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Introduction: The Global Politics of Food

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Cluster 1: Theoretical Perspectives Introduction: The Global Politics of Food

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The food price crisis of 2006-2008 sparked food riots across the globe, and catapulted the issue of food policy to the forefront of public debate.[1] While the transnational corporations that dominate the global food supply reaped windfall profits,[2] the number of malnourished people in the world climbed to 1.02 billion people in 2009 — a figure that corresponds to one sixth of the world's population.[3] The immediate causes of skyrocketing food prices included rising petroleum prices, adverse weather, burgeoning meat consumption, diversion of agricultural land to biofuels production, and financial speculation in agricultural commodity markets.[4] However, the underlying cause of the global food crisis is a corporate-dominated, fossil fuel-dependent model of agricultural production that is ecologically unsustainable and economically unjust.[5]

Based on the pioneering work of economist Amartya Sen, scholars and policy-makers have long recognized that poverty, rather than food scarcity, is the cause of chronic malnutrition.[6]

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1. *See* Carmen G. González, *The Global Food Crisis: Law, Policy, and the Elusive Quest for Justice,* 13 YALE HUM. RTS. & DEV. L.J. 462, 462 (2010).

2. Eric Holt-Giménez, *From Food Crisis to Food Sovereignty: The Challenge of Social Movements, in* AGRICULTURE AND FOOD IN CRISIS: CONFLICT, RESISTANCE, AND RENEWAL 207, 210 (Fred Magdoff & Brian Tokar eds., 2010).

3. *See* FOOD & AGRIC. ORG. OF THE U.N. (FAO), THE STATE OF FOOD INSECURITY IN THE WORLD 2009, at 11 (2009).

4. *See* Annie Shattuck & Eric Holt-Giménez, *Moving from Food Crisis to Food Sovereignty,* 13 YALE HUM. RTS. & DEV. L.J. 421, 423-25 (2010).

5. *See* González, *supra* note 1, at 465-71 (describing the "imposition through trade, aid, and financial institutions of an agricultural development model that undermines rural livelihoods, increases ecological vulnerability, and places developing countries in a structurally disadvantageous position in world trade").

6. *See* AMARTYA SEN, POVERTY AND FAMINES: AN ESSAY ON ENTITLEMENT AND DEPRIVATION 1-2 (1981) (describing food security as the ability to obtain access to food through the legal means available in society); FAO, *Introduction to* ROME DECLARATION ON FOOD SECURITY, WORLD FOOD SUMMIT §§ 2, 7, 14(e) (Nov. 13-17, 1996), *available at* http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/w3613e/w3613e00.HTM (recognizing poverty as the major cause of food insecurity); FRANCIS MOORE LAPPÉ ET AL., WORLD HUNGER: TWELVE MYTHS 16-17 (1998); GORDON CONWAY, THE DOUBLY GREEN REVOLUTION: FOOD FOR ALL IN THE 21ST CENTURY 4-5 (1997).

Indeed, as the World Bank acknowledged in an influential report on world hunger:

> The World has ample food. The growth of global food production has been far faster than the unprecedented population growth of the past forty years. . . . Enough food is available so that countries that do not produce all the food they want can import it if they can afford to. Yet many poor countries and hundreds of millions of poor people do not share in this abundance. They suffer from a lack of food security, caused mainly by a lack of purchasing power.[7]

Paradoxically, the majority of the world's undernourished people are the small farmers in the Global South responsible for growing at least 70 percent of the world's food and whose precarious livelihoods depend on selling their agricultural products.[8] These farmers face financial ruin when agricultural commodity prices drop, but they have not benefited from recent increases in world food prices because the cost of inputs have risen and because these farmers sell to intermediaries rather than directly on world markets.[9] Thus, while increasing food production is necessary, it is not independently sufficient to alleviate chronic undernourishment. Efforts to address global hunger will not succeed unless they also reduce poverty and inequality, enhance the livelihoods of small farmers, and protect the natural resource base necessary for food production.

