

THE MAKING OF A FOOD SECURITY CRISIS - OVERSEAS AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENTS AND NATIONALISM IN SOUTH KOREA



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**Front page: Korean farmers protesting the 2008
reopening for U.S. beef imports. © Getty Images**

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABARE	Australian Bureau of Agricultural Economics
BOP	Balance of Payment
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
CBOT	Chicago Board of Trade
CFU	Catholic Farmers' Union
CPI	Consumer price inflation
EPB	Economic Planning Board
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
HHI	Hyundai Heavy Industries
HQB	High Quality Beef
KFRSF	Korea Food Security Research Foundation
KORUS-FTA	Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement
KPL	Korean Peasants League
KRCC	Korea Rural Community Corporation
KREI	Korea Rural Economics Research Institute
KWPA	Korean Women's Peasant Association
LIDECOR	Livestock Development Corporation
LPMO	Livestock Promotion and Marketing Organization
LVC	La via Campesina
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
MFN	Most Favored Nation
MOFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
NACF	National Agriculture Cooperative Federation
NLCF	National Livestock Cooperative Federation
NTC	Non-trade concerns
OADA	Overseas Agricultural Development Association
OADS	Overseas Agricultural Development Service
ORD	Office of Rural Development
OSROK	Office of Supply of the Republic of Korea
RDA	Rural Development Administration
RDP	Reunification and Democracy Party
SBS	Simultaneous Buy and Sell
SRM	Specified risk materials
URAA	Uruguay Round Agreement of Agriculture
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

***A note on transliteration of names and terms.**

Most academic works on Korea employ the McCune-Reischauer system. I have chosen to use the Revised Romanization system because of its readability. I have always felt uncomfortable with the McCune-Reischauer system as it feels like an academic rite of passage to use a system not in use in daily life. There are exceptions in cases where common usage differs, or where someone has selected another transliteration of their personal names. I generally follow the Korean naming practices with the given name preceded by the family name. In referencing authors with Korean names, I follow the naming practice used by the author.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

In April of 2008, newly elected president of South Korea Lee Myung Bak was on his way back from a meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush at Camp David. On the plane, he held a press conference where he announced the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy for Food Security (OADS). The strategy was the government's response to the global food crisis and vital for the nation's food security, he argued. By mobilizing state agencies, state enterprises, and private companies, the government would seek to attain farm land overseas in anticipation of a future in which food would become a scarce resource. This was especially important for South Korea as one of the world's biggest net-importers of food (M. J. Wang, 2011). The announcement did not get a lot of attention initially. Other food issues took center stage in national politics. On his return from the U.S., the President was flung into one of the biggest political crises of a democratically elected president in South Korean history. Lee Myung Bak had agreed to resume U.S. beef imports to South Korea following a five-year ban caused by the discovery of Mad Cow Disease in the U.S.. The decision was made in order to get the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) through the American Congress who had made the resumption of U.S. beef exports to Korea a key condition for supporting the agreement (Petrik, 2008). His decision to resume U.S. beef imports combined with strong opposition to the KORUS-FTA led to massive protests across the country. Demonstrations lasted for months and at one point, the entire cabinet of ministers resigned in an attempt to appease an enraged public.

No one in the international media or academia took note of the OADS announcement either – at least not until the autumn of 2008 when the NGO Grain launched its report *Seized: The 2008 land grab for food and financial security* in which South Korea was said to be one of the major land grabbers in the Global South (GRAIN, 2008b). South Korea really made it headlines in November 2008 when the Financial Times revealed that the South Korean firm Daewoo Logistics was in negotiations with

the Madagascar government to lease 1.3 million hectares of farmland for 99 years (Blas, 2008). The news quickly spread to other major news outlets (Borger, 2008; Iloniaina & Lough, 2008; J. Song, Oliver, & Burgis, 2008; Walt, 2008) and fueled anti-government protests in Madagascar. In March 2009 the sitting President Marc Ravalomanana was deposed in a military backed coup (Berak, 2009; Burnod, Gingembre, & Andrianirina Ratsialonana, 2013). Only a few days after Financial Times broke the story about Daewoo in Madagascar, The Guardian published an infographic using data from GRAIN, in which South Korea was listed as the country with the largest area (2.3 million hectares) of overseas land purchases followed by China, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Japan (The Guardian, 2008). What these countries had in common, compared to northern-based agri-business investments search for profits, was a *food security imperative* (Borger, 2008; GRAIN, 2008b; P. Mcmichael, 2013). The framing of these countries as buying farmland for food security (perhaps with the exception of China) was intimately linked to the fact that these countries were all net-food importing countries.

