

Globalization and the Agrarian World

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Introduction

Over a century ago, Mahatma Gandhi posed the question: “If it took Britain the exploitation of half the globe to be what it is today, how many globes would India need?” One might just as provocatively ask this question today, noting that the division of the world under colonialism continues to shape the uneven consumption of resources, and that it is now commonplace to substitute the US for Britain and China for India.

The British ‘workshop of the world’ model depended on an unprecedented radical experiment of outsourcing its agriculture to the colonies. Today, while the US and Europe, and to some extent, Japan, continue to protect their intensive farm sectors, the model of agricultural outsourcing continues, and is expected to intensify with the rising costs of Northern farm subsidies. Meanwhile, the corporate reconstruction of food consumption relations on a world scale increasingly overrides customary (subsistence) food cultures in the global South, where the bulk of rural populations reside, and consume 60 percent of the food they produce. For the roughly 4 billion of the world’s population excluded from the global marketplace, to access land and resources means competing with the combined pressures of agro-exporting and the global supermarket revolution. To the extent that the agrarian South represents the vortex of globalization, it is the major focus of this essay.

Pressure on resources of the agrarian South is a key dimension of contemporary globalization, with its roots in the imperial past. It represents a world in which those with power, whether military or monetary, have means to commandeer resources and transform rural landscapes. These new *relations of production*, converting agriculture to agribusiness, represent both obstacles and options for rural producers and laborers in the global South as ‘non-traditional exports’ (eg, flowers, fruits and vegetables, shrimp), specialized commodity chains (eg, feedstuffs and livestock), and domestically-located retailers/processors enclose the agrarian world. Such developments are complemented by cheap food imports from the global North that displace local farmers and replace food staples lost through this process and agro-exporting.

While economic theory may refer to this bait and switch operation as the operation of the law of comparative advantage, the reality is a profound transformation of relations of consumption. Not only are producing regions exporting, rather than consuming, the products of their lands, but also staple foods are often displaced as small farmers yield to larger market

forces. The classic example is the displacement of Mexico's inexpensive white maize tortillas by yellow corn tortillas manufactured at triple the price as a consequence of the torrent of corn imports from the US mid-west via the North American Free Trade Agreement. That is, the changing geography of agriculture and food markets expresses a global re-composition of class and dietary relations.

A second dimension of globalization in the agrarian world involves transformation of the *relations of social reproduction*. In context of the above shifts in relations of agricultural production, food security is converted from a local to a global process of social reproduction. New commercial agricultures displace local provisioning with staple foods in the global South, and producers enter global circuits whereby they source (and reproduce) distant consumers, and in turn rely on imported and/or inferior foods to replenish their own diets. Many rural households supplement their subsistence consumption with off-farm income, earned on neighboring farms or plantations, in mushrooming rural industries/*maquilas*, and with remittances from family members engaged in migrant work.

Relations of resistance constitute the third dimension of globalization. Here, the politics of production and reproduction are expressed through movements to reclaim the agrarian world from its conversion to a site of profit. Landless peasants and workers combine with and complement eco-agriculturalists, seed savers, fair traders and food sovereignty movements, challenging the corporate and institutional mechanisms that impose monocultures and unequal market relations. The episteme of the global justice movement for diversity is very much 'agricultural': "encompassing first world farmers seeking market protection, farmers resisting genetic engineering, indigenous sovereignty movements seeking to control land and practices, sustainable development, localist economic visions, and third world peasant movements reacting to the failures of urbanization and neoliberalism by insisting on rights to land and subsistence" (Starr, 2001, p.224). These relations reveal the world-historical antecedents of globalization in the twenty-first century agrarian world.

World-historical perspective on the agrarian world

The social impulse for protection against market privations perhaps defines the political history of modernity (Polanyi, 1957). Today's global justice movements problematize modernity, in the name not just of current social pathologies, but also of the long-term sustainability of the social and natural world. Candido Grzybowski, director of IBASE in Rio de Janeiro, observed of the landless-workers' movement in 2004:

The modernity of the MST consists in questioning us about ... the past of our agrarian origins and about the future in the use of our natural resources, with the question of land at the center....the landless, on occupying ranches, bring to the surface a fundamental question about the possibility of sustainable democratic development in Brazil. We are, of the large countries of the world, the least demographically dense, the most privileged in terms of natural resources – land, water, biodiversity – and at the same time, the most unequal and tragically, the most predatory. For how long, in the name of an even more narrow vision, will we be able to maintain the right to act on this part of Planet Earth in a way that is so socially and ecologically irresponsible?

This rendition of Brazil challenges ‘globalization,’ and the modernity project, which linked the inevitability of progress to the necessity of science in the service of the industrial state, naming this phenomenon ‘development.’ Much of the global justice movement questions this paradigm with a different conception of modernity, revalorizing the Enlightenment principle of self-organization with social and ecological responsibility.

Brazil has emerged as the new agro-export powerhouse in the world economy. Exports of coffee, sugar, poultry, cacao, orange juice concentrate and soy and corn destined for livestock in the global North leave behind forty-four million chronically hungry Brazilians. For Brazilian policy, “the problem of agriculture is not about feeding the hungry, it is about profits and the national balance of trade. The potential for profitable agricultural expansion lies not in feeding the hungry but in better serving the markets of those with plenty to spend” (Wright and Wolford, 2003, p.279). But this observation applies universally, not just to Brazil. It refers to the paradox of ‘abundance amidst scarcity’ characterizing the food equation in this era of globalization.

The roots of this elemental inequality lie in empire, one legacy of which was to divide the world economically, with powerful cultural effects. European colonialism converted parts of the non-European world to export monocultures provisioning the West with various raw materials and foodstuffs. Such conversion reconstructed the dietary geography of the world, with a racialized legacy of under-consumption in the global South linked to over-consumption in the global North. While the under/over consumption relation obtains within all societies, this global dialectic has conditioned the politics and culture of globalization and agrarian relations.

Initially, the fruits of empire included those well-known ‘articles of pleasure’ – the stimulants, tobacco, coffee, tea and sugar. Sheller notes that despite the association of European exploration with precious metals, “it was as much the desire to acquire new edible, pleasurable, and pharmaceutical substances, things that had direct and powerful effects on the bodies of those empowered to consume them” (2003, p.77). She concludes: “As Europeans became more and

more attached to these goods, they were sucked into the vortex of slavery and its human-consuming economy” (Sheller, 2003, p.81). Sugar, originally a luxury for the European aristocracy, became a household commodity by the nineteenth century, and the object of intense imperial rivalry. Chronicling the commitment of imperial resources to securing the sugar colonies in the Caribbean, Mintz (1985) anticipates the role of imperial power today in managing the consumption relations of industrial capitalism.