The global food crisis has its origins in the colonial subordination of the Third World which transformed much of the Global South into "supply zones of food and raw materials to fuel European capitalism."[10] The agro-export specialization imposed during the colonial era persisted after political independence, and diminished food self-sufficiency by diverting agricultural lands to export

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7. WORLD BANK, POVERTY AND HUNGER: ISSUES AND OPTIONS FOR FOOD SECURITY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES 1 (1986), *available at* http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/1999/09/17/000178830_98101901455676/Rendered/PDF/multi_page.pdf.

8. *See Who Will Feed Us?*, ETC. GROUP COMMUNIQUÉ, Nov. 2009, at 1, *available at* http://www.etcgroup.org/upload/publication/pdf_file/ETC_Who_Will_Feed_Us.pdf; KEVIN WATKINS & JOACHIM VON BRAUN, TIME TO STOP DUMPING ON THE WORLD'S POOR 2 (2003).

9. *See* González, *supra* note 1, at 463-64.

10. Philip McMichael, *The World Food Crisis in Historical Perspective, in* AGRICULTURE AND FOOD IN CRISIS: CONFLICT, RESISTANCE, AND RENEWAL 51 (Fred Magdoff & Brian Tokar eds., 2010).

production while fostering dependence on imported foods.[11] Genetically uniform export crops displaced traditional food crops, eroded agrobiodiversity, increased the risk of catastrophic crop failure in the event of blight or disease, and created dependence on chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers manufactured in the Global North.[12]

In the aftermath of World War II, Northern development assistance programs, including the Green Revolution of the 1960s, 70s and 80s, exacerbated the problem of world hunger by increasing poverty and inequality.[13] In order to achieve Cold War foreign policy objectives and to facilitate the penetration of U.S. products into new markets, the U.S. government disposed of surplus agricultural production in the Global South in the form of food aid.[14] This food aid depressed developing country food prices and undercut local farmers.[15] The Green Revolution, which sought to combat hunger by introducing high-yielding varieties of rice, wheat and maize, likewise impoverished small farmers in the Global South by increasing agricultural output and causing agricultural commodity prices to collapse.[16] Indeed, the Green Revolution was inherently biased in favor of wealthy farmers because the new seed varieties produced high yields only in response to irrigation and to the application of synthetic agrochemicals – capital investments which small farmers lacked the resources to make.[17] The Green Revolution also accelerated the worldwide loss of traditional food crops, promoted fossil fuel-based chemical-intensive cultivation techniques, and increased dependence on seeds, pesticides, and fertilizers manufactured by Northern transnational corporations.[18]

Finally, the debt crisis of the 1980s inaugurated an era of structural adjustment under the auspices of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund that dispossessed farmers in the Global South by placing them in direct competition with highly

11. *See* Carmen G. González, *Trade Liberalization, Food Security, and the Environment: The Neoliberal Threat to Sustainable Rural Development*, 14 TRANSNAT'L L. & CONTEMP. PROBS. 419, 433-35 (2004).

12. *See id.* at 438-40.

13. *See id.* at 435-36, 441-45 (describing the Food for Peace program and the Green Revolution); Shattuck & Holt-Giménez, *supra* note 4, at 426.

14. *See* González, *supra* note 11, at 435-36.

15. *See id.* at 436.

16. *See id.* at 440-43.

17. *See id.*

18. *See id.* at 445-50.

subsidized U.S. and European Union agricultural producers.[19] In order to obtain debt restructuring, developing countries were obligated to adopt a standard recipe of free market economic reforms (popularly known as the "Washington Consensus") that included tariff reductions, elimination of non-tariff barriers, and curtailment of government input subsidies, extension services, subsidized credit, and marketing assistance.[20] The phase-out of import barriers and government support in the Global South enabled highly subsidized agro-exporters in the Global North to undermine the livelihoods of small farmers in the Third World by dumping agricultural commodities in world markets at prices below the cost of production.[21] As plummeting commodity prices forced farmers in the Global South to abandon food production, developing countries that were once net food exporters became net food importers and were later ravaged by the food price shocks that drove millions of people into the ranks of the malnourished.[22] Structural adjustment also required developing countries to expand agro-export production in order to earn the foreign exchange with which to service the foreign debt, thereby diverting additional land and resources from food production to cash crop production and increasing dependence on imported food.[23]

As I have argued elsewhere, the WTO Agreement on Agriculture institutionalized these inequities in global agricultural trade by permitting affluent countries to maintain market-distorting subsidies and import barriers while constraining the ability of poor countries to utilize tariffs and subsidies to promote food security and protect the livelihoods of small farmers.[24] However, even if Northern subsidies and import barriers were curtailed, the market power of transnational agribusiness enables a small number of agri-food corporations to dictate agricultural input and output prices to the disadvantage of small farmers in the Global

19. *See* González, *supra* note 1, at 468-69.