The logical connection between food import dependence, food security concerns and overseas land grabbing has become an enduring part of the debate on the rise in overseas farmland investments. GRAIN and others made that connection early on arguing that the dependence on food imports led a group of import dependent states to no longer trust global markets and northern agri-businesses with their food supply (GRAIN, 2008b; P. Mcmichael, 2013; Pearce, 2012). GRAIN labeled these net-food importing countries *food security seekers* thus establishing a direct logical connection between food import dependence and food (in)security. This logic of food import dependence meaning food (in)security has stood largely unquestioned in much of the existing literature on the drivers behind the overseas farmland investments by net-food importing countries, yet it is one that could need further scrutiny. In the case of Korea, food import dependence is not a new phenomenon. For

most of the South Korean republic's existence net food import dependence has been the rule rather than the exception and it has not always been regarded as a food security threat or as a problem at all. Secondly, there is a need to specify what is meant when the term food security is employed. Food insecurity usually evokes images of starvation and hunger or a lack of access to food, but this is hardly the case of South Korea who is ranked 26 on The Economist's Global Food Security Index (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2013). This index that ranks countries according to the three core themes of affordability, availability, and quality and safety thus places South Korea in the top of the world when it comes to food security.

What appears as easily observable and objective facts (food import dependence and food security) are nonetheless embedded in particular narratives about the causes of food import dependence and what food security is perceived to represent. These are two issues that so far have received little attention. It also points to the problem of assigning such general descriptors as food import dependent and food security to a larger group of countries in as much as they may obscure how individual national trajectories of development have led to food import dependence and varied interpretations of food security. Within much of the critical land grab literature food import dependence and the global food crisis is ascribed to global and international logics of capital accumulation in which northern governments, agri-businesses and finance capital have undermined agricultural production throughout much of the Global South (Akram-Lodhi, 2012; Philip McMichael, 2009a; Schneider, 2014). This view of food import dependence being the result of the subjugation of the periphery to the interests of powerful interests in the world economy's core is also a dominant discourse within South Korean debates about how South Korea ended up becoming a major net-food importer (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006; C.-H. Lee, 2013; B.-S. Yoon, Song, & Lee, 2013). However, such broader generalizations of what has caused some countries to become net-food importers and that food import dependence necessarily

leads to food insecurity fails to provide more nuanced analyses of the specific trajectories leading to food import dependence in individual countries.

Another issue is the varied responses by net-food importing countries to the 2007 food crisis. Only a handful of studies have looked at why certain countries responded to the food crisis by investing in overseas farmland while others did not. These variations cannot be explained by looking at global macro-economic trajectories alone, but should be studied at the level of national economics and politics as well. Perhaps the most thorough treatment of such a kind of these “new” investors has been provided by Eckert Woertz’s study of the Gulf Cooperation Council states (Eckert Woertz, 2013). Woertz’ analysis focuses on how food import dependence in the Gulf Countries has developed historically, how it is perceived, and how it is managed (Eckert Woertz, 2013, p. 4). Woertz situates his analysis in the interface between national development priorities and international political economy with a strong focus on the state. He argues that national food security has been a long-standing subject of concern for GCC countries because of their lack of arable land. This lack of arable land did not however, prevent countries such as Saudi Arabia to launch large-scale agricultural self-sufficiency initiatives especially during the 1980s to avoid dependence on foreign imports following failed attempts in the 1970s to develop Sudan into the breadbasket for oil-rich Gulf States (Eckert Woertz, 2013, pp. 161–194). Woertz also goes into depth with an analysis of the actual scale of current GCC agricultural investments and their organization. Woertz thus succeeds in accomplishing a number of things. First of all, he situates the impact of the 2007 food crisis on GCC countries in a historical context showing that food supply security has been an ongoing concern for GCC countries for decades and that they have responded to these concerns in different ways over time. Strategies have altered between trade, self-sufficiency through national agricultural modernization, and overseas agricultural development depending. These strategies have in turn chosen based on the immediate

contingencies of the situation. Secondly, Woertz provides detailed insights into how especially the states of Saudi Arabia and Qatar overseas agricultural development strategies are managed and the division of labor between the state, sovereign wealth funds and the private sector in those investments (Eckert Woertz, 2013, pp. 195–226).