The history of sugar follows a clear contour: “A rarity in 1650, a luxury in 1750, sugar had been transformed into a virtual necessity by 1850... The difference had to do with the ongoing development of an industrial economy and with the changing relationships between that economy and the overseas colonies.” The key to this relationship was: “the provision of low-cost food substitutes, such as tobacco, tea, and sugar, for the metropolitan laboring classes. By positively affecting the worker’s energy output and productivity, such substitutes figured importantly in balancing the accounts of capitalism” (Mintz, 1985, pp.148-149).

In other words, a world food such as sugar was integral to the value calculus of capitalism, whereby an uneven but combined *global* labor force was constructed and provisioned through an elaborate imperial relation. The empire not only secured the sugar colonies as European supply zones, it also imported supplies of starch such as breadfruit from the South Pacific, and protein such as salted cod from the North Atlantic, to complement indigenous fruits sustaining the bodies of plantation workers. Meanwhile the white settlers of the Caribbean consumed a *creole* cuisine invented by African cooks, and the propertied classes in Europe dined on roast beef harvested from the growing cattle culture introduced by John Bull into the American plains. Empire’s transformation of the agrarian world was irrevocably embedded in complex dietary relations.

Sugar and other stimulants supported the new schedules of industrial work and leisure, becoming generalized as both luxury and wage foods, and, indeed, “refined sugar... became a symbol of the modern and industrial” (Mintz, 1985, p.193). Sugar’s reconstruction of the modern diet linked the emerging food culture to the identification with empire: “As the exemplar of luxuries turned into affordable proletarian goodies by dint of individual effort, sucrose was one of the people’s opiates, and its consumption was a symbolic demonstration that the system that produced it was successful” (Mintz, 1985, p.174). A current analogue is the brisk and growing trade in foodstuffs, propelled by relatively affluent urban consumers desiring exotic, high-value and all-seasonal foods – sourced globally by transnational firms and retailers. A related and increasingly consequential analogue is the dietary transition in domestic food markets

everywhere: a shift towards consumption of processed foods, expressing the embrace of modernity, and enabled by the global supermarket revolution.

The *conditions* of the empire's success in delivering the goods, through agro-exporting, has been likened by Davis to a holocaust. The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw a synchronization of El Nino famines, causing a devastating drought across the tropics, accompanied by a swathe of famine-induced deaths (30-60 million people) from India through northern China to Brazil. In India, British colonialism dismantled village grain reserve systems as grain was transformed into an export product. Transport systems, including the telegraph and its coordination of price hikes, regardless of local conditions, enabled merchants along the line to transfer grain inventories from the drought-stricken hinterland to hoarding centers. Through this device, India was "force-marched into the world market," with grain exports rising from 3 to 10 million tons annually (equivalent to the annual nutrition of 25 million people), coinciding with the rough estimate of 12-29 million deaths during this period. Davis remarks, "Londoners were in effect eating India's bread," and notes that "the perverse consequence of a unitary market was to export famine, via price inflation, to the rural poor in grain-surplus districts" (2001, pp.7, 26, 285).

The response, across what came to be called the Third World, was an anti-imperial millenarianism that fueled the decolonization movements of the twentieth century. Whereas Polanyi's account of the social regulation of the market described European modernity in the making, Davis completes the narrative by revealing 'the secret history of the nineteenth century' – documenting the profound impact of the gold standard on the non-European world. Modernity, for non-Europeans, involved the subjection of their material life to the price form -- a lever by which necessities and new resources alike could be removed without evident force, and transported by price-making merchants to price-taking European consumers.

Modernity, in short, was double-edged, and the market remains one of the foundational elements of this paradox. Today, the World Trade Organization imposes the unitary market via its 1995 Agreement on Agriculture, which prioritizes a model of agro-exporting and food importing over domestic production that cannot compete in the world market. In India, for example, subsidies to small farmers have been withdrawn, and now target agribusinesses involved in export crops. That is, following the post-colonial project of self-sufficiency via the green revolution, Indian agriculture is once again undergoing conversion to serve the world market.

Development and the relations of agricultural production

The immiseration of colonial peoples through such mechanisms inspired the mid-twentieth century project of development, elaborated in powerful corridors of post-WWII Washington, London and Paris, and at the Bretton Woods conference of 1944, creating the World Bank and its sister institution, the IMF. This was the age of ‘hunger amidst scarcity,’ and development discourses formed around the problematic of Third World poverty, as a political threat. President Truman’s Four Point Declaration of 1948 noted: “The economic life of the poor is primitive and stagnant... Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas” (quoted in Escobar, 1995, p.3).

The post-WWII development project included a vision of the agrarian world as destined to disappear in a trope of industrial modernity, which would reshape agriculture as an industrial input and expel peasants into the manufacturing labor force. Contributing to the vision was the complementarity between US agribusiness and the disposal of its food surpluses, to subsidize industrialization in geo-politically strategic Third World states. This food export regime reshaped, indeed westernized, social diets of newly urbanized consumers in industrializing regions of the Third World, at the same time as it undermined local farmers with low-priced staple foods (Friedmann, 1982). The managed construction of the Third World consumer paralleled the decimation of peasant agriculture – each confirmed the simple truths of the development vision, that the western consumption pattern was a universal desire and peasants were historical residuals, destined to disappear.

Post-colonial states implemented this development model in the name of modernity, commercializing public goods (land, forest, water, genetic resources, indigenous knowledge), and extending cash cropping systems to pay for rising imports of technology and luxury consumer goods. Subsistence cultures experienced sustained pressure from cheap food imports and expanding commodity relations, resulting in patterns of peasant dispossession (Araghi, 1995). From 1950 to 1997, the world’s rural population decreased by some 25 percent. During the 1990s, the global urban population increased 36 percent, and by the early twenty-first century 63 percent of the world’s urban population dwells in, and on the margins of, sprawling cities of the global South -- a UN report (2003) noted that slum-dwellers account for an average 43 percent of the population of the global South (Vidal, 2004b, p.17).

