I dove deeper into the KPL's motivation for scaling agroecology and peasant feminism, by answering the research question: *How does the Kenyan Peasants Leagues's context affect their theory of prefiguration?*

Class and prefiguration

In chapter 9, I show that the KPL's prefiguration is at the heart of their activism, and it is based in their peasant feminist analysis of how to approach the structural and everyday challenges faced by low-income subsistence farmers in the neo-colonial context in Kenya. Class is defined in this thesis as the socio-economic position of a group or person, within the national and global economy (della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 53–54). The position of low-income subsistence farmers in the global south both describes the KPL members experience of struggling to build livelihoods, while also positioning them within the neo-agro-colonial economy as being in a national context which subjects them to exploitation based in the neo-colonial resource extraction of wealthier nations (Pfrimer & Barbosa Júnior, 2017, pp. 13–17).

While prefiguration in the literature has been criticised by some as a play-thing of the middle-class, the practice of the KPL shows how this is not the case as prefiguration for them is a powerful tool for both surviving and thriving in a hostile world. The members of the KPL both want and *need* a different world, in order to be able to survive, and equating goals and means through prefiguration is a powerful way to achieve that. The KPL is not experimenting for the sake of experimenting – they are creating livelihoods, not lifestyles. Instead, I suggest that the reason prefiguration has been understood as a middle-class tactic is because the literature mainly has covered middle-class movements. The KPL adds a much needed intersectional, and specifically class conscious, theory of prefiguration to the literature from the perspective of everyday rural activism in Kenya. Additionally, they move the focus from spectacle to organization, or from event-time to process time (Casas-Cortés et al., 2008, pp. 44–45; Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 205–208),

and value the mundane every-day work of prefiguring agroecology and peasant feminist food production just as highly as their protests. In this way, the KPL shows how prefigurative movements can avoid the pitfalls of the square movements and other prefigurative movements mainly focused on spectacle. According to Maeckelbergh many of the square movements failed because they collapsed process-time and event-time by limiting their movements existence to large-scale public occupations, and so as soon as the energy for these large scale spectacles ran out, so did the movements (Maeckelbergh, 2022, pp. 209–211). On the other end of the spectrum, the KPL focuses mainly on organizing livelihoods and small-scale practical solutions, while adding in the public spectacle of protest when needed. In this way, the KPL's view of prefiguration adds to both academic and activist discussions of how to use prefiguration as a strategy.

The KPL is prefiguring a different food production when they are teaching each other how to make manure and save seeds so they do not need to buy GMOs and fertilizers. This is motivated by the KPL's fundamental understanding of life being interconnected which links them close to decolonial feminist thought. Through this ontology the KPL conceptualizes climate justice as justice for both human and more-than-human life, as injustice to environments often are connected to injustice to humans. In this way the KPL sees the connections between social, climate and environmental justice. Consequently, it also becomes a moral imperative for the KPL members to prevent harm to life – for example by stopping the use of pesticides use of pesticides – while it also is a personal need to prevent harm to oneself.

Motivated by this ontology, the KPL is prefiguring a different food production when they are encouraging each other to grow several food crops, so they can be self-sufficient and be less dependent on the global market and its buyers. And they are prefiguring different gender relations within food production when they centre the voices of the women in the movement and treat their knowledge and the reproductive work they traditionally perform as valuable. All the KPL's teaching and scaling activities are dependent upon them having a practice to teach about and for others to see and copy. They aim to prefigure e.g., ways their members can put food on the table, ways to fight soil erosion and ways to challenge gendered power dynamics by for example providing women with a stable livelihood so they are less dependent on their husbands. Through their prefiguration the KPL hopes to create a more just world. The KPL's theory of prefiguration is thereby, highly affected by their context, as it is shaped by their socio-economic position as low-income subsistence farmers in the global south, of different genders, age groups and physical abilities. They are demonstrating how prefiguration can be anchored around livelihoods rather than lifestyle, and organization rather than spectacle, which is an important intervention into the literature on prefiguration and social movements.

