Quality and Value Appropriation by Colombian Coffee Producers: Starting to Fill the Gap from a Gender Perspective

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Abstract

Gender – considered as an intersectional analysis unit – can bring further insights into global value chains from production and processing to retailing and final consumption. This article provides insights on gender-specific constructs from an intersectional research perspective to enrich the understanding of quality attributes and conventions along the global coffee value chain. The exploration uncovers the roles and positions as well as value appropriation of female and male Colombian producers – in particular rural female producers – as they enter the specialty coffee niche characterized by distinctive cup quality (taste of coffee). Recognizing and valuing the contribution of women in all social and economic fields is a fundamental right under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5 to combat all forms of discrimination and enhance self-determination of women and girls as well as gender equality.

Keywords

Gender · Quality attributes and conventions · Female producers · Coffee · Colombia

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https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-36562-2_10

1 Uncovering Gender as an Intersectional Analysis Unit

Gender as an analytic category emerged in the 1970s (Scott 1986). Some theories have followed the binary logic of male and female while others have tackled "women's issues" or the subjective development of sexual identity. However, gender "as a way of talking about systems of social or sexual relations" did not appear before (Scott 1986, p. 1066). Nonetheless, if it is defined "as the culturally established correlates of sex (whether in consequence of biology or learning), then gender display refers to conventionalized portrayals of these correlates" (Goffman 1976, p. 69).

Bourdieu (1980) wrote about how the "di-vision du monde" based on "biological differences and those that refer to the division of labor of procreation and reproductions" works as "the best-founded of collective illusions" (Bourdieu 1980 cited in Scott 1986, p. 1069). Bourdieu also showed how agricultural exploitation was conceived in certain cultures following concepts of time and season, based on definitions of masculine or feminine (Bourdieu 1980 cited in Scott 1986). Likewise, it is important to consider female activities that make agricultural work possible (e.g., women's early cooking for farm workers) and that are not recognized monetarily or symbolically (see Dunaway 2013). Furthermore, Kabeer (2015) addressed bad payment and exploitative working conditions in non-agricultural employment faced by poorer women. Gender norms substantially shape the division of labor and the geographical participation of women and men in productive and reproductive activities (Barrientos 2019).

Criticism of gender as an essential concept emerged within the African American feminist movement in the United States in the 1980s. Authors belonging to the Combahee-River Collective (Hooks 2000; Lorde 1984; Taylor 2017 and others) criticized the ways in which ethnicity, class, and sexual orientation affect women as not being addressed or discussed in hegemonic feminism, which only reflected the positions of white, heterosexual, middle-class women. This critique created a new view on the gender aspect, namely the concept of intersectionality, coined in the United States by the lawyer Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw. Chebout (2012, p. 3) quoted Crenshaw's definition in this regard: "… capturing the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more axes of subordination. It specifically addresses how racism, patriarchy, class oppression, and other discriminatory systems create underlying inequalities that structure the relative positions of women, race, ethnicity, class, and the like. In addition, it addresses how specific acts and policies create burdens that flow along these axes that constitute the dynamic or active aspects of disempowerment."

The intersectional view by intertwining gender and environment (implicitly also agriculture) comprises three multiscale analysis perspectives: i) nature, culture, and power, whose central axis criticizes the Western definition of nature and considers gender and its relations to the environment "as a socially political sphere"; ii) feminist political ecology, based on "the differentiation of responsibilities, rights, and diverse mobilizations"; and iii) environmental justice, centered on how gender, race, and class differences, among others, shape the kind of environment we inhabit and we have access to (Ojeda 2011, pp. 67). Lugones (2012, p. 133) argued that while the African American-influenced concept of intersectionality is key to the study of gender, women in general "are not truly fighting for intersectionality to become a necessary methodological feature of gender studies: race, class and gender are inseparable and the intersection of the dominant homogeneous categories erase internal heterogeneity and [therefore] erase the Afro-American, the Afro-Caribbean, the Cherokee, the Sioux, the Navajo, the African, the Indo-Caribbean, the Afro-Colombian, the Afro-Latin American, the Guarani, the Mapuche, the Aymara, the Toba, the Quechua". Lugones (2012, p. 134) further stated that to conceive decolonial movements, it is important to "use intersectionality in both ways and stop thinking that there are black movements, indigenous movements, women's movements, as if indigenous women, black women were not contradictions. Where are we going to proclaim our struggle and with whom?" is then a pertinent question.