Commercial mono-cropping transformed rural landscapes as the US model of capital/energy-intensive agriculture was universalized through the European Marshall Plan, agribusiness deployment of counterpart funds from the food aid program, and green revolution technologies (substituting dependence on capital-intensive hybrids of wheat, rice and corn staples for ‘traditional’ systems of mixed cropping). In addition, post-war American-style consumption

transformed food from its nineteenth-century role of cheapening labor costs to its current role of extending the boundaries of profit, from fast food to the proliferation of processed food via the supermarket revolution. Globally, this appears in the convergence of (largely) urban diets on a narrowing base of staple grains, increasing consumption of animal protein, edible oils, salt and sugar, and declining dietary fiber, contributing to an increasing prevalence of non-communicable (dietary) diseases and obesity. And it gives rise to the notion of a ‘global epidemic of malnutrition,’ in which the 1.2 billion underfed match the 1.2 billion overfed (Gardner and Halweil, 2000).

The supermarket revolution centralizes food processing and retailing via continuing pressure on small or independent producers (Reardon et al, 2003). For example, the purchase of meat from small ranchers in the Amazon by local Brazilian slaughterhouses has been recently replaced by large commercial ranchers producing directly for supermarkets that service the Brazilian and global market. European supermarkets dominate the beef export market with extensive cattle ranching, and Europe and the Middle East account for 75 percent of Brazil’s beef exports. Supermarkets expanded their reach in Latin American countries during the 1990s from 15-30 percent to 50-70 percent of national retail sales. This growth rate exceeds that in the US by five times, and is now accelerating throughout Asia. Transnational firms such as Ahold, Carrefour, and Wal-Mart, comprise 70-80 percent of the top five supermarket chains in Latin America, centralizing procurement from farmers across the region (and their own processing plants), and, together with Nestlé and Quaker, are supplying regional consumer markets throughout the MERCUSOR trading bloc. In Guatemala, where supermarkets now control 35 percent of food retailing, “their sudden appearance has brought unanticipated and daunting challenges to millions of struggling, small farmers,” lacking binding contractual agreements, rewarded only if they consistently meet new quality standards, and facing declining prices as they constitute a virtually unlimited source for retailers (Dugger, 2004).

Standards are now a significant new vector in the global food production complex. WTO regulation of trade relations is complemented by a far-reaching private regulation of production standards, regarding quality, food safety, packaging and convenience. It is integral to the centralization of retailing capital, and the dual imperatives of satisfying quality demands of relatively affluent consumers and replacing smallholding by global/factory farms in order to realize those standards. UK supermarkets, for instance, “believe that concentrating their grower base will reduce their exposure to risk by giving them greater control over the production and distribution processes” (Dolan and Humphrey, 2000, p.167). As a new vector, the standards revolution expresses a transformation of the conventions of capitalism, whereby ‘Good

Agricultural Practices' underlie certification schemes within EUREP, an association of European supermarket chains concerned with regulating quality, safety, environment and labor standards surpassing publicly required standards (Busch and Bain, 2004). But the standards revolution involves selective appropriation by food corporations of social movement demands for environmental, food safety, animal welfare and fair trade relations, with the potential of deepening social inequality globally (at the expense of peasants and poor consumers) as private regulation displaces public responsibilities (Friedmann, 2005). Nevertheless, the new emphasis on quality has been regarded as "one of the bright spots of African development. It has raised production standards in agriculture, created supporting industries, and provided considerable employment in rural areas" (Dolan and Humphrey, 2000, p.159).

Factory farming is the new model of development in the food sector – currently targeting Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Mexico, Pakistan, the Philippines, South Africa, Taiwan and Thailand. Asia, whose global consumer class outstrips that of North America and Europe combined, leads the livestock revolution, driven by an association of development with animal protein consumption. 'Beefing up' has been a long-standing legacy of the British empire, now reproduced through the corporate empire. Two-thirds of global meat consumption expansion is in the global South, sourced with soybeans from Brazil. As its middle class emerges, China has shifted from an originating exporter of soybeans to the world's largest importer of whole soybeans and oils – a dynamic converting Brazilian pastures to soyfields, and displacing cattle herds deeper into the Amazon.

The global livestock industry represents the contradictory legacy of the modern dietary transition for ecological and public health. Meat consumption in the global South outstrips that in the North, and has been referred to as a 'demand-led livestock revolution' in implicit reference to the deepening of the global market relations (Delgado et al, 1999). Expanding animal protein consumption is both an indicator of rising dietary standards, and an increasing source of non-communicable, dietary diseases, with rising obesity rates worldwide. But animal protein consumption also has substantial environmental impacts, alongside those of intensive agriculture. A recent report from the International Water Management Institute regarding the global water crisis, notes that "Western diets, which depend largely on meat, are already putting great pressures on the environment. Meat-eaters consume the equivalent of about 5,000 liters of water a day compared to the 1,000-2,000 liters used by people on vegetarian diets in developing countries" (quoted in Vidal, 2004a, p.31). The contributions of the global livestock industry to global warming, via carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane, are significant:

Global warming is the inverse side of the Age of Progress. It represents the millions of tons of spent energy of the modern era.... Altered climates, shorter growing seasons, changing rainfall patterns, eroding rangeland, and spreading deserts may well sound the death knell for the cattle complex and the artificial protein ladder that has been erected to support a grain-fed beef culture (Rifkin, 1992, pp.229-230).

Climate change is a significant natural effect of globalization, and is already affecting the agrarian world. From the Peruvian Andes, where late blight (of the Irish potato famine) is creeping into high altitude potato fields for the first time in thousands of years, through the great plains of the U.S. and the North China Plain to the fields of southern Africa, patterns of rainfall and temperature are destabilizing agriculture. The Pentagon reported in 2004 that climate change could plunge the North into a mini-Ice Age, with a “significant drop in the human carrying capacity of the Earth’s environment” (Nierenberg and Halweil, 2005:71).

Rifkin’s reference to the artificial protein ladder concerns the displacement of food, by feed, grains across the world, as access to the global market via ubiquitous food corporations allows more affluent consumers to bid away the staple foods of the world’s poor. Thus the relationship identified by Gandhi above becomes a mechanism whereby the global North consumes the food and resources of the global South through the expansion of agribusiness and agro-exports. These resources include the stock of genetic diversity in the South.

