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Guillaume Ollivier, Stephane Bellon

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Alternative agricultures in academia: is Justice a cleaving issue?

Ollivier, Guillaume

Bellon, Stéphane

INRA Ecodéveloppement, Avignon, France



IRSA Congress 2016



Introduction

Many alternative agriculture propositions emerged since the 1970's, as social movements and/or in academia: organic, sustainable farming, agroecology... (Ollivier, Bellon, 2013)

Some of them have strong revendications about justice, in academia and social movements: e.g. in agroecology or organic agriculture

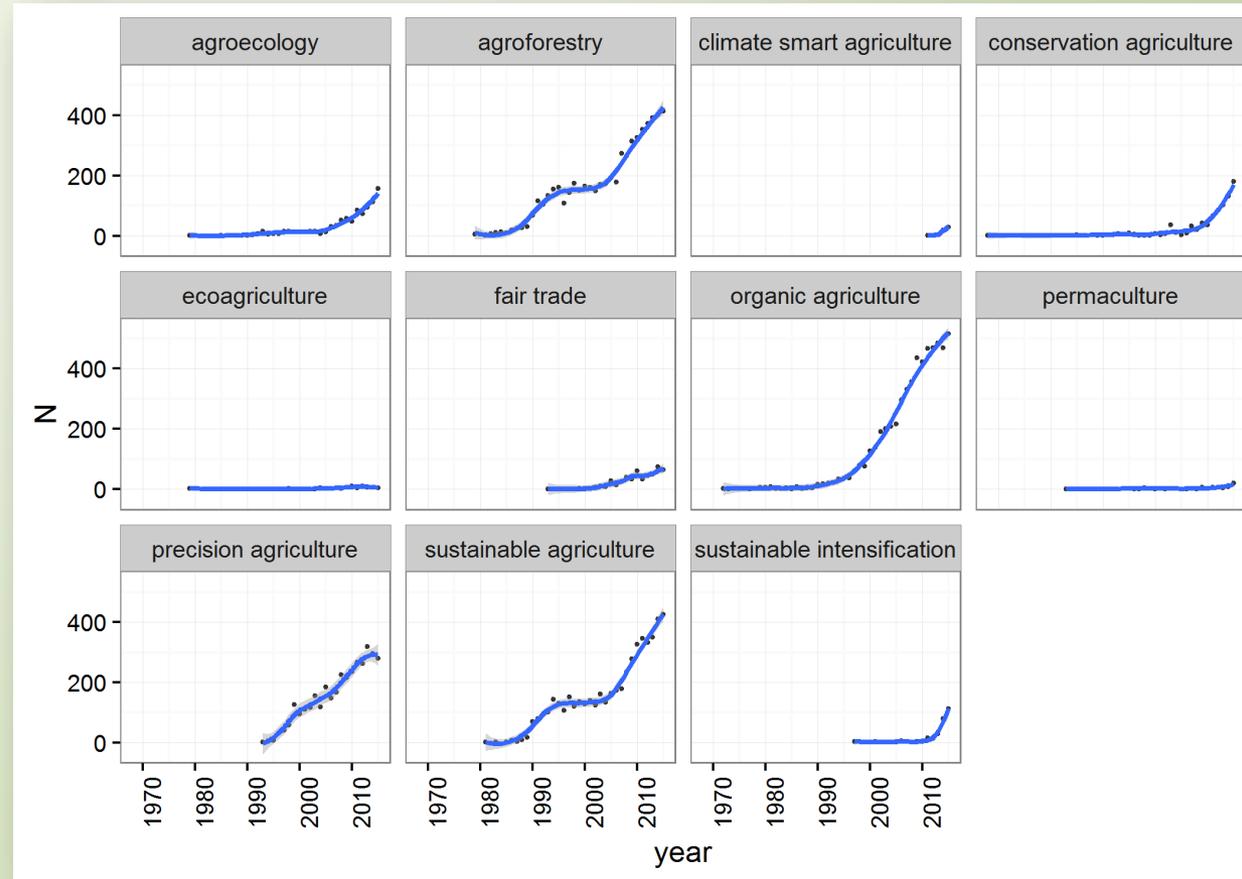
Questions: What about Justice issues in this proliferation of forms?

