

Just Transitions in the Global Food System: In between Fairness and Sustainability

Despite its significant contribution to climate change, the global agrifood system is often marginalized in policy and academic discussions around Just Transitions and Green New Deals. At the same time, the urban and national scale have been privileged sites of experiments in municipal and state-sponsored ‘food strategies’ that seek to reconcile decarbonization and environmental sustainability with food security and the protection of livelihoods across the food supply chain. Our workshop seeks to understand and explain this scalar contradiction and explore ways in which the local and the global, consumption and production, fairness and sustainability might be combined in a Just Transition toward a decarbonized global food system.

In doing so, we invoke the liminal peri-urban agri- and horticultural spaces that provision cities, hybrid agroecological and regenerative agricultural practices that work towards a low-emissions and biodiverse food system, as well as expressions of transnational food citizenship that complicate notions of purely local or ‘authentic’ food cultures and ecologies, all in an effort to recognize the right to food as a matter of social justice *and* environmental sustainability.

Calls to re-localize ‘our food’ by shortening supply chains, reducing food miles and eating seasonally are today commonplace. From community gardens to consumer cooperatives, farmers markets and digital farm-to-table networks, communities of different sizes and needs are experimenting with different options (often simultaneously) to re-localize their food(s) and to break the hold of the global agri-food system over their lives, economies and ecologies. Yet, where the ‘local’ is exactly, or what is included in ‘our food’ tends to be highly subjective and changeable, generally driven by dynamics and forces that are beyond the agri-food system itself, like wars, migration, monetary policy or intellectual property laws. Moreover, although state and non-state actors are increasingly aware of the need to think and act transnationally with regard to just food transitions, outside of a few notable exceptions, global governance of such transitions remains underdeveloped and understudied.

For this workshop, we welcome emerging research that treats agri-food systems (local, regional or global) as amalgamations of spaces, relations and practices that are often contradictory and ambiguous: both egalitarian and elitist, progressive and conservative, transnational and proudly insular. We are interested in probing these tensions and contradictions by inviting contributions that engage with Just Transitions in the food system across urban, rural, national and transnational scales.

Among the themes and questions, we are seeking to address are:

1. The Place of Agroecology in Just Transitions
2. Agricultural labor politics in the context of local agri-food systems
3. Is local really the opposite of global?
4. From Fair Trade to Slow Food: Transnational food movements and initiatives
5. What does the food regime theory say about local or regional food systems?
6. Re-peasantization and local food systems in comparative perspective
7. Climate change and local food systems
8. Global Governance, rural development and local food systems
9. What role can Peri-urban and Urban Food Systems play in a Just Transition?
10. Intellectual property laws, GMOS and agro-ecology
11. Agricultural land loss and urbanization
12. Land grabs and local food systems

Convenors

Dr. Candan Turkkkan – candan.turkkan@ozyegin.edu.tr

Profesor Alejandro Colás - A.Colas@bbk.ac.uk