China's overseas agricultural development has been the subject of an article by Irene Hofman and Peter Ho (2012) who argue that China's agricultural investments should be regarded as a form of developmental outsourcing "...in which the state, not the corporate sector, plays a vital role in planning and driving the off-shoring of production." And that this state driven initiative has the purpose "To fuel its economic development, China projects its domestic shortages to other countries and regions abroad." (Hofman & Ho, 2012, p. 7). Hofman and Ho focus their analysis on national development policy as the locus for China's engagement in overseas agricultural development. Bräutigam and Xiaoyang (2009) take a quite similar position arguing that current Chinese investments in African agriculture is part of China's "Going Global" strategy, the need to find land for land-scarce Chinese farmers, and to secure food resources for a future in which China can no longer supply its own food from domestic agriculture (Bräutigam & Xiaoyang, 2009, p. 694). Both articles here links Chinese overseas agricultural investments to China's national development policies, but they also emphasize the central role of state policies and institutions in facilitating these investments through finance and diplomacy.

Another pertinent question is perhaps why some capital-rich food import dependent countries do not figure prominently in the debate, academic or popular, on land grabbing. Derek Hall (2014) for example asks why Japan does not figure prominently in the land grabbing debate nor in the reports on land deals? According to Hall, Japan fits the profile of a country that would logically be involved for a number of reasons: 1. The size and wealth of the Japanese economy. 2. It is as one of the major net-food importing countries in the developed world. 3. It is one of the world's largest

capital exporters and holds enormous foreign currency reserves. 4. The country's long historical experience securing overseas raw materials using state-business cooperation that has led to the formation of large trading companies (sogo shosha) able to engage in overseas agricultural production, distribution and logistics. Hall proposes a number of hypotheses for why Japan does not figure prominently in the land grabbing literature. One reason would be that Japan already holds substantial land resources overseas, but that these assumptions often lack data to back up such claims (D. Hall, 2014, p. 10). Another hypothesis that seems more convincing to Hall is that past experiences have made the sogo shosha focus on sourcing, shipping, and storage rather than direct land investments. This does not mean that Japan did not respond to the 2007 food crisis, but that the government directed its resources to other activities other than direct land investments such as agricultural research, technology transfer, and increasing overall agricultural world production (D. Hall, 2014, p. 14). Hall also proposes the hypotheses that Japan may not feature prominently simply due to a falling western academic and media interest in Japanese political economy and politics and that Japan falls between the emerging economies and the financialization literature on land grabbing. Hall's analysis thus suggests, in line with the authors above, that net-food importing countries have responded to the 2007 food crisis in a variety of ways.

Another country that should be assumed to engage in overseas land investments would be Taiwan, which has equally low food self-sufficiency. But until now the Taiwanese government appears to focus instead on increasing national self-sufficiency. For example, to augment the production of feed corn the government has reclaimed idle farm land, provided contract farming subsidies, and experimented with double cropping on rice fields in the southern part of the island (A. Wang, 2011). Taiwan however remains an understudied case that could provide interesting insights into the variation of food supply strategies in the wake of the 2007 food crisis. What all these

studies suggest is that reactions vary and that national developmental trajectories, experiences and domestic politics matter in how net-food importing countries responded to the 2007 food crisis.

This study is a contribution to this body of literature by trying to understand (following Woertz) how South Korea's food import dependence developed historically, how it is perceived, and why South Korea decided to respond as it did. Drawing on Woertz' questions and the insights provided from the above studies into how specific countries have responded to the 2007 food crisis, this dissertation sets out to further our understanding of the South Korean Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy for Food Security. I will do so by firstly analyze the historical trajectory of rising food import dependence. Secondly, I will study how this food import dependence led to the perception of an impending food security crisis. The initial assumption is that there are particular historical trajectories and dominant perceptions of South Korea's position in the global food system and world order that can help qualify our understanding of South Korea's decision to pursue overseas land acquisitions for food security.