- *What are their relative positions about Justice in academia?*
- *Are these issues a cleavage?*
- *What is the specific contribution of Agroecology?*

Material & Methods

Web of Science corpus:

- most significant Alternative Agriculture forms in volume and/or in their recent evolution
- 23908 records (Title, Abstract & Keywords) with heterogenous size and dynamics

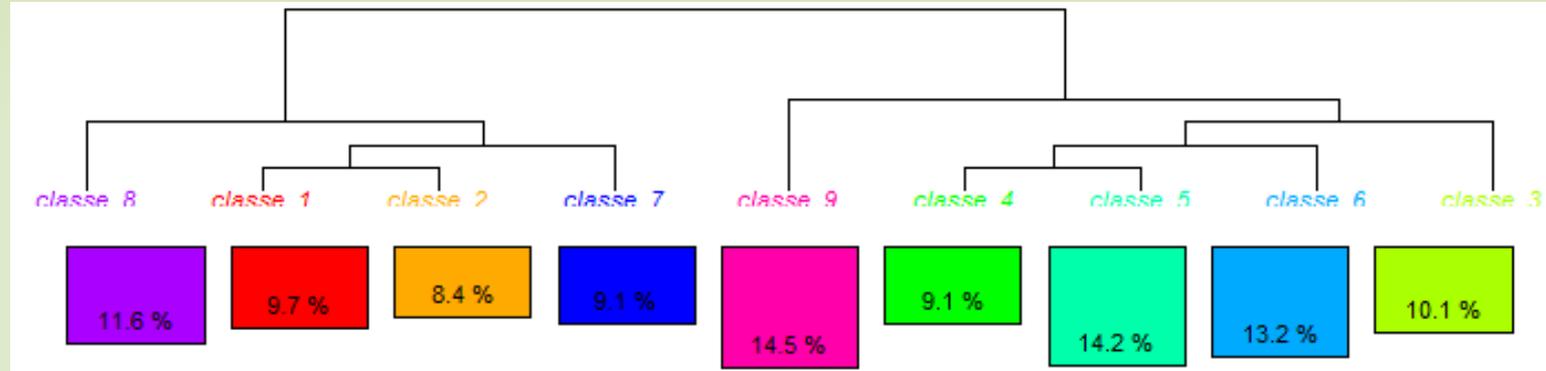


Exploratory statistical text analysis:

- R packages and Iramuteq software => descriptive and multivariate statistics
- ***Most salient and specific structural characteristics of discourses***

B- Another insight: thematic classification with the Reinert algorithm (*robust hierarchical clustering of co-occurring words, then statistical measure of cluster/forms relation*)

Detected clusters of co-occurring terms



% of total corpus

Most specific terms of clusters (*chi2*)



Significantly linked to forms:



At this scale:

- Agroecology is not distinct about Justice
- Most prominent issue: **producer/consumer relation**, by Fair Trade and Organic literature
- Very few references to Justice terms,
- As a **cross-cutting issue with many declinaisons => need to be analyzed at a lower level**

2- Focusing on a Justice corpus

A- Design of a query to encompass various aspects of Justice:

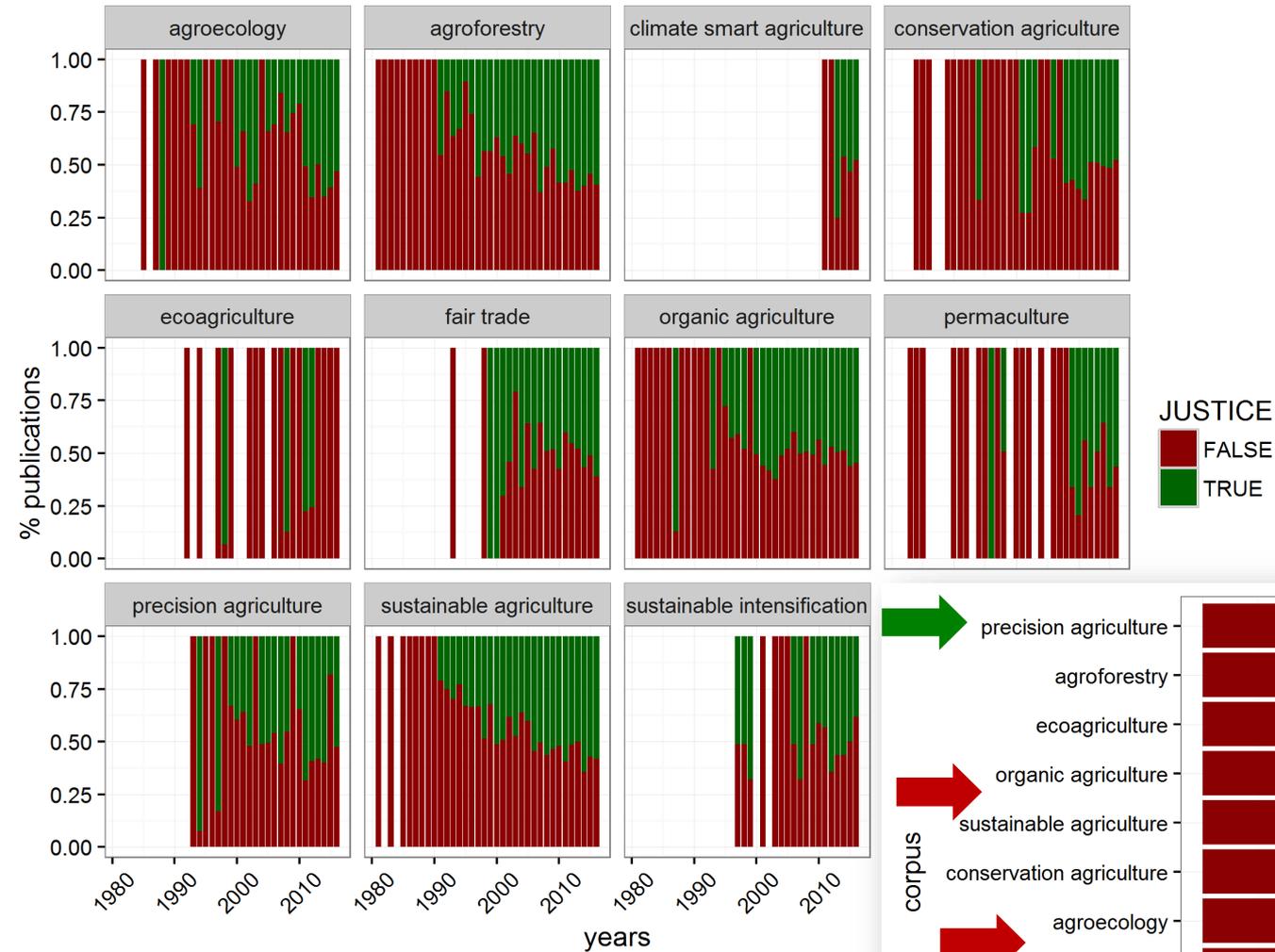
- set of relevant keywords identified via iterative visual exploration of texts and computational help (eg expressions with polysemous words: *right, value, principles ...*)
- choice of abstracts containing at least 2 occurrences of words to limit irrelevant results