Universalization of the Northern model of industrial agriculture through the twentieth century has resulted in the loss of 75 percent of the genetic diversity of agricultural crops across the world. Green revolution crops (new, bioengineered varieties) now account for more than half of the South’s rice culture. The adoption of transgenic technology substitutes monopoly for diversity, threatening ecological and social sustainability, and local food security. A century ago, hundreds of millions of the world’s farmers controlled and reproduced their seed stocks, whereas today “much of the seed stock has been bought up, engineered, and patented by global companies and kept in the form of intellectual property,” converting farmers into consumers of genetically altered seeds (Rifkin, 1998, p.114).

The ‘export of sustainability’ from the South includes the relocation of intensive agriculture to the South, where relatively inexpensive land and labor combine with relatively lax environmental laws (Gupta, 1998; Blank, 1998). Relocation is partly related to Northern environmental degradation – in the US, two million acres of farmland are lost annually to erosion, soil salinization, and flooding or soil saturation by intensive agriculture, which consumes groundwater 160 percent faster than it can be replenished. Relocation of food production resembles Britain’s nineteenth-century decision, but it also follows the pattern of outsourcing

manufacturing and services from the global North. It is a model replicated in China, where the recent acceleration of intensive agriculture has degraded soils from reduced crop rotation, erosion, over-fertilization, and the loss of organic content of soils once nourished by manure-based farming. Over two million square kilometers of land turn to desert annually. During the 1990s, 20-30 million Chinese farmers were displaced by environmental degradation during the 1990s, with predictions of almost twice that number by 2025 (Economy, 2004, p.82).

As the Chinese case indicates, the elaboration of a global agro-food complex is not simply a proliferation of commodity flows. It involves a transformation, and integration, of conditions of social reproduction within and across national borders. In what follows we consider the impact of such a transformation on the agrarian world.

Globalization and the relations of social reproduction

The relations of social reproduction concern how populations survive within international and national institutions that govern material and livelihood opportunities. The dominant theme of neo-liberal globalization is the re-privatization of social reproduction. For our purposes, this is best captured in the changing discourse of food security, reframed in the WTO as food provisioning through the allocative efficiencies of a unitary global market. Since markets respond to (monetized) demand rather than need, this system reproduces hunger at the same time.

Across the broad transition from the development, to the globalization, project, hunger has been a global phenomenon, that is, “ ‘Hunger amidst scarcity’ has given way to ‘hunger amidst abundance’ ” (Araghi, 1999, p.155). Mid-twentieth century food security concerns were addressed through broad public programs committed to poverty alleviation via social reproduction mechanisms of social welfare and development (including food aid), but twenty-first century food security concerns focus on private mechanisms, emphasizing consumer rights to corporate-managed delivery of goods and services. While the market is the designated vehicle and realm of social reproduction, its contradictory relations (cheap food for consumers vs. displacement of rural cultures) mean that a large portion of the world’s population is either reproducing the smaller, affluent proportion, or combining livelihood strategies on the margins of the market to reproduce themselves and their families.

These contradictory relations underly the WTO’s Agreement on Agriculture, a protocol at the center of controversy over trade rules (McMichael, 2005). This agreement governs agricultural policy among member states, outlawing artificial price support via trade restrictions, production controls, and state trading boards. While countries of the global South are instructed to open their farm sectors, those of the global North have so far retained their huge subsidies. Such

decoupling of subsidies from prices removes the price floor, establishing a *low* 'world price' for agricultural commodities, and favoring traders and processors in the global food industry at the expense of farmers everywhere.

The price depression is enabled by a WTO rule eliminating the right to a national strategy of self-sufficiency. The minimum market access rule guarantees the right to export, privileging Northern states and the global sourcing strategies of agribusiness. Sixty percent of global food stocks are in corporate hands, six of which control 70 percent of the world's grain trade. The US accounts for 70 percent of world corn exports, 70 percent of which are controlled by two corporations, Cargill and Archer Daniel Midlands. At the 1999 WTO Ministerial in Seattle, a Honduran farmer observed: "Today, we cannot sell our own farm products on the markets because of ... imports ... of cheap food produce from Europe, Canada and the US... Free trade is for multinationals; it is not for the small peasant farmers" (quoted in Madeley, 2000, p.81). Southern food dependency is the result, for example, after 9,000 years of food security, Mexico, the home of maize, was transformed by liberalization policies and NAFTA into a food deficit country, compelled to import yellow corn from the US at the expense of almost 2 million *campesinos*. The chairman of Cargill observed: "There is a mistaken belief that the greatest agricultural need in the developing world is to develop the capacity to grow food for local consumption. This is misguided. Countries should produce what they produce best – and trade" (quoted in Lynas, 2001).

The corporate food regime displaces staple food crops by exports – whether dumped on the world market, or installed locally as the measure of (global) development. Small farmers face both obstacles and opportunities. With respect to obstacles, the privatization of food security via liberalization not only reduces farm supports (credit, subsidized inputs, etc), but also exposes small farmers to the competitive pressures of artificially cheapened world prices for agricultural commodities. Liberalization policies are rooted in IMF-World Bank structural adjustment measures, which have routinely required 'free markets' in grain – for example in formerly self-sufficient countries like Malawi, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Rwanda and Somalia. Somalia's pastoral economy was decimated by a structural adjustment program of duty-free imports of subsidized beef and dairy products from the European Union (Chossudovsky, 2003). There is evidence, however, that the volatility of agro-exporting has encouraged farmers, close to dynamic urban markets, to shift into 'fast crop' production (fruits and vegetables) to regularize cash income as a matter of sustainability (Ponte, 2002 p.114).

Neo-liberal policies intensify de-peasantization. In Peru, for example, debt rescheduling in the 1990 'IMF Fujishock' introduced cheap corn imports, and inflated prices for fuel, farm

inputs and agricultural credit, bankrupting small farmers and enriching agro-industrial concerns. New laws in 1991 privatizing and concentrating landownership fueled export agriculture, polarizing the countryside, with peasants forced into coca cash-cropping, and/or providing a labor reserve for agro-export production (Chossudovsky, 2003). Chile, an early laboratory for neo-liberal policies, pioneered success in non-traditional exports from the 1970s, becoming the largest supplier of off-season fruits and vegetables to Europe and North America. Meanwhile, food cropping in beans, wheat and other staples has declined by more than a third, as corporate plantations have displaced local farmers into the casual labor force. Across Latin America, while 90 percent of agricultural research was devoted to food crops in the 1980s, during the 1990s export crops commanded 80 percent of research expenditures (Madeley, 2000).