The title of this Dissertation, which start with *making of* alludes to E.P. Thompson. Inspired by Thompson, I regard the making of food import dependence and in the South Korean context owes as much to agency as to conditioning¹ (Thompson, 1966, p. 8). Korean-American scholar Gi-Wook Shin argues in his study of colonial agrarian conflict and the origins of Korean capitalism that South Korea's industrial transformation cannot be understood as a smooth evolutionary process dictated by the state or the world system, but rather as an uneven and conflict-ridden process involving actions and reactions of individuals, groups, and social classes. Society was not passive, he argues, but mutually transforming vis-a-vis the state and world system (G.-W. Shin, 1998, p. 1310). Following Shin, I seek to understand the

¹ By conditioning I refer to the broader dynamics of the world agro-economy as setting certain limits to agency, yet does not predetermine agency altogether.

political strategies of resistance, adjustment, and alignment with the world system and state agro-food policy, and how in the process South Korean food import dependence came into being and how this food important dependence in turn came to be perceived as food security crisis.

To do so, I examine the connection between trade liberalization and declining self-sufficiency as intimately linked to broader state development priorities and the expansion of livestock production within the broader contours of the world economy. The livestock aspect of South Korea's dependence on grain imports is a particularly understudied aspect. Approximately 70 percent of South Korea's grain imports are for animal feed, and this proportion of feed grain to food grain ration has remained quite stable since the early 1990s (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014). Thus, the rise of meat production is something that should be taken into consideration in the study of declining food self-sufficiency rates in South Korea. The *meatification* (Schneider, 2014; Weis, 2013a, 2013b) of Korean agriculture and diet is thus an element that must be considered in our understanding of South Korean agro-food politics. Weis argues that "meatification," understood as rising meat consumption and industrial livestock production especially in Asia, is an inescapable part of the global food crisis of 2007 (Weis, 2013b). He is echoed by Cindy Schneider who argues that part of what drives investors to invest in farmland overseas is the demand for feed grains to meet rapidly growing demand for feed grains from Asian countries such as China and India. This hypothesis, while rejected as a contributor to the global price shocks around 2007-08 (Headey & Fan, 2010), does seem to apply to the situation of South Korea. The rise in meat production plays a major part in the country's declining grain self-sufficiency and the country's incorporation into the transnational and corporate agro-food system.

The second aspect that this study seeks to find answers to, is how this food dependence in came to be perceived as a food security crisis. I pay particular attention

to how the agricultural sector, in opposing trade liberalization, has attempted to link their economic interests to questions of national identity and economic, cultural sovereignty how this nationalist subtext has been used to mobilize support for the overseas agricultural development strategy².

To summarize, this study aims at providing a deeper understanding of the economic, political and cultural processes of transformation in Korean agro-food policy, that led to the current situation of food import dependence, and how a particular configuration of interests, economic and cultural, led to the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy.

Research Questions

My main research question is therefore as such: ***What historical trajectory can explain South Korea's rising food import dependence and how did this import dependence lead to a perception of a food security crisis that required an overseas agricultural strategy?***

This study critically engages with how the terms food import dependence and food security as drivers behind South Korea's strategy to acquire farmland overseas have been addressed in the existing literature as "objective" facts. It does so by questioning two central theses that appear in much of the existing critical literature on South Korean agricultural political economy: 1. That South Korea's food import dependence is predominantly the result of an unequal north-south power imbalance that has forced South Korea to open up its markets to the detriment of national self-sufficiency and

² It is important to note here that I do not regard nationalism as a static idea, but as having multiple meanings and competed over by different groups seeking to capture its politically legitimating effects (Eichler, 2005, p. 73). Just as the economy is not one single entity, neither is nationalism. Just as economic interests may change over time as a sector and its environment changes, so do national identities. Thus, it is important to study how claims to national identity and sovereignty change over time and come into being within the specific contexts in which they operate.

domestic agriculture. 2. That food import dependence caused by outside forces in itself constitutes a food security problem. To challenge these notions, I propose an analysis in two parts: the first part will study the historical trajectory of rising food import dependence while the second part will study the representations of food import dependence as a food security problem. For each part, I outline two research questions.