1.1 Intersectional Gender Perspective in the Coffee Value Chain

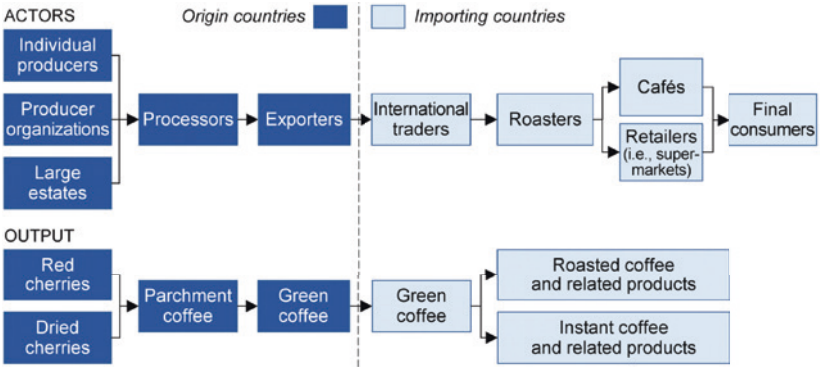
Recent studies have addressed gender relations and inequalities at primary production sites (e.g., Dilley 2011; Lyon 2009; Lyon et al. 2010; Núñez-Solis 2019; Pineda et al. 2019; Quisumbing and Pandolfelli 2010; Ramírez 2011; Utting 2009). Barrientos (2001) portrays the connections in production, processing, and retail, to reveal how gender relations underlying these activities can affect the way how value chains[1] function. According to Leimona et al. (2013), women are generally disadvantaged due to: i) the low level of

[1] The term "value chain" refers "to the sequence of productive (value-added) activities [e.g., coffee cropping and processing at farm level (upstream activities), industrial processing such as roasting; and retailing and final consumption (downstream activities)] leading to and supporting end use" (Sturgeon 2001, p. 11).

participation in decision-making in farming policy, ii) the subordination in land management, iii) the stereotyping as weak actors who are expected to follow mainly traditional norms, and iv) the double burden of career and family (Leimona et al. 2013 cited in Imron and Satrya 2019). According to Senders et al. (2012), the current discourse on gender and value chains focuses on the economic empowerment of women. The role of women is evidenced at the agricultural level or based on primary production relations (e.g., Lyon et al. 2010; Núñez-Solis 2019). Nonetheless, gender as a category of analysis is less studied intersectionally and narrowly.

Particularly in coffee value chain research, reports from producers in Guatemala, southern Mexico, and Honduras revealed that women had "to take control of farms during periods of low coffee prices when the men migrated to urban areas or to the United States" (Dietz et al. 2018; Lyon et al. 2017 cited in Núñez-Solis 2019, p. 69). Lyon et al. (2010, p. 95) uttered the following statement made by a woman in a focus group: "Yes, because women who are alone have to do both jobs, men's tasks are now done by us. The work is double."

Coffee is one of the most traded agricultural commodities in the world and represents a relevant agrarian case for studying gender relations across diverse scales, intersections, and world views. About "20–25 million smallholder coffee farmers and the vaguely defined 100 million people in the producing and processing of green coffee" are involved (Panhuysen and Pierrot 2018, p. 13). The number of actors increases when the entire global coffee chain (Fig. 1) is



Note: In the washed coffee processing method, parchment coffee results after washing red cherries and removing all outer layers (except the parchment). Green coffee results when the parchment is removed.