Agro-food export strategies typically divide between corporate plantations and small-holder contract farming. Research on Thai agro-exporting (chicken, shrimp, seafood and fresh fruit) documents limits on income generation and food security (Goss and Burch, 2001), and research on contract farming for the international processing tomato industry confirms that long-term volatilities override short-term gains to producers (Pritchard and Burch, 2003). But the *extant* producers are not the only ones affected. In the Philippines, the average shrimp farm provides 15 jobs on the farm and 50 security jobs around the farm, while shrimp culture displaces 50,000 people through loss of land, traditional fishing and agriculture. One Filipino fisherman observed: “The shrimp live better than we do. They have electricity, but we don’t. The shrimp have clean water, but we don’t. The shrimp have lots of food, but we are hungry” (quoted in Tilford, 2004, pp. 93).

As agro-industrialization deepens under the spur of global markets and agribusiness, rural economies everywhere are experiencing depression or crisis. Low prices and shrinking public supports undermine the viability of farming as a livelihood as well as a way of life. In Brazil, price falls for staple crops like rice and beans have exacerbated rural exodus and rising urban unemployment. The extreme form of crisis is expressed in the rising incidence of farmer suicides around the world, following the spread of the neo-liberal model and its subjection of farming to the price form, reflected in debt stress – from the US in the 1980s, through the UK in the 1990s to India in the late 1990s, and now to China, where privatization of the rural collective has exposed farmers to the market. The Beijing Suicide Research and Prevention Centre reports the incidence of suicide in 2004 exceeded the global average: “those who took their own lives were rural women who remained behind in villages as males in the family migrated to towns and cities in search of work” (Mohanty, 2005, pp.267-68). In the dramatic collapse of the WTO Ministerial in

Cancun in 2003 over agricultural subsidies, the ultimate symbol of this agrarian crisis was expressed in the suicide of a Korean farmer, Mr. Kyung-Hae Lee, on the barricades.

Conservative FAO estimates are that, globally, liberalization has deprived 20-30 million people of their land. This outcome includes a characteristic process of ‘semi-proletarianization,’ which has a long history but has been deepened by neo-liberal policies. Research in Africa documents the impact of structural adjustment through the displacement of the stable servicing of peasants by parastatal marketing boards with private traders, who “rarely provided the market efficiency that the [International Financial Institutions] had anticipated.” The impact has been either ‘de-agrarianization,’ with African peasants reallocating land and labor away from commercial agriculture, or ‘de-peasantization:’ “selling or renting their land to large-scale farmers and turning to agricultural wage labour or non-farm activities.” These processes are accelerated by real wage reductions associated with liberalization, undermine the off-farm income supplements necessary to sustaining farms. Evidence from the late 1990s “indicates that most households now have one or more non-agricultural income sources, and between 60 to 80 percent of their income derives from these sources” (Bryceson, 2004, pp.618-619). Differentiated off-farm labor market conditions correlate with socio-economic differentials among peasants, the poorest households being the most heavily dependent on off-farm, informal piecework labor (Bernstein, 2005; Bezner-Kerr, 2005).

For Asia, between 30-40 percent of rural household incomes are supplemented with off-farm sources, household well-being often best-served in contexts supporting women’s ability to diversify out of farming (Kabeer and Tran, 2002). And for Latin America, the large majority of the peasantry is semi-proletarianized (Kay, 2000), with “subfamily farmers...now increasingly complementing [60 percent of] their incomes with rural non-agricultural employment” (Moyo and Yeros, 2005, pp.28-9). For example, in the Mexican *agro-maquila* industry:

campesinos who are the salaried workforce in the growing agro-export economy no longer have access to land for their own subsistence, have been deprived of their small producer credits and food subsidies, and must piece together their survival often with a patchwork of part-time and seasonal waged work, informal sector jobs, and subsistence activities such as farming their own plots or making their own food (Barndt, 2002, p.175).

Barndt’s ‘corporate tomato’ research qualifies the notion of the rural family unit as the ‘family wage economy,’ where family farm labor is supplemented by “remittances from members who

migrate, and migrating families often offer several family members as salaried workers to agribusiness” (2002, p.182).

The corporate tomato is one of several fruits developed now for export to urban and overseas markets across Latin America, in which fruit and vegetables accounted for 27 percent of its major agricultural exports (oilseeds at 32 percent) in 2000. But in the Latin American countryside, in particular, “agricultural production can no longer be privileged over other income earning/livelihood activities, and there is at the same time growing concern for landscape and environmental considerations and management of forests and water resources” (Long and Roberts, 2005, p.66). This has been termed the ‘new rurality,’ in which urban residents make claims on and for the countryside, even as agro-industrialization intensifies. The commercial agricultural complex is fast-changing, using information technology and mobile phones to link to commodity markets, and seeking production niches in a volatile global marketplace – where retail markets include a proliferation of specialty products. An example of the latter is the market for corn-husks grown by Mexican *campesinos*, and packaged for *tamale* production in California, often provisioning the proliferating ‘transnational communities’ formed through labor migration to supplement the family wage economy (Long and Villarreal, 1998).

The discourse of the ‘new rurality’ is related to the production of ‘global food spaces,’ regions where agricultures are transformed by their articulation with the institutional and quality standards of the global market. Marsden’s analysis of the ‘new agrarian districts’ of Brazil’s Sao Francisco Valley, based in exports of mangoes, grapes, tomatoes, and acerola (50 percent overseas, with 25 percent under contract with French retail giant, Carrefour, and 50 percent to Brazilian cities, in the *Uvale* enterprise), focuses on the new forms of ‘governance’ of the food industry, requiring specific quality controls and design, as well as setting parameters for labor and environmental conditions (2003, pp.30, 57). A successful producer in the shift from seller- to buyer-driven chains, characteristic of neo-liberal globalization, comments:

the market had changed and was demanding quality. We had to change too; more qualified people, new technologies at harvest and after harvest; packing houses, cooling chambers, packaging and wrapping papers.... We had to travel, to hire external experts, and to develop new systems of cutting and irrigation. There were changes in labour control and in the ways fertilization, pulverization and timing were done; the introduction of computer programming was also new (Marsden, 2003, p.56).