20. *See id.* at 469-70; LATIN AMERICAN ADJUSTMENT: HOW MUCH HAS HAPPENED? 18 (John Williamson ed., 1990) (setting forth the key elements of the neoliberal economic model known as Washington Consensus).

21. *See* González, *supra* note 1, at 470.

22. *See id.* at 470, 462.

23. *See id.* at 469.

24. *See* Carmen G. González, *Institutionalizing Inequality: The WTO Agreement on Agriculture, Food Security, and Developing Countries*, 27 COLUM. J. ENVTL. L. 433, 459-68, 478-84 (2002) (explaining why the WTO Agreement on Agriculture failed to curb agricultural protectionism in wealthy countries, but succeeded in restricting the ability of poor countries to promote food security and protect rural livelihoods).

North and the Global South.[25] In short, the "free market" is a fallacy given the lavish agricultural subsidies maintained by Northern governments and the domination of global agricultural markets by a handful of transnational corporations.

The rapid expansion of chemical-intensive, fossil-fuel dependent industrial agriculture has also produced dire environmental consequences, including widespread deforestation, agrochemical contamination of lakes and rivers, depletion of aquifers, and dependence on greenhouse gas-emitting and increasingly expensive petroleum inputs for the production of pesticides and fertilizers, the operation of irrigation machinery, and the processing, packaging and transportation of food.[26] The impact on biodiversity has been particularly devastating. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, the planet lost seventy-five percent of its food crop diversity in the 20th century as farmers shifted from genetically diverse traditional food crops to high-yielding monocultures.[27] This alarming decline in agrobiodiversity increases the susceptibility of the world's food supply to catastrophic crop failure – replicating on a worldwide basis the type of vulnerability that led to the Irish potato famine.[28] Industrial agriculture is a also major source of anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.[29] Climate change, in turn, threatens to disrupt global food production by increasing the frequency and severity of droughts, floods, and hurricanes while depressing agricultural yields and placing additional stress on finite water resources.[30]

The articles by Professor Charles Pouncy and Professor Peter Halewood contained in this cluster provide the theoretical foundation for this Symposium by situating the global food crisis in economic theory and in contemporary debates over international trade law and policy. Professors Pouncy and Halewood build upon

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25. *See* González, *supra* note 11, at 490-91.

26. *See* THOMAS PRUGH, NATURAL CAPITAL AND HUMAN ECONOMIC SURVIVAL 79-84 (1995); Frederick Kirschenmann, *Do Increased Energy Costs Offer Opportunities for a New Agriculture? in* AGRICULTURE AND FOOD IN CRISIS: CONFLICT, RESISTANCE, AND RENEWAL 227 (Fred Magdoff & Brian Tokar eds., 2010).

27. *See* U.N. FOOD & AGRIC. ORG., WOMEN — USERS, PRESERVERS, AND MANAGERS OF AGRO-BIODIVERSITY (1999), *available at* http://www.fao.org/sd/nrm/Women%20-%20Users.pdf.

28. *See* CARY FOWLER & PAT MOONEY, SHATTERING: FOOD, POLITICS, AND THE LOSS OF GENETIC DIVERSITY 54-82 (1996).

29. *See* JESSICA BELLARBY ET AL., GREENPEACE INTERNATIONAL, COOL FARMING: CLIMATE IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURE AND MITIGATION POTENTIAL 15-16 (2008).