Fig. 1 The global coffee value chain as an illustrative example. Adapted from Tröster (2015)

considered. The chain is socially anchored and includes producers and processors (men, women, others) at all stages, i.e., primary producers, company owners, managers and workers as well as retailers and consumers. Multipart interactions along the coffee value chain generate context-specific social and knowledge relationships (Quiñones-Ruiz 2020, 2021). Constructions of gender relations, that trigger actors, strongly influence the functioning of value chains and provide a hint about the gender-specific division of labor (Barrientos 2001, 2019). People compete for land, labor, capital, and other assets that enable them to participate in and benefit from value chain functions (e.g., production, processing, retail) (Coles and Mitchell 2011).

In case of unequal access to capital and property, women tend to participate as workers in value-addition activities (e.g., improving quality by selecting green coffee beans to avoid defects), while men dominate decision-making functions (e.g., management) (Coles and Mitchell 2011). In North Sumatra (Indonesia), e.g., women constitute 80 % of coffee workers and play an important role in the cultivation, processing and marketing of coffee; however, they are often excluded from training and other developments (Sarirahayu and Aprianingsih 2018). A study of the International Trade Center (ITC 2008) shows that in Brazil, where one-third of the world's coffee is grown, women's participation in fieldwork and harvesting is low due to the high level of mechanization in farming. In Vietnam, women make up about 50 % of in-country traders, which is a significantly higher proportion compared to other countries. Despite the important contribution of women as a labor force, they generally have little impact on the domestic and foreign coffee trade (ITC 2008).

Little attention has been paid to the situation of women facing multiple disadvantages, e.g., due to gender, race, or ethnicity. Therefore, gender needs to be studied from an intersectional perspective, e.g., to make specific discriminations visible (e.g., the situation of peasants, blacks, indigenous people, migrants, or women affected by armed conflicts as in Colombia). Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to explain gender empowerment processes in relation to the specific conditions of coffee cultivation, processing and retailing/final consumption of high value-added products (e.g., roasted coffee, coffee beverages). Gender constructions related to differentiated positions of producers (women, men, others) along the value chain activities and their specific and contextual knowledge may go beyond the single event of market exchange.

Even more, understanding gender constructions from an intersectional perspective can uncover exploitative relations in the still postcolonial and extractivist global coffee value chain, in which producers mainly located in the

South (e.g., Latin America, Africa, Asia) sell raw material (green coffee) at low prices, while industrial processors and consumers in the North (e.g., Europe, North America) market exclusive products at high prices. At the same time, additional insights and viewpoints from the intersectional perspective provide opportunities to make informed policy decisions and reshape the global coffee value chain.

1.2 The Need for Differentiation and Value Creation along the Global Coffee Value Chain

Market liberalization of the sector, i.e., the dismantling of the quota system rooted in the International Coffee Agreement in 1989, led to fierce competition among coffee-producing countries. To address this, producers started to comply with voluntary standards such as Fairtrade, Organic, Rainforest, and UTZ, among others (e.g., Daviron and Vagneron 2011; Dietz et al. 2018; Geiger-Oneto and Arnould 2011; Glasbergen 2018; Jaffee 2014; Loconto and Dankers 2014; Muradian and Pelupessy 2005; Panhuysen and Pierrot 2020; Potts et al. 2014; Raynolds et al. 2007), which are demanded by domestic and international buyers and roasters in consuming countries. The narratives behind the voluntary standards represented by the labels, which constitute symbolic quality attributes of coffee marketing, have led to power shifts in favor of the roasting and retail sectors (downstream activities) (Bacon 2005; Daviron and Ponte 2005). In other words, the coffee quality that producers sell and the coffee quality that consumers get are completely different (Daviron and Ponte 2005). While producers are remunerated for material quality (e.g., the absence of physical defects), consumers pay mainly for symbolic quality and in-person services attributes (e.g., embedded in a coffee cup (beverage) served in a fancy coffee shop in New York). This is referred to as the coffee paradox (Daviron and Ponte 2005), meaning that producers continue to focus on selling raw materials while international buyers and roasters offer a highly differentiated ready-to-drink coffee.