This form of agro-industrialization, like earlier, green revolution technologies, is beyond the resources of most farmers, who surrender their farms to their commercial neighbors or incoming entrepreneurial farmers, and may stay on as hired labor. But, given the new conditions

of food governance, the character of rural labor is irrevocably changed. While there is always unskilled work, often assigned to ethnic and female minorities, the new agrarian regions become more selective in their employment practices, opening up the region to qualified newcomers:

whereas the growth of the region was a result of the extensive use of labour, the actual conditions of production led by global standards of competitiveness pressed producers to restructure the organization of production by employing new labour-saving technologies and a more adaptable and qualified workforce (Marsden, 2003, p.61).

In Kenya's export horticulture, growers rely on migrant female labor, with gains being realized through the 'comparative advantage of women's disadvantage' that characterizes the global horticulture labor force, in a context where retailers (with just-in-time inventories) organize global commodity chains (Dolan, 2004). In Latin America, this 'comparative advantage' involves agribusinesses hiring women to combine high-quality labor with the lower costs associated with the flexible employment patterns of women, related to their primary responsibility to provision their household -- in other words capitalist social relations are not simply market relations, but implicate household relations also as part of their conditions of reproduction. That is: "Agribusinesses use gender ideologies to erode stable employment and worker rights where women are concerned. Of equal significance, employing women provides the employer with a way of invoking institutions beyond the workplace to extend and reinforce labor discipline" (Collins, 1995, p.217). From the household angle, female migrant labor patterns are based in decisions "nested within a wider household strategy to enhance security and well-being." In Kenya, where 89.4 percent of horticulture is destined for Europe (especially the UK), the shift away from smallholder-contract production to centralized employment on farms and in packhouses in the mid-1990s, has depended on a migrant labor force, as women in particular migrate for short-term employment to help sustain the household (Dolan, 2004).

The proliferation of new rural districts, as global food spaces supplying urban produce markets, is matched by an expansion of new urban centers in rural areas. One form is 'corporate urbanization' on new agricultural frontiers, notably in the soybean boom in Mato Grosso, Brazil. Here, the *Avanca Brasil*, a \$40 billion state-supported project to open the Amazon for its timber and farmland, partners with global agribusiness such as Cargill, which has the contract to build a new port terminal in the Amazon delta, to connect the vast Mato Grosso soy fields with the insatiable appetite of the ballooning Chinese middle class (Vidal, 2001). As a consequence, "small and medium size towns arise to service the projects, such as the town of Campo Verde in Mato Grosso. . . with a population in the municipality that grew from nothing to 30,000 in fifteen years (Long and Roberts, 2005).

An alternative to opening forest land to development is the Chinese version, where farmers, designated as members of village collectives, have only leasehold rights to their land. Land seizures by city officials for lucrative development possibilities have confiscated land from as many as 70 million farmers over the last decade, driven by the possibility of earning 10 times more on land transaction fees than on farm taxes (Yardley, 2004a). While local grain self-sufficiency was the standard under the Mao Zedong regime, the priority has shifted to exploiting water and land resources for urban development. The annual migration of 10 million peasants into cities has dramatically reduced arable land and domestic grain supplies, leading China to more than double its food imports, wheat from the US, soybeans from Brazil, and rice from Southeast Asia.

China's de-peasantization is reflected in the dramatic transformation of rural landscapes, as industrial estates have mushroomed on former rice paddies. In Dongguan City (producing Reebok and Nike shoes), local farmers now live off factory rents, while tens of thousands of migrants from the hinterland swell the workforce, with Korean or Taiwanese managers (Chan, 1996). Datang, a rice farming village in the late 1970s, with a cottage industry in socks, now produces nine billion socks annually:

Signs of Datang's rise as a socks capital are everywhere. The center of town is filled with a huge government-financed marketplace for socks. The rice paddies have given way to rows of paved streets lined with cookie-cutter factories. Banners promoting socks are draped across buildings (Barboza, 2004, p.C3).

Renamed 'Socks City,' Datang is one of many new coastal cities: southeast is Shenzhou, the world's necktie capital, west is Sweater City and Kid's Clothing City and to the south, in the low-rent district is Underwear City. In China, medium and small town and village enterprises account for over 140 million jobs, roughly one-third of the rural labor force (Eyferth et al, 2003).

Globalization intensifies rural industrialization, beginning with export-processing zones. From the 1960s, firms seeking lower wages were attracted by host governments seeking investment and foreign currency via specialized manufacturing export estates, with minimal customs controls, and exempt from labor regulations and domestic taxes. The Mexican government's Border Industrial Program (1965) established a string of *maquiladoras* to compete with East Asian export manufacturing, sparking a global trend of relocation of manufacturing from North to South via this model of low-wage assembly work.

As de-peasantization advances, states and provinces across the world have embraced the *maquila* model to provide off-farm employment. Between 1975 and 1995, 1,200,000 jobs in the global garment industry located in the newly created state of Bangladesh, alone, and by the start

of the twenty-first century the world economy accounted for almost 30 million *maquila* jobs. From the 1970s, Mexico's *maquilas* spread inland, driven by firms intent upon improving their bargaining position with labor through subcontracting arrangements, beyond reducing wages. Most workers' take-home pay is one-third of a 'sustainable living wage,' forcing them to rely on household and community networks to pool resources to make ends meet. Here local, and global, relations of social reproduction intersect: "When branded marketers of apparel subcontract their production in the developing world, they tap the resources of these communities. By paying less than a living wage, they require them to supplement and subsidize the work that is done in the factory" (Collins, 2003, pp.168-9).

While the development narrative represents rural industrialization as a first step on the ladder of economic success, the world-historical context through which agrarian regions are transformed is more complex. Differential conditions and class differentiation across the agrarian world make generalization impossible. Where rural industrialization is robust and cumulative, such as in parts of Southeast Asia, "peasants appear to have improved their socio-economic status even without a change in the distribution of agricultural land," or sometimes by pawning their land to invest in human capital, such as education for their children or in securing overseas employment (Aguilar, 2005, pp.227-8). Global assembly work typically intensifies gender and ethnic inequalities in rural regions, often generating powerlessness among adolescents, and intergenerational tensions as young people are at once seduced by, and excluded from, symbols of modernity associated with off-farm work (Green, 2003).