Part I – The rise of import dependence

Part 1 takes an economic perspective to study how state development priorities in the context of shifts in the world economy and domestic politics have resulted in high levels of food import dependence. The hypothesis here is that rising food import dependence followed a distinct trajectory defined not only by the world economy, but also by national economic and political priorities. It does so through a focus on national agro-food policy in general as well as a sector-based study of the rise of the cattle sector as a case of how the transformation of agriculture towards livestock production has affected food and feed imports.

Research Question 1: *How have the world economy and state economic developmental objectives influenced agro-food policy prioritization of either self-sufficiency or import-based food supply strategies since 1970?*

The first research question seeks to understand the agro-food policy shifts in South Korea over the past forty years not only as the outcome of global forces, but rather as produced in the political interplay between global economic forces and national politics. Rising food import dependence and declining conditions for the agricultural sector were central aspects of the political struggles leading up to the food crisis. Central to these debates have been the impact of agricultural trade liberalization and whether it has been forced upon South Korea or whether the state has sacrificed a

domestically oriented agricultural sector to further the interests of the country's export-industries? This question thus situates agro-food policy within the broader developmental trajectory of South Korea and pays particular attention to the rise and decline of statist agriculture and self-sufficiency strategies and how this affected the structure of the agricultural sector³ and the terms of trade for agricultural producers.

Research Question 2: *How did agricultural sector transformation towards livestock production emerge and how was it shaped into its current form of high specialization and feed import dependence within the broader context of national agricultural policy?*

The second research question centers on the trajectory of the agricultural sub-sector of beef cattle production, known as Hanu, and how it came to dependent on grain imports. In 2008, the cattle sector accounted for thirty-four percent of total compound feed production, making it the largest consumer of feed grains (S. Choi & Francom, 2008). The rise of livestock production in general and beef production in particular has been a significant contributor in making the country the fifth-largest grain importer. Cattle producers have become a significant subsector within agriculture in South Korea in terms of numbers, value and political power, and yet agriculture and beef cattle production play an insignificant role within the broader economy. The question seeks to trace the trajectory of beef production as producers have sought to adapt to the broader shifts in agro-food policy towards trade liberalization and how this has led to feed import dependent production systems and diverging intra-sectoral economic interests.

Part II – The perception of a food security crisis

³ Agriculture accounted for only 2.6 percent of GDP, and beef cattle accounted for about ten percent of total agricultural value in 2009 (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010).

The second part of this dissertation studies how food import dependence came to be perceived as a food security crisis and where I perhaps most distinctly depart from other studies of national responses to the food crisis. This part of the analysis begins with the hypothesis that food security should be studied as an expression of economic nationalism rather than as a matter of food security per se. It studies how the struggles over the direction of agro-food policy came to be a political struggle over the role of food and agriculture in defending national sovereignty and national identity. This is one in two research questions:

Research Question 3: *How did agriculture and food in general, and Hanu in particular become symbols of national sovereignty and identity in the context of political and economic liberalization?*

With this research question, I intend to inquire into how political questions of food and agriculture became embedded in broader discourses of national sovereignty and identity during the period of political and economic liberalization and how national sovereignty and identity became key political themes in the debate over the course of agro-food policy. I do so by tracing the linking of agriculture and food to broader nationalist historiographies of colonization and subjugation as well as the idea of a distinct ethnic nation. This requires us to study the formation of political subjectivities in the political struggles over agro-food policy formation. I will do so in both more general terms, but also how Hanu cows and beef came to be understood as part of national identity and a symbol of national identity and anti-trade liberation resistance. It pays particular attention to representations of farmers and Hanu in campaigns and popular culture aiming to support farmers and domestically produced agricultural products facing overseas competition.