Not surprisingly, dissatisfaction with well-known voluntary standards for coffee emerged. As a result, producers (male, female) – as well as downstream actors (e.g., roasters) – have been seeking for rewarding alternatives, such as the opportunity to enter coffee niches (e.g., specialty coffee, Café Femenino). The specialty coffee niche is based on direct relationships along the coffee value chain and deals with high-quality coffee [e.g., based on the scores defined by the

Specialty Coffee Association (SCA)[2]], aimed to improve producers' livelihoods and roasters' corporate images (Vicol et al. 2018). In 2003, women from Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and the United States created the International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA) with the goal of improving all aspects of the coffee industry by empowering and connecting women on issues of quality, gender equality or self-organization (IWCA s.a.). Also in 2003, 464 women farmers in northern Peru decided to separate their coffee production from that of the men. They created their own product and income. Their coffee cooperative joined the commercial partner Organic Products Trading Company to create Café Femenino – a gender-focused program to support social justice and empowerment of female producers worldwide (Café Femenino s.a.). This article aims to provide insights for an intersectional gender perspective to uncover the quality attributes and conventions followed by female and male producers along the value chain of specialty coffees with the goal of revealing how to govern a reshaping of the still-extractive coffee value chain.

2 Guiding Concepts and Theory

Daviron and Ponte (2005) defined three main distinguishable coffee quality attributes: i) intrinsic or material, ii) symbolic, and iii) in-person service. The first type refers to 'intrinsic' and/or 'objective' attributes. Certain physical (e.g., absence of color or size defects in cherries, parchment or green coffee beans; required humidity of beans), chemical, or biochemical processes and parameters are assessed by human senses or accurate measurement operations and devices. The second attribute (symbolic) cannot be measured in the same way, because it is based on narratives and reputation, often embedded in trademarks, geographical indications, or other voluntary standards (i.e., formally compliant with certifications or based on trust). While "trademarks enable the 'consumption

[2]The protocols elaborated by the SCA allow the evaluation of the material quality of coffee, i.e., green coffee beans (e.g., size, color, humidity level) and roasted coffee (cup quality, sensory evaluation). The use of a scoring form in the sensory evaluation (cupping test) allows to disclose desired coffee attributes such as fragrance, aroma, aftertaste, acidity, body, flavor, sweetness, uniformity as well as defects resulting in negative or poor flavors and decreasing the material quality (SCA s.a.). Well-trained cuppers, such as Q-graders, use SCA forms to record the results of a cupping test to determine the material coffee quality (SCA s.a.). Coffees reaching between 80 and 100 points are considered specialty (SCA s.a.).

of an enterprise', geographical indications promote the 'consumption of a place'. Sustainability labels [e.g., Fairtrade] make it possible to 'consume ethics'. The reputation is obtained through repeated consumption experiences and advertising" (Daviron and Ponte 2005, p. 37). The last attribute (in-person service) can be considered as "the immaterial dimension of modern capitalism" (Daviron and Ponte 2005, p. 44). That is, the in-person service attribute refers to the "relations between the employees at the cafés and the consumers, including affective labor" (Daviron and Ponte 2005, p. 46). It occurs at the moment of consuming a coffee beverage in a fancy coffee shop (e.g., Starbucks or Juan Valdez coffee shops around the world) and therefore accrues the highest (e.g., income) value.