A recent study of rural industrialization, via the insertion of two of Mexico's rural areas, Yucatán and La Laguna, into the global garment industry in context of a deteriorating agricultural economy, reveals the limits of the development narrative in this 'low road to competition.' Aside from the absence of technology transfer, global assembly work is increasingly tenuous, where Chinese labor costs (one-sixth of the Mexican wage) are now undermining the *maquilas* (Van Doren and Zárate-Hoyos, 2003). The outcome, intensified labor migration, is often prefigured in gendered relations of social reproduction. For example, in the Los Amoles group of communities in the lowlands region of southern Mexico, while women manage subsistence farms as well as perform domestic assembly work for, or work in, nearby clothing *maquiladoras*, men migrate to the U.S. for short-term work, returning at agricultural harvest time (Gonzalez, 2001).

The migrant labor phenomenon ultimately represents a global response to the changing requirements of social reproduction. In rural China, where the migrant laborer population is around 120 million, "the only way to survive as a family is to not live as one. Migrant workers ... are the mules driving the country's stunning economic growth. And the money they send home

has become essential for jobless rural China” (Yardley, 2004b, p.A1). Already in the mid-1990s, 37 million rural migrants remitted an average of 2,000 *yuan* to their villages, especially in richer provinces (Zhejiang, Fujian and Guangdong) on the coast (Eyferth et al, 2003).

Whether in China’s vast territory, or on an international scale, the export of labor from rural communities has become a key livelihood strategy in the neo-liberal era. Within the global South, under the pressures of structural adjustment in the 1980s, internal migration reached between 300 and 400 million people. Continuing into the twenty-first century, this pool of labor contributes to current levels of 150 million migrants leaving overburdened cities to find work in metropolitan regions of the global economy. Estimates suggest that roughly 100 million kinfolk depend on remittances of the global labor force. Mexico, a nation of 100 million, earns more than \$9 billion a year in remittances – almost as much as India, with its population of 1 billion. And Latin America and the Caribbean received \$25 billion in 2002 from remittances, which, along with foreign direct investment, are now more important sources of finances than private lending (McMichael, 2004, p.208). Sometimes these funds are channeled into public ventures to replace shrinking public largesse in the neo-liberal era. Indonesian villages have used remittances to finance schools, roads and housing, and in Zacatecas, Mexico, remittances have financed new roads, schools, churches, water systems and parks.

The migrant labor performed, whether in fields, sweatshops, restaurants, care industry, transport, entertainment, sex tourism, building maintenance or burgeoning informal arenas of Northern economies, binds host and sending communities together in a tangle of circuits of social reproduction. These are circuits within which exile, opportunity, vulnerability, dependence and slavery combine distinct cultures of survival and exploitation. Where possible, ‘transnational peasants’ employ differential migration strategies. For example, peasants from the Andean region use migration “not to escape their regions but to better position themselves structurally in a well-articulated, migrant export economy” (Kyle, 2000, p.197). Comparing two highland villages in Ecuador, Azuay and Octavalo, Kyle distinguishes between communities sending wage labor abroad, and ‘merchant migrants’ who commodify and market their own and others’ indigenous culture (notably Andean music) in the global marketplace, concluding:

Transnational migration may be fundamentally rooted in economic processes of capital accumulation (class) but is often impossible to disentangle from other important areas such as ethnic and gender discrimination (caste) and historical social norms and ideologies of the migrating group (culture) because all three have a synergistic or multiple conjunctural effect (2000, p.198).

Globalization as resistance

Global power relations are inevitably infused with resistances, which take multiple forms affecting the agrarian world. These include consumer movements concerned with food safety and fair trade; farmer movements concerned with the impact of globalization on rural/urban distributive relations; farm-worker movements concerned with human rights, pesticide use and worker security; farmer/peasant movements concerned with protecting a way of life against agribusiness – such as seed savers, land rights claimants, and community supported agricultures; and indigenous peasant movements struggling for regional and cultural (landed) autonomy – notably the neo-Zapatista movement in southern Mexico (Bartra and Otero, 2005).

The broadest contours of these relations of resistance are perhaps captured in the elemental struggle between a centralized agro-industry with market coordinates, and a democratic and diversifying eco-agriculture with its coordinates in various forms of public sovereignty. In between, are distributive movements like the rural Mexican Barzón movement of the 1990s, generating a ‘debtors’ insurgency contesting neo-liberalism (Williams, 2001); and the social experiment of ‘fair trade,’ addressing the colonial legacy of tropical mono-crops, by reducing the psychic distance between producers and consumers, eliminating intermediaries, and building social needs (education, health, environmental protections, job security, non-discriminatory work conditions) into the price structure of the commodity (Raynolds, 2000).

Parallel to global fair trade schemes for certification, civil society groups are exploring *domestic* fair trade schemes – such as Red Tomato, based in Massachusetts, which markets produce from southern small farmers in New England, or Mexico’s *Comercio Justo*, which markets coffee, cacao, honey, handicrafts and basic grains for small producers, within a set of fair trade standards based on international criteria, and with the goal of obtaining just prices for small producers as an alternative to export market dependence (Jaffee, Kloppenburg and Monroy, 2004). Related efforts to protect Mexico’s ‘culture of maize’ are underway in response to the neo-liberal assault on peasant maize farming. However limited in scope, off-farm activities subsidize this culture – ranging from monetary remittances to creating new markets for locally grown maize varieties and other peasant products, such as amaranth, beans and honey: “large numbers of urban denizens are now purchasing hand-made tortillas by the dozen ... Similarly, coloured tortillas, *tamales* made from *criollo* maizes, *mole*, *pozole* and other traditional foods from Mexico’s indigenous and peasant cultures command premium prices from peasant salespeople (mostly women) in many parts of the country” (Barkin, 2002, pp.82-3).

The Slow Food movement, originating in Italy but now global, builds on similar principles to fair trade: localizing foodsheds, retaining local cuisines, and protecting food heritage

in general. The Slow Food Foundation for Biodiversity formed in Italy, 2003, to “know, catalogue and safeguard small quality productions and to guarantee them and economic and commercial future.” In relation to this, COOP-Italia, a consortium with over 200 consumer co-operatives, co-ordinates production and sale of quality food products traceable to their socio-spatial origins, with the aim of protecting links between consumers and producers, within a broader ethical engagement that includes supporting fair trade initiatives, water provisioning in Africa, and contesting diffusion of genetically-modified organisms (Fonte and Boccia, 2004). Alternative Food Networks also contribute to the proliferation of new rural development practices, such as agro-tourism, energy production, and landscape management. These developments, known as ‘multi-functionality,’ have potential as a new Northern agricultural policy paradigm (Pretty 2002), once current WTO trade rules cease using multi-functionality as a façade for concealing subsidies at the expense of the 2.5 billion rural peoples in the South (Losch, 2004).