The KPL's motivation for prefiguration is the same as for the movement – to support peasant farmers to create sustainable, peasant feminist livelihoods through agroecology. John H. highlights how to him founding the KPL and prefiguring agroecology was taking things into their own hands and creating

alternatives to GMOs and chemical fertilizers, instead of only campaigning against it. Low-income subsistence farmers in the global south, need seeds, they need manure and protests and signs will not make sure they can grow food tomorrow. Moreover, the KPL values community organizing, both based in their values, as is visible in their use of PAR for research collaborations, *and* based in their needs they cannot always rely on government services. Prefiguration of essential services, in community led ways, might thereby be the best and only way that these communities can rebuild after floods, support each other during droughts or make sure there is basic plumbing in urban areas. However, this should not be seen as an either or, as the KPL also engages in political protests and lobby work. Rather, this is John H. underscoring how prefiguration is a powerful strategy for the KPL not in spite of but because of their class position, as it can speak to both the needs and the wants of the movement at the same time.

Just as westernized epistemology assume a dichotomy between body and mind, it seems that an assumed dichotomy between needs and wants is what has kept a clearer class focus from entering the literature on prefiguration. For a while, it seemed that to be taken seriously prefiguration scholars insisted that choosing a prefigurative strategy is not only idealistic but also pragmatic (Maeckelbergh, 2011, pp. 13–15), and in the case of the KPL the reverse need to be insisted: pragmatic decision can also be idealistic, which is a foundational principle in a prefigurative praxis. This once again underscores the importance of listening to political theories born in the movements we are trying to understand (Accornero & Gravante, 2022, pp. 196–197; Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, pp. 2–3; Osterweil, 2013; P. Rosset, 2020, p. 50; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 15–18). The KPL's practice and theory of prefiguration suggests that prefiguration is exactly a strong tool in the hands of the marginalized and poor, to live the future they want *and need* today. Because *wants* and *needs* exactly align when basing prefiguration on an intersectional analysis of the movements context, which is gender, age, ability, class and (neo)colonial position in the case of the KPL. Consequently, they both want and need to prefigure ways in which they can survive in the current system today.

While the theories of the KPL of course are bound to their context, it can inspire movements and other theorists in other contexts to think about whether these lessons speak to their conception of prefiguration. If nothing else, the KPL can teach everyone that remembering to centre the specific *needs* of the communities in your prefiguration is an important part of scaling-out, and connecting with the people you want to convince.

Lastly, the KPL is by no means the first or only movement to have such an approach to prefiguration, rather they speak to a longer tradition within decolonial movements, and we need to engage with more theories like theirs to understand activism based in different epistemologies (Osterweil, 2013, p. 616; Schlosberg & Craven, 2019, pp. 15–18). Chapter 9 is a start to a conversation where we can revisit the work of movements such as the Green Belt Movement and the Black Panther Party through the lens of social movements as knowledge and theory creators. Such work could also open up for more in-depth work of the class position of

low-income subsistence farmers in the global south, which is sorely needed. Just as we need to work on expanding our definitions of social movements and movement organizations in rural global south contexts, we also need to complicate our understandings of class in rural global south context.

Roads not (yet) taken

As with any qualitative study, the data co-created speaks to enough possible themes, that it could fill several theses, and consequently, some themes did not make it into this thesis. Here I give a brief overview of some of the themes that could have taken up more space in this thesis, and that I think deserve more attention in future work. First, there is the theme of peasant feminism. While I show how peasant feminism runs through all of the KPL's work, I could have devoted the entire thesis to engaging with the KPL peasant feminism and engaging it with other feminist thought. When writing I considered whether there should be a separate chapter on peasant feminism, as the KPL's peasant feminism was a through line in all of the KPL's activities. Separating it into its own chapter could somehow suggest that the farming and the feminism are somehow separate entities – that the gender stuff is in its own little box, rather than showing how gendered dynamics and their peasant feminism affects all levels of their activism. On the other hand, it can also be argued that by *not* having a separate chapter on peasant feminism I have not given these thoughts the careful attention they deserve. In the end, I decided that it would give a clearer picture of the interwoven nature of their peasant feminism with their everyday practice to have it be examples in the empirical chapters. However, I do think the KPL's peasant feminism deserves more attention, especially in how they refuse to separate their prefiguration and scaling of agroecology and their prefiguration and scaling of peasant feminism.