The definition of product quality criteria and the respective assessment procedures are the result of communication, negotiations, and coordination (Marescotti 2000; Sylvander et al. 2006). These criteria are synthesized in specific practices and procedures, serving as collectively accepted conventions, which prevent the notion of quality from being reduced to an abstract idea or subjective recognition. Boltanski and Thévenot (1991, 2006) showed the "orders of worth" to explain several types of convention paradigms (Table 1) to be embedded in corporate behaviors, including resource use. These conventions create realities and can serve as differentiation tools (Busch 2011), also for distinguishing product qualities. According to Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), conventions regularly happen in hybrid rather than in single forms via compromises. Global value chains such as for coffee require coordination between actors. This is not just a process of complying with formal rules (e.g., certification schemes). It also involves interactions resulting in a reinterpretation or even suspension of informal (e.g., practices) and formal rules (e.g., compliance with standards), so that actors can benefit from flexible interpretations (Eymard-Duvernay et al. 2003).

By coupling the quality attributes of Daviron and Ponte (2005) with the convention theory of Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) we propose an analytic framework (Fig. 2) that aims to unpack the interpretative schemes for the actions followed by coffee chain actors, to reveal what they understand by quality (i.e., materialized in quality attributes) and how this is reflected in value appropriation along coffee chains (e.g., producers selling not only parchment but also coffee drinks). It connects quality attributes, conventions, and value appropriation accrued by chain actors along the chain. Furthermore, one cannot only grasp the need for coordination, information, knowledge and power exerted by actors (see Dallas et al. 2017) along the global coffee value chains, but also how production and consumption processes are guided or institutionalized.

Table 1 The orders of worth showing eight conventions. According to Diaz-Bone (2018, p. 73)

Convention	Worth/quality	Evaluation criteria	Information format	Personal qualification	Interpersonal relation
Domestic	Tradition, handcraft	Esteem, reputation	Oral, exemplary	Authority and flexibility	Trust
Market	Demand orientation, free exchange	Price	Money units	Desire, purchasing power	Exchange
Industrial	Planning and standardization	Efficiency, productivity	Measurable criteria, statistics	Professional expertise	Functional link
Inspired	Grace, non-conformity, creativity	Originality, innovative capacity	Newness, emotionality	Creativity, ingenuity	Passion
Opinion	Renown	Amount of recognition	Semiotics	Celebrity	Recognition
Civic	Collective interest	Relevance for collectivity	Formal, official	Equality	Solidarity
Green	Ecology (its integrity)	Environ-mental compatibility	Narrative	Ecological knowledge	Responsibility
Network	Activity, self-management	Successful projects	Meetings	Capacity for teamwork	Project orientation

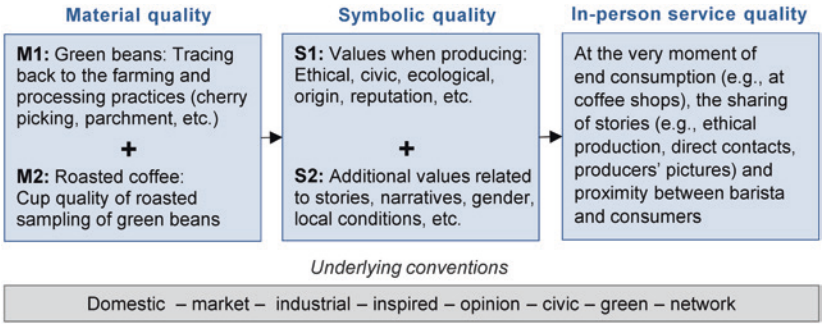


Fig. 2 Linking quality attributes and the orders of worth as coordination mechanisms. Adapted from Quiñones-Ruiz (2020)

The relationship between conventions and quality characteristics is illustrated by the following examples. For instance, to enter the value chain of specialty coffees, the required innovative capacity (inspired convention) of specialty producers to apply novel post-harvest or processing techniques shall be combined with careful natural resource management (green convention), that in some cases follows organic standards (see Hernández-Aguilera et al. 2018). With respect to quality attributes, this also means that symbolic quality is added to the material quality of coffee. Tepox-Vivar and González-Cabañas (2021) showed how coffee producers (e.g., peasants, indigenous farmers, rural artisans) in Latin America and the Caribbean created the label *Símbolo de Pequeños Productores* (SPP) (symbol of small producers) in response to some discrepancies with the Fairtrade standard. According to the underlying civic convention, SPP promotes values such as solidarity, which is understood as the basis of a social organization and the antithesis of selfishness and indifference in their activities as coffee producers. For SPP-certified producers, justice is referred to as the ethical basis for creating democratic rules among participating organizations.