Research Question 4: *How did certain representations of the causes of food import dependence link up with economic interests to advocate for and defend the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy and what other potential problematizations were not problematized?*

The fourth research question inquiries into the political debate surrounding the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy to discuss how economic interests and nationalism shaped the political coalitions that formed in support of the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. Building on the findings from the previous research questions, this question seeks to provide a critical assessment of the debates around food import dependence and food security in the wake of the global food crisis and how certain problem representations were used to advocate for the OADS. It examines how issues of national, cultural, and economic sovereignty was employed mobilizing force by various economic interests. Informed by the first three chapters, the question assess how OADS proponents mobilized supports, drawing on representations of externally induced threats to national sovereignty, and how these representations determined what was highlighted as the problem and what was not.

Trade Liberalization and National Food Crises

Before continuing, it is perhaps relevant to outline the fault lines in scholarly debates about South Korean agro-food politics. The Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy is a very recent event and therefore little in-depth research has been conducted on the economic, cultural, and political processes that shaped the decision and its support. The OADS however builds on an ongoing and contentious debate about transformations in South Korea agro-food sector as a consequence of four decades of economic and political liberalization. Mainstream economists predominantly outside Korea have for many years argued that government protection

of the agricultural sector through trade barriers has been detrimental to the national economy and Korean consumers by raising food prices (K. Anderson & Martin, 2009; Beghin, Bureau, & Park, 2003; Francks, Boestel, & Kim, 1999). To some, the state has sought to protect an outdated and economically unimportant sector on political and sentimental grounds. The agricultural sector in South Korea is still characterized by small multifunctional farms with an average farm size of 1.5 hectares and agriculture's share of total GDP is only about 2.6 percent. Nevertheless, South Korea, along with Japan, has been heavily criticized for agricultural protectionism and dragging their feet when it comes to agricultural trade liberalization. This debate has also been quite significant in international trade politics with especially the U.S. and Australia arguing that South Korea keeps double standards when it comes to international trade. The country's export-oriented manufacturing industries have for decades benefited from trade liberalization while the agricultural sector has experienced declining terms of trade. Other authors have argued that the South Korean government all too willingly has provided agricultural trade concessions to the benefit of the large industrial conglomerates such as Samsung and Hyundai, to the detriment of Korean farmers and national food self-sufficiency (Hart-Landsberg, 2011; Hartsell & Kim, 2010; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008; Y.-K. Lee & Kim, 2003; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013).

These differences between those who claim that South Korea has pursued a protectionist strategy to the detriment of the national economy, and those who argue the government has not done enough to protect agriculture from economic globalization to the detriment of farmers arise from both theoretical, disciplinary, and political differences. Within the English language critical agricultural studies of South Korea two important scholars need mention as they both provide great analytical insights into the history of Korean agro-food policy. One of the most prolific authors is Larry Burmeister (Burmeister & Choi, 2011; Burmeister, 1987, 1990a, 1990b, 1992, 1999, 2000, 2006; Sakamoto, Choi, & Burmeister, 2007). Burmeister's work over the past

almost three decades provides a consistent continued discussion of shifts in agricultural policy, the centrality of state controlled agro-food policy and the transformations the sector has undergone from authoritarianism to democracy and from protectionism to trade liberalization. Another notable scholar is Kim Chul-Kyoo whose studies have situated South Korean agricultural policy formation from a Food Regime perspective (Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006, 2008). Even though these two authors use different analytical lenses both Kim and Burmeister agree that trade liberalization and inter-sectoral economic disarticulation since the early 1980s has been detrimental to agricultural producers.

I will not delve further into these debates, but simply position myself within the segment of the literature that argues that sectoral, structural adjustment to trade liberalization and broader political and economic changes in South Korea in the transition - from authoritarian dictatorship to democracy - and from statist protectionism to liberalization - has led to declining economic conditions for agricultural producers and economic disarticulation between agricultural and the industrial sectors. (Burmeister, 1990a, 1992, 2000; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006, 2008; Philip McMichael & Kim, 1994; Sakamoto et al., 2007). From an economic perspective, there is no doubt that agricultural trade liberalization have worsened the terms of trade for many South Korean farmers. In 2009, farm household income had declined to 66 percent of urban household income (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 101). The declining economic conditions of the agricultural sector in South Korea have in turn spurred debates about what has been the causes of agricultural crisis and declining self-sufficiency. Within this debate, a particular, but popular strand of literature attribute these crises to government neglect, trade liberalization and corporate globalization (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; H.-N. Kim, 2010; C.-H. Lee, 2013; H. Park, 2011b; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). These authors find analytical footing in Food Regime