30. *See* Anthony Nyong, *Climate Change Impacts in the Developing World: Implications for Sustainable Development, in* CLIMATE CHANGE AND GLOBAL POVERTY: A BILLION LIVES IN THE BALANCE? 47-50 (Lael Brainard et al. eds., 2009).

and extend LatCrit's ongoing interrogation of neoclassical economic theory and of the policy prescriptions emerging therefrom. Although LatCrit symposia have featured articles challenging economic orthodoxy and neoliberal globalization,[31] LatCrit X was the first LatCrit conference to focus squarely on neoclassical economic theory as the ideological justification for the global economic order and to critique economic orthodoxy from a variety of perspectives including: ecological economics, post-Keynesian economic theory, endogenous growth theory, and post-colonial theory.[32] The dominance of market fundamentalism in law, economics, and social theory subsequently became the theme of the LatCrit South-North Exchange on Free Market Fundamentalism, which took place at the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia in May 2006. The symposium papers were initially published in English[33]

31. *See, e.g.*, Robert Ashford, *Using Socio-Economics and Binary Economics to Serve the Interests of Poor and Working People: What Critical Scholars Can Do to Help*, 8 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 173 (2009); Angela P. Harris, *Theorizing Law and Political Economy: A Seminar on Law, Markets and Culture*, 14 GRIFFITH L. REV. 174 (2005); Martha T. McCluskey, *How Equality Became Elitist: The Cultural Politics of Economics from the Court to the "Nanny Wars,"* 35 SETON HALL L. REV. 1291 (2005); Charles R.P. Pouncy, *Institutional Economics and Critical Race/LatCrit Theory: The Need for Critical "Raced" Economics*, 54 RUTGERS L. REV. 841 (2002); Ibrahim Gassama, *Confronting Globalization: Lessons from the Banana Wars and the Seattle Protests*, 81 OR. L. REV. 707 (2002); Carmen G. González, *Beyond Eco-Imperialism: An Environmental Justice Critique of Free Trade*, 78 DENV. U. L. REV. 979 (2001); Timothy A. Canova, *Global Finance and the International Monetary Fund's Neoliberal Agenda: The Threat to the Employment, Ethnic Identity and Cultural Pluralism of Latina/o Communities*, 33 U.C. DAVIS L. REV. 1547 (2000); Chantal Thomas, *Globalization and the Reproduction of Hierarchy*, 33 U.C. DAVIS L. REV. 1451 (2000); Elizabeth M. Iglesias, *Human Rights in International Economic Law*, 28 U. MIAMI INTER-AM. L. REV. 361 (1997); Enrique R. Carrasco, *Oppositional Justice, Structuralism, and Particularity: Intersections Between LatCrit Theory and Law and Development Studies*, 28 U. MIAMI INTER-AM. L. REV. 313 (1997).

32. *See* Charles R. P. Pouncy, *LatCrit X: Critical Approaches to Economic In/Justice: Introduction*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. i-xvii (2006); Steven A. Ramirez, *Endogenous Growth Theory, Status Quo Efficiency and Globalization*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 1 (2006); Kristen A. Sheeran, *Ecological Economics: A Progressive Paradigm?*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 21 (2006); Francisco E. Guerra-Pujol, *Cornel West, Meet Richard Posner: Toward a Critical-Neoclassical Synthesis*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 39 (2006); Rafael A. Porrata-Doria, Jr., *Economic Paradigms and Latin American Development Theory: The Search for Nirvana*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 51 (2006); Carmen G. González, *Deconstructing the Mythology of Free Trade: Critical Reflections on Comparative Advantage*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 65 (2006); Ruth Gordon, *Contemplating the WTO from the Margins*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 95 (2006); Patricia Michelle Lenaghan, *Trade Negotiations or Trade Capitulations: An African Experience*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 117 (2006); Larry Catá Backer, *Economic Globalization Ascendant and the Crisis of the State: Four Perspectives on the Emerging Ideology of the State in the New Global Order*, 17 BERKELEY LA RAZA L.J. 141 (2006).

33. Ha-Joon Chang, *Introduction to the Symposium on Free Market*

and were later compiled into a Spanish language book.[34] Professors Pouncy and Halewood contribute to this growing body of LatCrit scholarship by grounding their analysis of the global politics of food in heterodox economic theory and in critiques of neoliberal globalization.