3 Methods

Unanticipated gender issues emerged during the fieldwork in Colombia from June to August 2019, aimed to study coffee quality attributes and conventions in selected value chains. This analysis is based on semi-structured interviews and informal cupping exercises (informal sensory coffee evaluation) conducted with selected specialty producers in Colombia as part of an ongoing research project. Two male producers and one female producer were included as of Quiñones-Ruiz (2020), and two additional interviews with female producers from the field research were added due to the depth and richness of the conversations held with them in Bonda (Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta-Magdalena, manager of a coffee cooperative) and in San Adolfo (Huila) (both recognized Colombian coffee growing regions). The sensory exercise consisted of evaluating two different coffees by the producers and one international coffee buyer (in Huila). The interviews attempted to uncover how (male, female) producers understand (practice) the quality attributes, the conventions followed, and how producers tentatively appropriate the value along the chain (e.g., selling parchment or green coffee, coffee drinks served in a café).

4 Results

Male Producer 1. Inspired producer complying with the SCA standards to achieve high SCA scores for the specialty coffee niche.

Personal Background. Son of a coffee producer, veterinary, more than 20 ha located in different lots, dedicated entirely to coffee cultivation since 2014, does not participate in a producer group but actively exchanges with local producers.

Identified Quality Attributes and Conventions. He has consciously learned about the quality attributes (i.e., by travelling to coffee origins such as Guatemala, Panama, or Brazil) when he decided to enter the coffee sector to prevent the sale of the family farm as his father was frustrated with falling coffee prices and tired of the efforts involved. Male producer 1 is well aware of the defects in green coffee (M1) and can identify their source (i.e., tracing back to the coffee tree, soil nutrition/deficiency, plagues). He uses diverse varieties, i.e., *Bourbon Amarillo*, *Bourbon Rosado* or *Geisha*, in addition to the nationally recommended varieties in Colombia (i.e., *Castillo*). Although he is not an organic-certified producer, he is aware of the value of soil nutrition and strives for an "80/20 or 70/30 organic/chemical input ratio" for cultivating his coffee (Quiñones-Ruiz 2021, p. 111). He considers the agro-ecological conditions and diverse innovative processing techniques (e.g., longer fermentation processes) as front runners to influence the physical quality (M2). He easily described his coffee during the sensory exercise using the SCA lexicon ("*chocolate tones, very aromatic, medium acidity, creamy body, long-lasting residual*"). He assisted other participants to start cupping, as some producers were shy at the beginning of the sensory exercise. He has participated at specialty coffee competitions and is an experienced cupper (not certified). He has set up a small coffee lab on his family farm to evaluate cup quality (M2). Male producer 1 has personally invested a lot of efforts to organize the first specialty fair "Feria de Café Especial Tierra del Bourbon Rosado" in San Adolfo in 2018, without involving the national coffee authorities (S2, extra efforts to show an origin, to tell a story), to cup and promote the *Bourbon Rosado* from the region, involving not only the coffees from his farm, but of all local coffee producers able to participate, also following civic and domestic conventions.

Value Appropriation. He sees himself not only as a producer but also as an entrepreneur (adapting to market trends) and has managed to export directly to specialty roasters (small quantities), albeit mainly green coffee to importers

in North America and Asia. He has also exported small lots of roasted coffee. Explaining that the roasting he gets might not be suitable for the European market, he said "*we are learning*" [to roast]. Although he does not run a coffee shop to manage the in-person service attribute, he registered a trademark for the roasted coffee mainly sold in the domestic market.