Second, there is the theme of commoning. As in other peasant and food sovereignty movements, commoning is a crucial practice at the heart of their activities. Especially seed commoning is a crucial practice, as agroecology depends on access to a variety of seeds. It is not realistic for the average farmer to gain access to the necessary diversity of seeds through the industrial model of patenting seeds, which means agroecology is dependent on seed exchanges being free, and seed saving being allowed. Throughout this thesis I have highlighted how access to seeds, through the formal and informal exchange of seeds within the KPL, is a huge motivation for many to join the movement. Pimbert shows how in an agroecological farming praxis you *need* a diversity of seeds as it is aiming at polycultural farming rather than monocultural farming (Pimbert, 2022, pp. 26–28; Shiva, 2005, pp. 87–89, 2016, pp. 42–44, 50–51). Moreover, the KPL like other food sovereignty movements, also champion commoning of knowledge, land and other inputs making a more general appeal for the sharing of resources and making them freely accessible. Commoning could thereby, be said to be the perfect encapsulation of the KPL's needs centred prefiguration as they are motivated by both making sure their members can have enough food, and by their belief that this will lead to a better world. The reason I chose not to have a chapter on commoning, is that a chapter would not be enough to cover this

topic, and I could write a whole separate thesis just centred around commoning. This would mean not focusing on the teaching and learning aspects of the movement – which was the original agreed upon topic of the collaboration between the KPL and myself – except for when it tangentially came into contact with their commoning. So, instead I have done it the other way around, and kept my focus on teaching and learning while mentioning commoning when it comes into contact with their teaching, learning and prefiguration. Moreover, being an interdisciplinary thesis, there are already many literatures at play and adding the vast literature on commoning both within agroecology, political theory and social movements, would add more confusion than clarity.

Thirdly, I could have dedicated more time to focus on the KPL's efforts on scaling up, through lobby work and protest campaigns. The KPL is very active politically both locally, nationally, and internationally. Internationally, members of the KPL have for example participated in UN processes as representatives for LVC, nationally they fought the ban on manure, and locally they are often fighting for access to government services. This is an important part of KPL's work, and focusing on this could also have added to the conversation on prefigurative movements using several strategies (Forno & Wahlen, 2022, pp. 126–127). However, this was a PAR project, and the knowledge that the movement was interested in documenting in 2019, was the knowledge used by their members in their homes, clusters and communities, which revolved around their everyday agroecological practice and peasant feminism. Moreover, the KPL's work of scaling up, their lobby and protest work, is what often puts them most at risk of repression, which made it quite easy to decide to focus less on this part of the work and risk putting them in further danger. The recent political developments in 2023 seem to validate this decision (Wandera, 2023). I am not ruling out further work on this, but I find it hard to morally justify publishing details about this precarious work in a thesis that does not directly benefit the KPL, rather than co-writing a text with the KPL on these issues.

Lastly, I would have loved to dive more deeply into the connections between the theories of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton and the KPL. Newton's theories of survival pending revolution and reactionary and revolutionary intercommunalism are astute theorizations of the neo-liberal economy (Narayan, 2017a, pp. 4–8), that align well with the KPL's theories as I mention in chapter 9 and above. Moreover, it is a theory that is sensitive to the different ways neo-liberalism affects racialized and working class peoples across the globe, in ways that even contemporary theories are not (Narayan, 2017a, 2017b, 2020; Opperman, 2020). However, introducing a theory only relevant to one chapter, on top of the many other theories and literatures in this thesis seemed too much. Perhaps instead what I need to do is a deep dive into revolutionary intercommunalism as a theory of prefiguration on its own.

All of the above topics deserve more time and attention, and I would love to be given the opportunity to work more on them in the future. Moreover, other interesting topics arose from the KPL's theory of prefiguration. As mentioned, the KPL's theory of prefiguration indirectly challenges the assumptions of the

middle-class as the natural basis for social movements, which encourages more work with an intersectional class perspective on different social movement strategies in the context of the global south (della Porta, 2015, pp. 4–9, 2017, p. 468; della Porta & Diani, 2006, pp. 36–44; Fernandes, 2019, pp. 392–395). Additionally, and connected to the thoughts on Newton, it would be interesting to do a comparative study of prefigurative environmental movements in Africa and see if there are similar dynamics in their theories of prefiguration, how it relates to their strategies of scaling, and whether they are as rooted in an intersectional (peasant) feminist analysis of structural power as the KPL.