In *Food, Globalism and Theory: Marxian and Institutional Insights into the Global Food System,* Professor Pouncy points out that "[t]he processes of food production, distribution and consumption have become market processes and as a result, the ability to meet one's nutritional needs is a function of the ability to pay the price that the globalized market has established for the commodities we consume as food."[35] Professor Pouncy argues that neoclassical economics is an inadequate framework with which to analyze and critique these processes because its reliance on markets for resource allocation subordinates the needs of the world's population to the economic interests of those who dominate these allegedly "free" and "self-regulating" markets. He proposes that critical scholars abandon the neoclassical paradigm and look to heterodox schools of economic thought that recognize the limits of markets and the ways in which history, subordination, and inequality shape economic relationships.

Drawing upon Marxian food regime theorists, Professor Pouncy proceeds to examine the evolution of the global food system from the colonial period to the present, and describes the cur-

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Fundamentalism, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 497 (2007); Daniel Bonilla Maldonado, Colin Crawford & Carmen G. González, *Reality, Theory, and a Make-Believe World: The Fundamentalism of the "Free" Market*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 499 (2007); Frank J. Garcia, *Is Free Trade "Free"? Is it Even "Trade"? Oppression and Consent in Hemispheric Trade Agreements*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 505 (2007); Maria Paula Saffon, *Can Constitutional Courts be Counterhegemonic Powers vis-à-vis Neoliberalism? The Case of the Colombian Constitutional Court*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 533 (2007); Alejandro Nadal, *Coasean Fictions: Law and Economics Revisited*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 569 (2007); Elvia R. Arriola, *Accountability for Murder in the Maquiladoras: Linking Corporate Indifference to Gender Violence at the U.S.-Mexican Border*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 603 (2007); Claudia Lozano, *The Free Market and Gender Relations: Political and Economic Power, Impunity, and the Murders of Women*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 661 (2007); Kristen Sheeran, *Beyond Kyoto: North-South Implications of Emissions Trading and Taxes*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 697 (2007); Alexandre Ditzel Faraco & Diogo R. Countinho, *Network Industry Regulation: Between Flexibility and Stability*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 721 (2007); Alan Cibils & Rubén Lo Vuolo, *At Debt's Door: What Can We Learn from Argentina's Recent Debt Crisis and Restructuring?*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 755 (2007); Roldan Muradian, *Is China a Threat to Mesoamerica's Development?*, 5 SEATTLE J. SOC. JUST. 797 (2007).

34. DANIEL BONILLA MALDONADO, CARMEN GONZÁLEZ, & COLIN CRAWFORD, DERECHO, DEMOCRACIA Y ECONOMIA DE MERCADO (2010).

35. Charles C.P. Pouncy, *Food, Globalism and Theory: Marxian and Institutional Insights into the Global Food System*, 43 U. MIAMI INTER-AM. L. REV. 87, 89-90 (2011).

rent food regime as one controlled by agribusiness, hedge funds, and other speculators. He then uses institutional economic theory to analyze the institutions and processes that have transformed farming into industrial production, food into commodities, and home-cooked "family meals" into industrially manufactured meal products to be consumed at home, at work, or in restaurants. Professor Pouncy demonstrates the ways that corporate and financial interests have achieved hegemony over food production, distribution and consumption through advertising, substitution of transnational regulation (i.e. multilateral trade agreements) for national regulation, and oligopolistic and monopolistic market practices. His analysis serves as a valuable roadmap for social movements that seek to challenge the current food regime. Professor Pouncy persuasively argues that such movements must engage transnational agribusiness and finance at every level of the institutional environment, from the definition of food and farming to the national and international legal regimes governing economic competition and financial speculation.

In *Trade Liberalization and Obstacles to Food Security: Is Food Sovereignty the Answer?*, Professor Halewood points out that the internationally recognized human right to food has failed to mitigate global food insecurity. He argues that the concept of food sovereignty may be more effective in rallying opposition to global capital's hegemonic control over the world's food supply. Professor Halewood explains how the agricultural subsidies maintained by the United States and the European Union have violated the right to food and examines the limited remedies available under international trade law and international human rights law. He then analyzes the threat to food security posed by trade liberalization, by the privatization of seeds and plants through patenting, and by the appropriation by transnational agribusiness of the traditional knowledge of small farmers in the Global South. Professor Halewood concludes that "fundamental human rights are often sidelined by the need to comply with the rules and obligations of [international trade and intellectual property agreements]."[36]