Female Producer 2. A committed producer for whom natural and human resources are equally important regardless of an SCA score.

Personal Background. Inherited the coffee culture from her parents, 4 ha, belongs to an organic association, retired teacher, widow, also manages the inherited farm of her two children.

Identified Quality Attributes and Conventions. As a member of an organic certified producer group, she is very much knowledgeable about production rules and methods for organic coffee production and is considerably aware of the management of natural resources and workers. She visibly appreciates the symbolic quality (S1). During the interview, it was very important for her to show the farm, specifically how she manages water, forest, compost, and the workers. She described her coffee as "*salud*". She also showed some agreements that workers need to sign before starting their jobs. For her "[the worker] *is not a person to be kicked around, it is a person who belongs to the family*" (S1). Green and ethical values were clearly observable regardless of the material quality she might achieve represented in an SCA score (M2). She did not participate in the sensory exercise.

Value Appropriation. She brings her parchment coffee mainly to the organic cooperative. A small portion of her coffee is roasted and sold informally to friends. She stated to sell a healthy coffee that does not contaminate the environment. Female producer 2 is very much guided by green and civic conventions.

Male Producer 3. Recognized and started valuing his coffee after participating in a coffee competition (Cup of Excellence).

Personal Background. Recognized producer in the region, 10 ha, belongs to an association for about 15 years, also repairs de-pulping machines.

Identified Quality Attributes and Conventions. He became more aware of the material quality (specifically M2) as he was ranked fifth in the Cup of Excellence in 2012. After this event, he considered producing organic coffee and stated:

"*One day I would like to become an organic producer because now I know the value of my coffee*." Although he did not participate in the sensory exercise, he prepared a coffee for us and described it following the SCA lexicon.

Value Appropriation. He already had a coffee shop in Neiva (Huila) before 2012, but used to sell standard quality only. Now he owns two shops (in-person service quality) and since 2012 he has only been selling his own quality coffee brands at his shops and has learned how to prepare coffee. He directly exports green coffee to the United States, Germany and Russia.

Female Manager of a Coffee Cooperative (and Producer). A self-confident coffee cooperative manager aiming to utter the efforts made by female and male producers and to challenge the extractivist global coffee chain.

Personal Background. Manages a cooperative of about 65 producers (women and men), daughter of a coffee producer who "*had to take over*" the responsibilities of the family farm after the death of her father.

Identified Quality Attributes and Conventions. She mentioned the relevance of M2, as worthy as M1, to achieve good material quality. Particularly, she stressed the importance of the sensory assessment (cup quality, M2). She acknowledged M2 as requirement for international buyers before formalizing buying agreements. Moreover, the cooperative evaluates all parchment coffees of the approximately 65 associates: M1 in the warehousing facilities and M2 in the coffee lab. In her work, apart from running the cooperative, she concentrates on improving M1 and M2, but also highlighted S1 and S2 on behalf of and for the benefit of all members. She considered herself as a *mujer campesina* (peasant woman) who has faced the perils of the armed conflict and violence in Colombia, as well as other associates. In particular, she strives to show the symbolic quality of the coffees during her negotiations with buyers by revealing the environmental conditions in which the coffee is produced (S1), but also the additional efforts made by producers, in particular women (S2), in the cultivation, processing, and transportation of specialty coffee. She uttered the importance of the history (a coffee with a name) to define what she qualifies as a "*good coffee*", so that the following question can be asked (and answered): "*Who benefits from the purchase of this coffee?*" She did not participate in the coffee exercise, but described the coffee quality according to her personal taste ("*the coffee that I like*") with a medium acidity and a creamy body. For her, a good coffee is ranked 84–85 following the SCA score.