The point of engaging with social movement theory is not to assimilate it with academic theory, nor to hold it to the same standards. In this thesis I have taken a *glass half full approach* to the KPL, where I am trying to highlight the contributions and strengths of the KPL's practice and theory, without overlooking the contradictions (Borras Jr., 2023, pp. 19–20). It is important to remember that it is impossible both to completely transcend one's historical context and that it is impossible to *relate all means and ends.* Most social movements using prefiguration as a strategy are aware of this and most recognize that social movements are in a constant process of trying to reach their goal (Day, 2005, pp. 197–200, 208–209; Yates, 2015, p. 16). This does not mean that we cannot critique such movements, quite the contrary critique is what keeps this process going, however, we should also not be too cynical in terms of which problems are terminal. Moreover, being a PAR project, with a movement as the KPL that already aims to practice self-critique, adding critique is less about "exposing" or *unveiling* their limits, but about adding points to the already ongoing reflexive dialogue (Arribas Lozano, 2018, pp. 460–461).

To follow the analogy I use in the introduction of theory as food, how well food tastes depends on so much more than the ingredients, it also depends on where, how and why it was made, and who we share it with. I hope that I throughout this thesis have managed to present the reader with a fulfilling theoretical meal that can be shared with academic colleagues and activist comrades alike.

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Appendix

Table 7 Number of FGD's and interviews in the different clusters

	Focus Group Discussions	Individual Interviews
Baringo County		
Kamnarok Cluster	0	0
Machakos County		
Kalianni Cluster	1	0
Mwende Munyanyau	2	1 (1 interview with 2 people)
Migori County		
Kurutyange Cluster	2	3
Mulo Cluster	5	4
Rabolo Cluster	2	5
Nairobi County		
Dandora Cluster	1	0
Kangemi Cluster	1	2
Mathari Cluster	0	0
Utawala Cluster	1	0
Total	**15**	**15**

Table 8-10 Overview of participants, age, gender, geography

Table 8 Gender, Age and Geographic Balance, FGD

Gender, Age and Geographic Balance, FGD														
Focus Group Discussions	%	No.		%	No.		%	No.		%	No.		%	No.
Women	56,5%	52	Adult	60,9%	56	Young Women	47,2%	17	Adult Women	62,5%	35	Rural	75,0%	69
Men	43,5%	40	Youth	39,1%	36	Young Men	52,8%	19	Adult Men	37,5%	21	Urban	25,0%	23
Total	100,0%	92		100,0%	92		100,0%	36		100,0%	56		100,0%	92

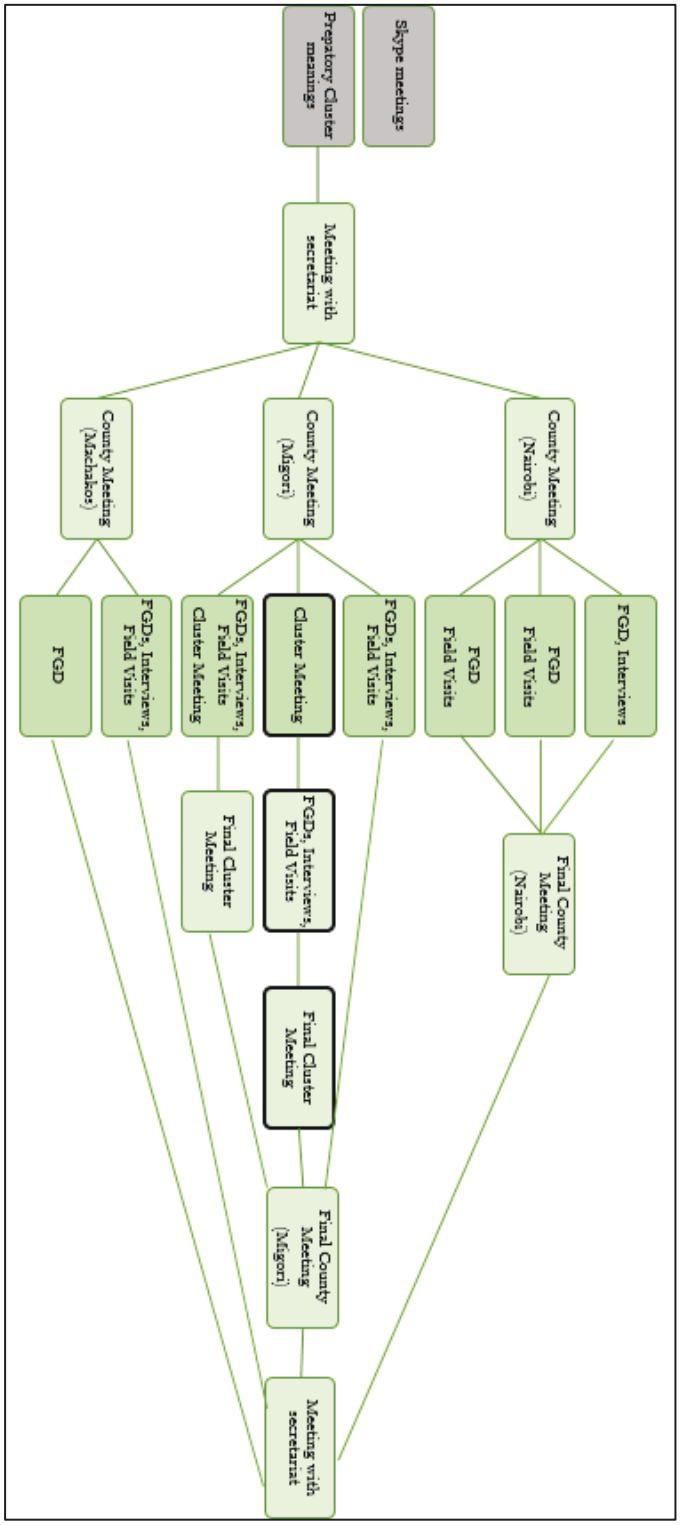
Table 9 Gender, Age and Geographical Balance, FGD without Mwende Munyanyau