Professor Halewood proceeds to evaluate the concept of food sovereignty as an alternative paradigm through which to challenge the inequities in the global food system. The movement for food sovereignty seeks to remove food from the WTO and to promote national and local self-determination over the production,

36. Peter Halewood, *Trade Liberalization and Obstacles to Food Security: Toward a Sustainable Food Sovereignty*, 43 U. MIAMI INTER-AM. L. REV. 115, 134 (2011).

distribution, and consumption of food. Professor Halewood concludes that the food sovereignty approach, pursued in tandem with or in parallel to the right to food, may serve as a useful vantage point from which to critique the corporate-dominated "free trade" agenda and as an effective vehicle for creating the national and international political coalitions necessary to transform the global food system.

Professors Pouncy and Halewood analyze the injustices of the global food regime, expose the fallacies of the corporate-dominated "free trade" agenda, and suggest alternative paradigms that can be used by scholars, policy-makers, and activists to achieve emancipation. However, these articles do leave us with one unanswered question: whether the food sovereignty movement is capable of redefining farming so as to move away from the chemical-intensive, fossil fuel-dependent industrial agricultural model that has contributed to global environmental degradation, including the agrobiodiversity and climate crises. The short answer is that the political demand for food sovereignty has been accompanied on the ground by the practice of sustainable agriculture.[37]

Sustainable or agroecological agriculture refers to farming systems that seek to reduce agrochemical inputs, integrate natural pest control and soil regeneration processes, use the skills and knowledge of farmers to promote their self-reliance, and minimize dependence on external inputs.[38] Sustainable agriculture produces fewer greenhouse gases and sequesters more carbon than industrial agriculture, increases resilience to droughts and floods, promotes agrobiodiversity, and enhances food security by protecting the livelihoods of small farmers.[39] Contrary to popular misconception, sustainable agriculture is also highly productive. Sustainable agriculture has increased agricultural yields in Asia, Africa, and Latin America while boosting the income of small farmers and protecting the environment.[40] Studies have shown that sustaina-

37. *See* Shattuck & Holt-Gimenez, *supra* note 4, at 432.

38. *See* JULES N. PRETTY, REGENERATING AGRICULTURE: POLICIES AND PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND SELF-RELIANCE 8-13 (1995); ERIC HOLT-GIMENEZ & RAJ PATEL, FOOD REBELLIONS! CRISIS AND THE HUNGER FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE 102 (2009).

39. *See* HOLT-GIMENEZ & PATEL, *supra* note 38, at 101-103, 108-110, 125-129.

40. *See generally* United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP-UNCTAD Capacity-Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development, Geneva, Switz., *Organic Agriculture and Food Security in Africa* (2008), *available at* http://www.unep-unctad.org/cbtf/publications/UNCTAD_DITC_TED_2007_15.pdf; Int'l Fund for Agric. Dev., *The Adoption of Organic Agriculture Among Small Farmers in Latin America and the Caribbean* (2003), *available at* http://www.ifad.org/evaluation/public_html/eksyst/doc/

ble agriculture can produce enough food, on a per capita basis, to feed the world's population without increasing the amount of land under cultivation.[41]

La Vía Campesina, the international network of peasants, indigenous peoples, and other rural dwellers that developed and popularized the concept of food sovereignty, has explicitly endorsed sustainable agriculture in order to "increase self-reliance of farming families and communities, promote environmental stewardship, and generate healthy foods."[42] In Latin America and elsewhere in the Global South, farmer-to-farmer networks have implemented this commitment by disseminating agroecological knowledge to rural communities.[43] Indeed, in the year 2000, Brazil's Landless Workers' Movement (MST) announced that it would henceforth adopt agroecology in all of its settlements and would work with La Vía Campesina to offer secondary school and university courses to enable the movement's youth to train farmers in agroecological methods.[44] In short, food sovereignty, as practiced by La Vía Campesina and the MST, recognizes the interdependence of humans and nature and the duty to value and protect both the social and ecological functions of land.[45]

Grassroots organizations in the Global North are also calling for alternatives to corporate-dominated industrial agriculture.[46] In the United States, the food justice movement has drawn attention to the lack of access to fresh, healthy foods in low-income communities of color and to the disproportionately high levels of diet-related diseases in these communities.[47] Community gardens and urban farming initiatives are employing young people in sustaina-