Value Appropriation. The cooperative processes the parchment coffee brought in by the producers mainly into green coffee and exports it as Fairtrade, Organic Fairtrade and Women's Certified coffee. The cooperative also has its own brands and commercializes a small amount of roasted coffee (beans and grounded) for the domestic market. The associated producers also run their own coffee shop (in-person service quality) in a touristic town in the Caribbean region.

Female Producer 4. Best calibrated with the international buyer/roaster during the sensory exercise, pays attention to the agroecological conditions of her farm.

Personal Background. Manages the farm together with her husband, 5.5 ha, participates in a producer group.

Identified Quality Attributes and Conventions. She mentioned the importance of quality and named soil quality as a key factor for preventing the use of pesticides and fertilizers and for a good quality of cherries and hence of parchment and green coffee (M1). For her, it is important to plant other trees (forest) to accompany the coffee trees (green convention). Similar to the female manager, she also specified that coffee has to have all sensory attributes and a balance between acidity, body, and sweetness (M2). For her, a good coffee is a fruity one with traces of red and yellow berries. The international buyer recognized her skills as a cupper during the sensory exercise. Likewise, she stated the efforts involved in planting diverse coffee varieties and experimenting with coffee processes to improve cup quality (innovative capacity to improve M2), but also voiced the pride of producing a high-quality coffee. When asked, "What motivates you to sell quality coffee?", she answered, "*You always strive to improve the economic part, and beyond that, to offer something of good quality, no?, that is worthwhile (que valga la pena), you feel proud about*" (S2).

Value Appropriation. As a member of a producer group, she mainly brings parchment coffee to the group, and through it green coffee can be exported via intermediaries, but also directly.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

In Colombia, women represent approximately 30 % of coffee producers (FNC and IGAC 2017). In a country with well-established coffee institutions such as Colombia, producers are generally able to explain the efforts required to achieve a minimum level of material quality. However, the extent of understanding

material quality (M1 and M2) will depend on the processing stages along the chain that producers are able to manage and dominate, whether they are women or men. It seems that the consciousness and the values put on the management of natural resources will depend on external knowledge (from men, i.e., when participating in competitions) or on values and experiences (from women in a more holistic approach for farming, but also for processing and through their self-identification as *mujeres campesinas*, revealing certain intersectionality). This assumption will be further examined during the upcoming fieldwork (i.e., master and PhD studies). The uncovering of *additional values* (S2) could reveal further aspects related to the trade of specialty coffee, since material quality, especially cup quality (M2), is at the forefront when international roasters and buyers search for specialty coffees. The concern and goal of achieving quality – the quality-turn (Ponte 2016) – keeps producers in a constant creative innovation "mode" (inspired convention) when cultivating and processing coffee embedded in the followed SCA standards; but it also allows producers to acknowledge certain green, civic, and/or domestic conventions.

Women's contributions in the specialty coffee niche go beyond unpaid work on the farm or selecting the best cherries and green beans. Their specific stories (i.e., violence embedded in armed conflicts) need to be spoken. Likewise, the conditions under which coffee is produced to obtain specialty coffees (but also conventional) need to be shown, as these are usually invisible (e.g., local conditions and narratives, poor farm infrastructure and tertiary roads, lack of electricity) (Quiñones-Ruiz and Salcedo-Montero submitted). In particular, future research endeavors to uncover and highlight the role and positions of women (as well as men) in the contest of value chain management and their specific efforts to ensure intrinsic, symbolic, and in-person service quality attributes. In other words, we strive to see women not only as peasants, artisans, and guardians of their land and communities (see Narotzky 2016), but also as qualified and recognized actors who create and appropriate value in upstream and downstream coffee miles. Finally, future research attempts to make visible the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5, by achieving "gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls" not only as "a fundamental human right, but [as] a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world" (UN s.a.).

Acknowledgements: We are very grateful to all interview partners in Colombia for their time and invaluable inputs. We kindly appreciate the comments provided by Manuela Larcher and Camilo A. Salcedo-Montero. This work was financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) [grant no. T960-G27].

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