theory⁴ to argue that South Korea's food system increasingly has been subjugated to a transnational corporate food regime to the detriment of farmers, consumers and national self-sufficiency, thus situating South Korea's rural decline and rising food import dependence within a broader global dynamic of capitalist agro-food transformation and a global north-south dynamic. (Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008; P. D. McMichael, 1992; P. McMichael, 2000; Philip McMichael, 2000). While I do not disagree entirely with the global dimensions and its impact on South Korean agriculture from a macro-perspective, it seems that most of these studies neglect the role of national agro-food politics. Perhaps this is no surprise since one key aspect of food regime theory is the de-nationalization of agro-food politics (P. McMichael & Myhre, 1990). The state is willingly or forcibly subjugated to the interests of transnational finance capital, which in turn redirect focus from the nation as a relevant unit of analysis. This dissertation is not an attempt to challenge the merits of studying global agro-food transformation, but questions the elimination of the nation state as a unit of analysis in understanding the trajectory of agro-food transformation in South Korea.

The same authors that situate the roots of the crisis in a dominant transnational corporate food regime in turn regard new grassroots alliances between farmers and consumers as the source of a countermovement that may open up avenues for new kinds of agro-food politics and resistance. Within this literature, South Korea's alternative food movements have become the center of attention by a number of scholars in recent years (Burmeister & Choi, 2011; Hartsell & Kim, 2010; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008; Ku, 2009; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). Farmers and consumer activism is represented as possible agents of progressive change resisting the corporatization and globalization of food systems, and the erosion of national self-sufficiency (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008; S.-J. Kim & Wainwright, 2010; S.-O. Lee, Kim, &

⁴ See for example (Araghi, 2003; Friedmann & McMichael, 1987; Friedmann, 2009; Philip McMichael, 2009a, 2009b)

Wainwright, 2010; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). For example, ecological alternative movements represented by what is called prosumer⁵ cooperatives and peasant movements such as the Korean Peasants League (KPL) and Korean Women's Peasant Association (KWPA) are represented as examples of a new national movement to counter the forces of corporate dominance over the country's food system (Burmeister & Choi, 2011; Hartsell & Kim, 2010; Ku, 2009; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). Since the late 1990's South Korean farmers' movements have actively participated in international activities to resist multilateral agricultural trade negotiations under the WTO, and the Korean Peasant's League (KPL) and the Korean Women's Peasant Association (KWPA) have become prominent actors in *La via Campesina*. Notably, the concept of food sovereignty introduced by the international peasant movement *La via Campesina* (LVC) has been subject to much anticipation of the possibility for a national food movement based on democratic participation and local food production (Burmeister & Choi, 2011; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). I do not intend to enter into a detailed debate about the concept of food sovereignty⁶. That is beyond this dissertation's scope. Suffice to say here is that food sovereignty has been presented as a grassroots policy concept that seeks to challenge the dominance of the corporate food regime.

The situation of the struggle as operating within a context of corporate domination versus grassroots resistance is present out both in the mainstream media but also within academic circles⁷ internationally as well as in South Korea. The 2008 anti U.S. beef protests in particular have been subject to much speculation about the emergence of a nationally, politically powerful alliance of farmers and consumers

⁵ Prosumer cooperatives are organizations in which producers and consumers are organized within the same cooperatives. Most of these movements where consumers and producers negotiate annual fixed prices based on farmers' production costs rather than market prices.

⁶ For discussions of *La via campesina* and interpretations of the policy concept of food sovereignty, see example (La Via Campesina, 2010; Martinez-Torres & Rosset, 2010; Patel, 2009; Schanbacher, 2010; Wittman, Desmarais, & Wiebe, 2010)

⁷ See for example (S.-O. Lee et al., 2010; Martinez-Torres & Rosset, 2010; Philip McMichael, 2009b)

countering the hegemonic project of transnational corporations and the government (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; J. Kang, 2012; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010). While sympathetic to the political agenda of these grassroots alternatives, this study challenges the somewhat dichotomous understanding of agro-food politics between dominance and resistance where counter movements are assumed to rally around an agenda of resistance to neo-liberal globalization and trade liberalization a priori.