Gender, Age and Geographic Balance, FGD without Mwende Munyanyau														
Focus Group Discussions	%	No.		%	No.		%	No.		%	No.		%	No.
Women	48,1%	37	Adult	55,8%	43	Young Women	44,1%	15	Adult Women	51,2%	22	Rural	70,1%	54
Men	51,9%	40	Youth	44,2%	34	Young Men	55,9%	19	Adult Men	48,8%	21	Urban	29,9%	23
Total	100,0%	77		100,0%	77		100,0%	34		100,0%	43		100,0%	77

Table 10 Gender, Age and Geographic Balance, Individual Interviews

Gender, Age and Geographic Balance, individual interviews														
Individual Interview	%	No.		%	No.		%	No.		%	No.		%	No.
Women	50,0%	8	Adult	62,5%	10	Young Women	66,7%	4	Adult Women	40,0%	4	Rural	87,5%	14
Men	50,0%	8	Youth	37,5%	6	Young Men	33,3%	2	Adult Men	60,0%	6	Urban	12,5%	2
Total	100,0%	16		100,0%	16		100,0%	6		100,0%	10		100,0%	16

Figure 5 Illustration of the actual process for each cluster, self-made



Picture 1 Pictures of prompts used in Focus Group Discussions, taken by Sophia Wathne

Picture 2 Map of Kenya, counties

The stars show which counties the KPL has clusters in. The green stars mark where I have been, while the red stars mark the counties I have not visited, either because it was not physically possible in 2019, or because they did not exist in 2019. The map is taken from, Kwach, Julie (2018): 'Nairobi Sub Counties Explained', Tuko.co.ke - Kenya news., https://www.tuko.co.ke/261967-nairobi-sub-counties-explained.html.