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thematic/pl/organic.pdf; NICHOLAS PARROTT & TERRY MARSDEN, THE NEW GREEN REVOLUTION: ORGANIC AND AGROECOLOGICAL FARMING IN THE SOUTH (2002); Jules N. Pretty, *Reducing Food Poverty by Increasing Sustainability in Developing Countries,* 95 AGRIC. ECOSYSTEMS & ENV'T 217 (2003); Jules N. Pretty & Rachel Hine, *The Promising Spread of Sustainable Agriculture in Asia,* 24 NAT. RESOURCES F. 107 (2000); Jules N. Pretty, *Can Sustainable Agriculture Feed Africa? New Evidence on Progress, Processes and Impacts,* 1 ENV'T, DEV. & SUSTAINABILITY 253 (1999).

41. *See* Catherine Badgley et al., *Organic Agriculture and The Global Food Supply,* 22 RENEWABLE AGRIC. & FOOD SYS. 86, 94 (2007).

42. Saulo Araújo, *The Promise and Challenges of Food Sovereignty Policies in Latin America,* 13 YALE HUM. RTS. & DEV. L.J. 493, 497-98 (2010).

43. *See* Holt-Gimenez, *supra* note 2, at 215-218.

44. *See id.* at 220-21; HOLT-GIMENEZ & PATEL, *supra* note 38, at 104-106.

45. *See* Hannah Wittman, *Reconnecting Agriculture and the Environment: Food Sovereignty and the Agrarian Basis of Ecological Citizenship, in* FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: RECONNECTING FOOD, NATURE, AND COMMUNITY 102-103 (Hannah Wittman et al. eds., 2010).

46. *See* HOLT-GIMENEZ & PATEL, *supra* note 38, at 159-177.

47. *See id.* at 160-161.

ble agricultural production and are offering high quality fresh foods at discounted prices to low-income consumers.[48] In Europe, farmers, environmental organizations, consumer groups, fair trade organizations, and economic solidarity networks are mobilizing to denounce corporate-dominated industrial agriculture and to promote socially just and environmentally sustainable alternatives.[49]

Ecological economists have long warned that "the scale of human economic activity is dangerously large relative to nature's capacity to provide raw materials and absorb and recycle waste."[50] The climate and agrobiodiversity crises are two examples of the consequences of exceeding limits imposed by ecosystems.[51] Environmental justice scholars have pointed out that food security is an environmental justice issue,[52] and that Northern trade, aid, and development policies are threatening the livelihoods of traditionally disenfranchised communities and jeopardizing the natural resource base necessary for food production.[53] The food sovereignty and food justice movements in the Global North and the Global South have developed nuanced and thoughtful alternatives to the corporate-dominated food system that integrate social and environmental concerns and challenge the hegemony of market fundamentalism.[54]

In order to capture the many dimensions of the global food crisis, it is important for LatCrit scholars to integrate the insights of ecological economists, environmental justice scholars, and food sovereignty and food justice movements into the broader critique of the global food system and of economic orthodoxy and neoliberal globalization.

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48. *See id.* at 165-67.

49. *See id.* at 175-77; Shumaisa Khan, *Food Security and Sustainability: Community Food Initiatives in London, in* ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE 115, 116-17 (Dorceta E. Taylor ed., 2010)

50. Sheeran, *supra* note 32, at 26.

51. *See* Carmen G. González, *China in Latin America: Law, Economics, and Sustainable Development,* 40 ENVTL. L. REP. 10171, 10183 (2010) (discussing the "myriad ways that human economic activities are exceeding ecosystem limits").

52. *See* Carmen G. González, *Genetically Modified Organisms and Justice: The International Environmental Justice Implications of Biotechnology,* 19 GEO. INT'L ENVTL. L. REV. 583, 592 (2007).

53. *See id.* at 595-611.

54. *See* ROBERT GOTTLIEB & ANUPAMA JOSHI, FOOD JUSTICE 223-233 (2010); Eric Holt-Giménez & Annie Shattuck, *Food Crises, Food Regimes and Food Movements: Rumblings of Reform or Tides of Transformation?* 38 J. PEASANT STUDIES 109, 124-132 (2011).