"justic|injustic|oppression|dispossession|ecojustice|socially
just|moral|equity|equitable|equalit|egalit|dignity|inequit|inaequal|justness|goodness|sovereignty|fairness|unfair|fair condition|fair
access|access to food|food access|access to land|access to water|access to safe|fair globali|fair distrib|fair price|fair relation|fairer
distribution|unjust|security|insecur|social safet|food safet|environmental safet|gender|socially just|principles and right|social law|social
legisl|social polic|social right|charter of right|legal right|equal right|communal right|human right|civil right|religious right|individual
right|womens right|material right|farmers right|farmer right|workers right|worker right|farmworker right|labour right|consumer
right|ownership right|utilitarian right|property right|property-right|property regim|land right|tenure right|tenural right|animal right|civil
right|water right|resource right|user right|use right|indigenous right|custom right|customary right|traditional right|plant
right|development right|pogge's right|rights to|right of|right to food|right to bargain|restricted right|usufruct right|pro-poor|poor
farm|precautionary principl|stewardship|ethic|bioethic|macroethic|axiolog|welfare|responsibilit|accountability|responsible
action|responsible produc|responsible trad|responsible institut|socially responsib|quality of life|good life|wellbeing|well-being|wealth
distribution|redistribut|dignity|empowerment|emancipation|self determination|self-determination|self-relian|self-relian|self-sufficien|self-
sufficien|autonomy|rural exclusion|social exclusion|political exclusion|inclusiveness|transparency|openness|social accountability|work
quality|intrinsic value|rawls|bentham|kitcher|de schutter|Ziegler|callicott|bryan norton|john seymour|ideals|human value|social
value|environmental value|value judgment|normative value|personal value|value theor|rights theory|organic value|value-based
agriculture|farming value|duty|duties|illegal|legal|courthouse|law court|legitimacy|legislation|lawfulness|monism|social
cost|democrat|undemocratic|citizenship|workload|workfare|labor law|labor welfare|labor condition|labour condition|working
condition|work condition|workers' health|penibility|fair labor|fair labour|jurispruden|jurisdictio|judicial|court
system|legislature|agrarianism|desirability|socio-ethical|virtue|criminal|benefit sharing|consumption value|fair initiative|value of
life|sustainable value|health care|health provision|consumers care|care farming|caring practice|conscious farm|
altruis|philantrop|freedom|food access|unethical|non-ethic|social mindedness|guilt|social cost|social outcome|social
consequenc|externalit|imbalance of power|hunger|non-discrimination|decent livelihood|equal exchange|poverty|societal value|power
back to|core value|values and motivation|social issue|unequal distribution|civic value|civic agric|civic standar|civic engagement|social
protection|anthropocentric values|organic philosoph|ecological philosoph|environmental philosoph|farming
philosoph|anthropocentrism|ecocentrism|utilitarian|socially inclusive|socially-inclusive|benefits to the poor"

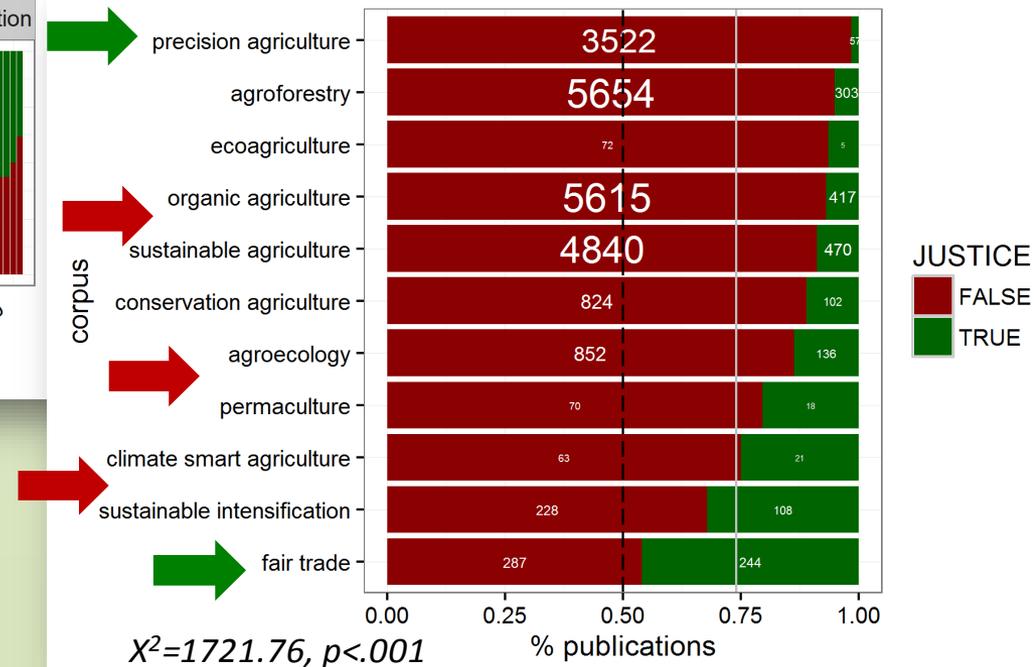
B- Importance of Justice across Alternative Agricultures

An increasing issue since the 90's ...