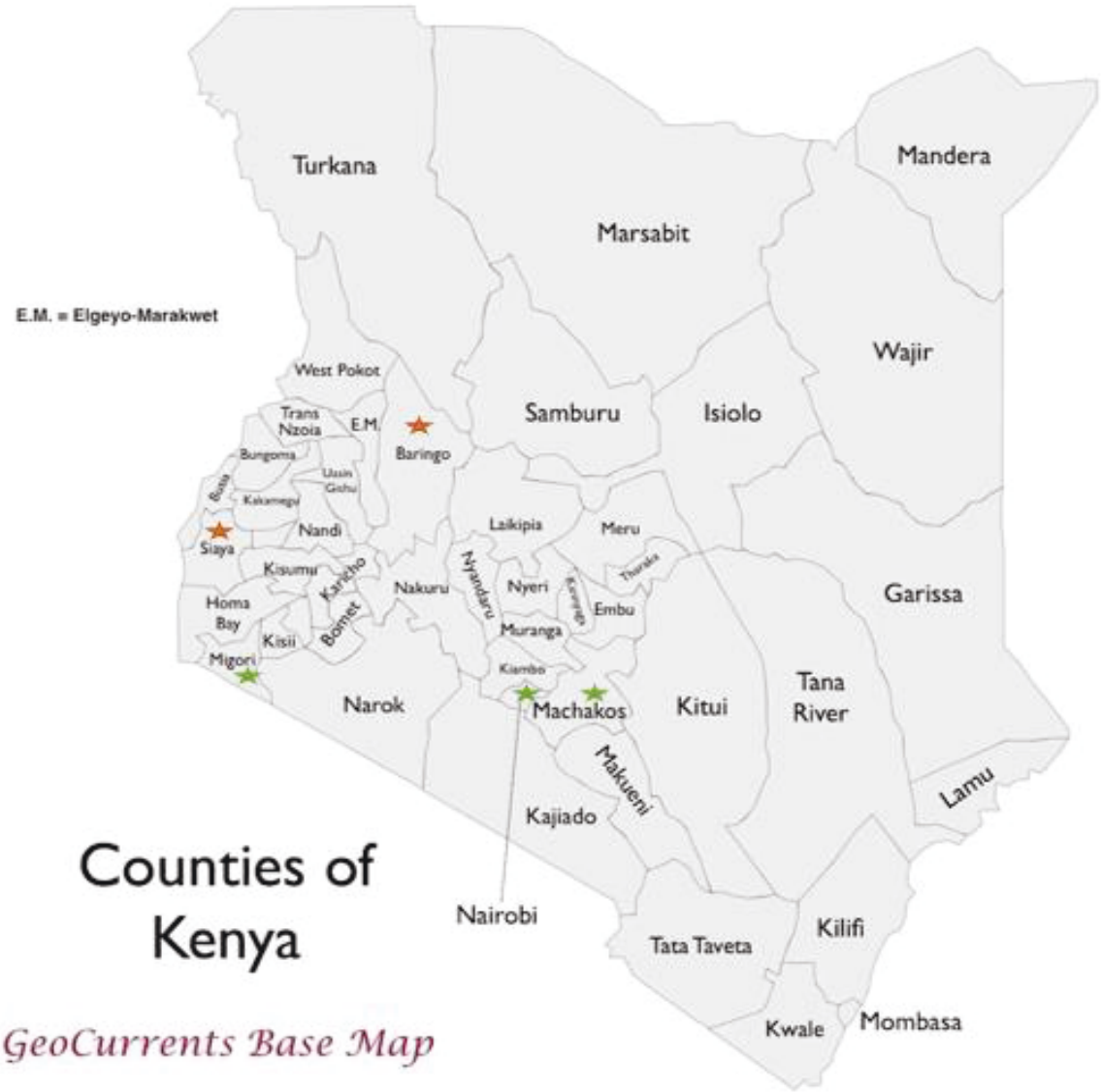


Table 11 Formal Learning Activities

FORMAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES				
Learning Activity	**Aimed at**	**Where?**	**Goal**	**Examples**
Workshops on rights • Women's/Children's Rights • Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	• Community (often schools, clubs, colleges or churches. Often for youth in general or young girls specifically) • Members	Rented halls, schools, churches, outside on people's land	Gaining specific knowledge Empowerment to demand rights Public service announcements	One cluster holds meetings with young girls and their parents (both together and separately) talking about the medical problems with FGM and the rights of women and girls
Farmer to farmer training • Continual training • Yearly Summer school	Members	In the fields	Improved agroecological farming Improved livelihoods Empowering people to teach others	Sometimes the KPL meetings would take place in the fields with a member teaching the others about a specific crop or technique they had learned from other clusters or workshops
Workshops on farming • Specific skills (manure making, tree planting, harvesting) • Indigenous crops • Agroecology more generally	Community (often schools, clubs, colleges or churches. Often for youth)	Rented halls, schools, outside on people's land, in the fields	Introducing more people to agroecology Introducing people to the values of indigenous crops	One member teaches schools, colleges, universities and others about how to grow and protect indigenous passion fruit.
School garden projects	The students in the school	The school grounds	To teach the students about agroecology Showing the value of farming	Many different clusters are collaborating with schools to set up

