



Food Cultures for Sustainability

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MY NOTES

The 'Broken' Global Food System

In 2010, Russia had a '100 year' heat wave. Forest catches on fire and because of cut-and-run of resting practices this cause a tinderbox for it to spread into agriculture land (wheat fields). Russia has also cut funding to social services like firefighting because of austerity measures after the 2008 economic recession.

Glencore

- Anglo-Swiss Multinational Commodity Trading Corporation
- They own 25% of the Barley in the world
- Profited \$200 million per year from the fall of the Canadian Wheatboard

Faced with a food crisis the Russian government met with Glencore in the midst of this fire and suggested they place an export ban on domestic wheat.

This is a problem for the world wheat market because Russia wheat exports account for 1/3 of the world total market. Prices shoot up 15% in 2 days.

Mozambique

- Country in South-East Africa

Imports wheat because of their food culture needs which came about from the Portuguese and them imposing their culture onto the indigenous, therefore the current culture wants bread.



Bread riots occur because the government cannot afford the wheat prices and the government resorts to crowd control through rubber bullets but run out and therefore start shooting live ammunition therefore killing people.

Climate change is not only the Environment change around use but our social and market response to these changes.

Global Wheat Market

Only 140 years old from the British.

India had a feudal moral economy pre-British colonialism, which means the landowners had an obligation to feed their peasants who worked on the land. Once British came they converted their economy to the capitalist system.

In the 2000 years prior to British colonialism, India had a famine once every 150 years. Once they were colonialized and exported the wheat they produced famine shifted to being once every 4 years.

India Currently:

- Since the 1990 opening up of the market income gap has increase dramatically (4 out of the 10 richest people reside in India)
- Pepsi and Coca-Cola battle for the Indian people but they are ultimately the losers with Type II Diabetes jumping to 20% in slums opposed to the 3% in rural areas.
- The capitalist system of exportation leads to malnutrition of the population
- Farmer suicide because of debt to keep up with the global demand is on the rise and is probably unreported (1 suicide every 30 minutes)

The Developed World

Certified products and the ethical division of eco-labelling, we buy Fair Trade because it has created a moral contrast of those who are ethical and those who are not. Which leads to the mentality of: *"I buy fair trade coffee, because what's the alternative? Bastard coffee."*

We are tricked into thinking the food is made for us, where our food culture has made us into docile or unaware consumers. The question is how do we unmake this?

Unmaking the Current Food Culture

Italian *Slow Food* movement, which is based on taking pleasure seriously. Get more time and money through paying the actual cost of food and being given the time to enjoy the food being consumed.



Malawi

Did not follow the World Bank's advice and invested in agriculture in 2008/2009. The government bought fertilizer (in the midst of the recession, therefore fertilizer was priced higher) and distributed it to farmers which double yields for that year. The following year the government had no money left and really nothing to show for it.

Power of Community

5000 Farmers start experimenting with other farming techniques (example given was polycultures) in order to tackle infant malnutrition.

With new techniques yields increased, but infant nutrition also increased. This is because women are working the fields as well and do not have time to breastfeed.

- This is remedied by getting men to cook and take up other tasks traditionally associated (and gendered towards) women.
 - This was not completed overnight, it was at first
- This provided and succeeded in a radical equality resulting with a flat hierarchy and is a model of social change: radical equality through joy.
- A domestic issue would escalate to being a political issue within this community

QUESTIONS SUMMARY

- Green Revolution farming techniques need to change; it draws too much water from the glaciers that India depends on for agriculture.
- The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) envisioned a food system and food in cities in 2050. Their report calls for more urban agriculture. The model he drew from was Havana, Cuba which suffered its peak oil crisis after the United States of America imposed its embargo.
- Calls for the removal of agricultural products from the World trade Organization.
- Expand the temporal time scale. Think intergenerationally, stop corporations marketing to children who are not rational consumers (this is why we do not allow them to buy guns, lottery tickets, alcohol etc.).





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These are my (Joseph W Hobbs) opinions and perceptions on the talk.

MAINPOINTS

- Climate change is not only the Environment change around use but our social and market response to these changes.
- We are tricked into thinking the food is made for us, where our food culture has made us into docile or unaware consumers.
- This provided and succeeded in a radical equality resulting with a flat hierarchy and is a model of social change: radical equality through joy.
- Expand the temporal time scale. Think intergenerationally, stop corporations marketing to children who are not rational consumers (this is why we do not allow them to buy guns, lottery tickets, alcohol etc.).

MY THOUGHTS

I feel like Raj missed the point that opportunity comes from crisis, he maps out how we can change post crisis and how we as a society should change together, but does not discuss how to do this without a crisis. It is only within a crisis we start reevaluating what we are doing and challenge the status quo, therefore the Chinese word for 'crisis' is composed of the two characters: 'danger' and 'opportunity'.

The concept of climate change being just as much social as environmental was a great point to make. I also really liked his examples on radical equality and how other societies food cultures are shaped from historical beginnings.



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