...in most of academic litteratures



JUSTICE
 FALSE (red)
 TRUE (green)



An uneven distribution across forms
 Some met expectations...
 Some surprises also...

C- The framings of farming justice



Most specific terms of clusters (chi2)	class 3	class 4	class 1	class 7	class 6	class 5	class 2
	food_security energy climate_change population resources Increase productivity by technological efficiency for environmental impact and inequalities reduction	soil tillage nitrogen emission wheat till nitrous Productivity and input efficiency for poverty alleviation	agroforestry household tree forest income tenure Subsistence, livelihood and land tenure security via multipurpose, multistratified and local resources	animal_health animal_welfare dairy welfare animal cow herd mastitis pig Animal welfare in organics	consumer ethical behavior attitude choice organic_food willingness Individual and ethical consumer behavior inside market regulation rules	fair_trade certification coffee governance politics producer chain Political Economy of Agrofood chains in a neoliberal and globalized world	community vision sustainable_agriculture food_sovereignty social permaculture Right of people in connection with biotic communities to control their own food and agroecosystem
Significantly linked to:	Sust. Intensification Sust. Agr	Conserv. Agr. Sust. Intens.	Agroforestry	Organic	Fair Trade Organic	Fair trade	Sust. Agr. Permaculture Agroecology

International organizations: CGIAR, FAO, ICRAF, IFOAM, La Via Campesina

Social and grassroots movements: consumer, retailer, EU, Workers, Peasants

Some actors: smallholders, gender, State, producer, corporation, Safety, gender, Workers, Peasants

Some food issues: Security, Sovereignty vs Security

3- Agroecology: a critical role to other forms

1- Agroecology in the search for a truly Sustainable agriculture

- Agroecology defined as ‘*the scientific basis for sustainable agriculture*’ (Altieri, 1988, Gliessman, 1990...)
- But in the same time, some agroecologists question some appropriations of sustainability:
 - promote a ‘*truly sustainable agriculture*’ in UNDP (Altieri, 1995) and UNEP reports (Altieri, Nicholls, 2005)
 - recognize social Justice in a balanced view of interacting sustainability dimensions (Allen... Gliessman, 1991)
 - silences of sustainability: hunger, farm labor, race and gender issues... (Allen & Sachs, 1992, 1993)

2- Conventionalization of organic practices based upon agroecological principles (Buck, Guthman, Rosset & Altieri...) and ethical criticism also:

- “*the fundamental social responsibility of organic agriculture is improving the **health of the soil** (...). But there is **no consensus on the nature of justice and what equity is**” (Allen, 2004)*
- IFOAM formalized **Organic Principles** in 2005 and implemented them through its standards, even if **Social Justice in not at the top level of hierarchy** (Schreck, 2006, COROS, 2011)
- Increasing influence of Agroecology inside IFOAM, even if there are **still tentions**:
 - *e.g. debates in OWC on certified vs non-certified agroecological peasants => third-party vs participatory certification => North vs South => export vs domestic market*

Conclusions

Justice: difficulties to track, due to blurred and contested semantics, for our analysis but also for scholars and other actors

Justice cleaves: An uneven distribution of Justice issues over Alternative Agricultures, with 3 main competing framings of justice

=> Cleavages about hierarchy of objectives, publics and means, about Technology, State and people self-organization

The particular role of Agroecology: a spur inside the alternative agriculture field, questioning others, but not the single to have justice claims

From Discourses to Practices:

- Possible mismatches between (possibly incantational) narratives and implementation
- Interest to invest situations that deal pragmatically with Justice, with debates on devices, instruments, indicators and standards to implement Justice