			Introducing people to the values of indigenous crops Having the school produce its own food	gardens that the students tend to as part of their biology or agricultural lessons
African meditation (Mística) • In workshops • During summer school	Members	Rented halls, schools, churches, outside on people's land	Create deeper understanding of complex topics. Often used before or after meetings and trainings, to prepare and summarize	A member mentioned a mística on land grabbing by multinational companies in Kenya before a training
Role playing exercises	Members	Rented halls, schools, churches, outside on people's land	Create deeper understanding of complex topics	In the teaching materials we co-created there was a "game" where each participant is given different gender, age and class backgrounds and then asked to think about what that means
Focus Group Discussions (FGD)	• Members • Community at large (often relating to research)	Rented halls, outside on people's land	Problem solving matters at hand. Brainstorming new projects Empowering Research	The KPL conducted Focus Group Discussions with women on microcredits in several clusters as they researched the pitfalls of microcredit.
Farm based research	Members	In the fields	Finding new solutions Learning about agroecology	The KPL is currently experimenting with organic pesticides

			Learning research skills	that work against the full army worm which is a large problem as it attacks maize which is a staple food crop.
Internet based research	Members	Online (requires smart phone or computer access)	Finding and sharing teaching resources Gaining specific knowledge Self-study or study in groups	Documents from LVC and other movements are often shared in the different WhatsApp groups
Monthly/Bi-Weekly KPL Meetings	Members	In people's homes, outside on people's land	Learning from other's experiences	Meetings were often set up as chances of listening to others talk about their experiences with certain crop or certain breeds of indigenous species.
Organizational work (i.e., cluster secretary, treasurer, convener)	Members (often focused on youth and women)	In people's homes, outside on people's land	Learning organizational skills Make sure the movement has people with organizational skills in the future. Empower people to be comfortable taking initiative. Prefigure youth and women in central or powerful positions	When I visited it was decided that in each FGD there would be a rapporteur taking notes with the explicit purpose of giving more youth in the KPL the chance to practice their reporting skills.
Seed exchange	Members	Rented halls, schools, churches,	Knowledge of different crops	Members exchanging seeds for crops they are curious about or

		outside on people's land	Knowledge of different seed saving techniques	need to solve various problems

Table 12 Informal Learning activities

INFORMAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES				
Learning Activity	**Aimed at**	**Where?**	**Desired outcome**	**Examples**
Seed exchange	Members	Rented halls, schools, churches, outside on people's land	Knowledge of different crops Knowledge of different seed saving techniques	Members exchanging seeds for crops they are curious about or need to solve various problems
Monthly/Bi-Weekly KPL Meetings	Members	In people's homes, outside on people's land	Empowerment (especially focused on youth and women) Learning how to express themselves and cooperate	Meetings were mentioned as opportunities for specifically women to practice speaking up in semi-public settings, to give them more courage to speak up in public and private settings.
Organizational work (i.e., cluster secretary, treasurer, convener)	Members (often focused on youth and women)	In people's homes, outside on people's land	Learning organizational skills Make sure the movement has people with organizational skills in the future. Empower people to be comfortable taking initiative. Prefigure youth and women in central or powerful positions	The KPL insists that each cluster has a convener, a secretary and a treasurer, and the treasurer and secretary roles are reserved for women (regardless of age) and youth (regardless of gender) respectively.
Prefiguration, leading by example	• Neighbours • Community members at large	In people's homes, outside on people's land	Sparking interests in non-members Creating credibility in the community	That KPL members actually farm using agroecological techniques and do not

	• Invited external visitors			purchase seeds or chemical fertilizers
Encouraging non-members to do farm-based research	• Neighbours • Community members (often from clubs, churches, • Invited external visitors	In the fields	Starting an independent learning process Creating credibility for the KPL arguments Allowing people to learn and unlearn at their own pace	Often members would suggest that people who were sceptical about agroecology to plant GMO and indigenous seeds side by side and see what happened for themselves.
Preaching what you practice	• Neighbours • Community members at large	In the fields, at gatherings in other civil society groups, religious communities	Actively trying to show people the work of the KPL Actively trying to show people the benefits of agroecology Allowing people to learn and unlearn at their own pace	The members would actively engage in discussions on agroecology with people in their community whenever they got the opportunity, as they did not count on people coming to them without encouragement