On a broader scale, the proliferation of movements for land rights coincides with the privatization of agricultural resources, such as marketing boards, credit, and collective lands, led by the World Bank’s ‘market-assisted reform program.’ This program views land markets as a solution to poverty and rural development by facilitating titling and redistribution of land through land banks, releasing the ‘social capital’ of the rural poor through cooperative networks, subsidized with micro-finance (cf Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). But land inflation is a typical outcome, and this is exacerbated by financial liberalization, which replaces public farm credit systems with individualized micro-credit markets, deepening patterns of indebtedness among rural households (Barros et al, 2003; Ramachandran and Swaminathan, 2002). Privatization intensifies debt stress under conditions of highly unequal land holding patterns, and access to markets, resulting in individual acts of suicide or collective resistances.

Relations of resistance are embodied in a proliferating occupation of land *en masse*, as the material and political act of a ‘new peasantry’ (Petras, 1997), committed to a relatively autonomous politics of ‘agrarian citizenship’ (Wittman, 2005). Such movements seek to reconstitute the rural as a civic base through which to critique conventional electoral politics and the development narrative. The most substantial movements are the Brazilian *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST), which emerged in the 1980s, and the South African Landless Peoples’ Movement (2002). Land rights movements have formed alliances within the framework of the Landless People’s Charter, adopted in Durban in 2001, and oriented to the shared goals of the global justice movement.

The core of the new relations of resistance, perhaps, centers on the food sovereignty movement. 'Food sovereignty' expresses a variety of agrarian relations that counterpoint corporate relations of production and consumption of food. It is a unifying concept emerging from the transnational peasant movement, *Via Campesina*, which introduced food sovereignty into public debate during the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome. While food sovereignty has multiple meanings depending on context, the movement is building an alternative, decentralized understanding of food security in which material want-satisfaction is not subordinated to the market, but embedded in ecological principles of community and environmental sustainability.

The *Via Campesina* includes 97 farm organizations representing millions of farming families from 43 countries (Desmarais, 2003). Food sovereignty, in the *Via Campesina* vision, would subordinate trade relations to the question of access to credit, land and fair prices, to be set via rules of fair trade negotiated in UNCTAD and not at the WTO, with active participation of farmers' movements. This principle of self-organization would inform a distinctive vision of strategic diversity, sanctioned multilaterally. French Farmer and member of *Via Campesina*, José Bové, observed: "Why should the global market escape the rule of international law or human rights conventions passed by the United Nations?" (Bové and Dufour, 2001, p.165). But access to land is fundamental.

The MST, a member of *Via Campesina*, has settled over 400,000 families on fifteen million acres of land seized by takeovers in Brazil over the past eighteen years. The landless-workers' movement draws legitimacy from the Brazilian constitution's sanctioning of the confiscation of uncultivated private property. From 1985-96, rural unemployment rose by 5.5 million, and from 1995-99 a rural exodus of four million Brazilians occurred. While dispossessed farmers comprise sixty percent of the movement's membership, it also includes unemployed workers and disillusioned civil servants. Land seizures are followed, gradually, by the formation of cooperatives, which involve social mobilization to transform a material act into a politics of social and ecological practice.

This 'peasant model' "does not entail a rejection of modernity, technology and trade accompanied by a romanticized return to an archaic past steeped in rustic traditions [but is based on] ethics and values where culture and social justice count for something and concrete mechanisms are put in place to ensure a future without hunger" (Desmarais, 2003, p.110). The *Via Campesina* is developing alternative forms of modernity drawing on deeply rooted traditions. Its vision is for the right of peoples, communities and countries to define culturally, socially, economically and ecologically appropriate policies regarding agriculture, labour, fishing, food

and land. While demanding guarantee of such rights through the state system, the substantive content of those rights is to be determined individually by communities and countries.

There are, of course, multiple examples of communities, and even governments, promoting conditions resembling food sovereignty. In Thailand, for example, farmers in the semi-arid Northeast have been developing ‘local wisdom networks,’ using the concept of ‘learning alliances’ to rehabilitate local ecological relations and promote health before wealth in agricultural practices. Since the 1997 financial crisis, these alliances have supported partnerships between farmer networks and the government, dedicated to improved water conservation, participatory technologies, community forest management, and biodiversity promotion. The goal is to convert monoculture to integrated, diversified farming and community development, and to convert state agencies to a rural sustainability paradigm (Ruaysoongnern and de Vries, 2005).

Resistance to the effects of corporate globalization ultimately concerns not only reintegrating social, agricultural and ecological relations into alternative models, but, in doing so, transforming *political* cultures of modernity that have been premised on the industrialization of rural economy and the redundancy of peasantries.

Conclusion

The dominant theme in this chapter concerns the social stakes involved in universalizing an industrial culture across the agrarian world. Industrial agriculture, in its most mature form in California, nevertheless depends on an endless stream of low-wage Mexican farm-workers and sharecroppers (Walker, 2005). That is, agro-industrial production relies on global circuits of social reproduction, which in turn have become essential (through remittances) to the survival of ‘peasant-based’ rural cultures. As we have seen, the protocols of the WTO sanction the spread of corporate agriculture, a significant element of which involves a process of ‘de-peasantization’ as small farmers join the global labor force. In the Mexican case, NAFTA, the leading edge of these protocols, sanctions US corn dumping in the Mexican market, at the expense of maize producers, and generates the migrant labor force that reproduces Californian agriculture, among other parts of the US economy.

Thus the consequences are not an inevitable homogenization of the agrarian world. Certainly the social reproduction of an affluent global consumer class has woven a web of corporate relations that will remain as tight as the fossil-fuel energy system can bear into the foreseeable future. But in the disruptions to rural cultures across the world, there are a variety of alternatives forming, by necessity, to weather the agrarian crisis. As it has over the centuries, the agrarian world has often displayed resilience in the face of natural disasters, and the disruptive

reach of empire. The world itself faces a serious threshold in the twenty-first century, whereby corporate globalization's pursuit of an all-embracing market culture is facing, and producing, social and environmental limits that can offer new spaces for a robust variety of agricultures dedicated to principles of social and ecological sustainability. These, in turn, promise to revalue the contribution of the agrarian world to life itself.

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