There is a need to scrutinize such counter movements to understand their dynamics and the forces that bring such coalitions together. One such force is nationalism, something that the authors above do not address in their analysis of the 2008 U.S. beef protests. Only a few articles from critical scholars have so far discussed the central aspect of nationalist sentiments in the political mobilization against the KORUS FTA. The perhaps most critical study comes from Mi Park, who argues that the framing of opposition campaigns to the KORUS FTA played distinctly on nationalist and anti-US sentiments to rally popular support while subduing more anti-capitalist frames of resistance (M. Park, 2009). A similar argument has been made by Martin Hart-Landsberg in his analysis of resistance to the KORUS FTA (Hart-Landsberg, 2011). Mi Park and Hart-Landsberg's critique of trade liberalization resistance has been very informative providing important insights, yet in both cases, I find a need to qualify the trajectory of nationalism as a political mobilizing force in South Korea.

Nationalism, Sovereignty, and Food Politics

The central role of nationalism in South Korean development and politics is a subject debated by scholars to much lesser extent than state capacity and world economic factor endowments, but it has received attention in the past couple of decades. Meredith Woo-Cumings for example argues that a study of Korea's development without an underlying understanding of the dynamics of national security and national survival in political discourse, practices, and policies will miss the point. To Meredith

Woo-Cumings, nationalism and security have been used as powerful mobilizing forces throughout South Korea's modern history as an efficacious binding agent that made Korea propel forward. Without factoring these nationalist sentiments into the study of South Korea's economic success (and failures) will miss the point (M. J.-E. Woo-Cumings, 1998; M. Woo-Cumings, 2005). Henry Em also discusses the centrality of national sovereignty and external threats as essential to understand national identity formation in South Korea. Em argues that the imagined Korean ethnic nation and ideas of sovereignty merged in a period of imperialism and colonialism, during which Korean nationalist historians sought to ideologically justify Korea as a sovereign entity in the world system (Em 2013). In a similar vein, Gi-Wook Shin argues that ethnic nationalism and an organic notion of the Korean nation was only one of a range of collective identities competing for dominance in the early 20th century including non-national and transnational collective identities. The unitary ethnic nation emerged as the most prominent anti-colonial response to Japanese claims to racial unity that had justified the colonization of Korea, and Shin argues that nation or national identity remains a contested terrain in contemporary Korea (G.-W. Shin, 2006a).

Such a challenge to the notion of horizontal ethnic unity (Minjok) as the dominant form of national identity in the Korean national imaginary came under from pro-democracy activists in the 1970s who sought to contest the authoritarian regime. Namhee Lee's study of the emergence and rise of an alternative nationalism based on the concept of Minjung, or "the dispossessed," as the central ideology of anti-state movements in the 1970s and 1990s captures this struggle of competing nationalisms (N. Lee, 2007). Minjung (the dispossessed) stood in opposition to Minjok (the ethnic nation), not in terms of nationalism vs. anti-nationalism, but rather who were the "true" subjects of a nationalist historiography. Minjung philosophy was instrumental in positioning the peasant as the true nationalist subjects who were historically oppressed by corrupt elites but also the defenders of the nation against foreign aggression. The

formation of a political peasant subjectivity and its role in organizing farmers in political struggles over agricultural policy and pro-democracy movements has been particularly well studied by Nancy Abelman (Abelman, 1993, 1995, 1996). The central role of nationalism in South Korean politics is thus one that spans the political spectrum from right to left. The studies of Minjok and Minjung nationalism are important to this study because the struggle over food has historically been fought not only based on competing economic interests and class struggle, but also what classes or segments of the population that represent the true nationalists and patriots.

This political struggle between competing national identities also affect the politics of food in South Korea, but so far, only a small number of scholars have studied food as a lens through which to analyze broader social, economic, and cultural transformations in Korea in the 20th century. Katarzyna Cwiertka (2012) regards food as a medium through which to understand how the lives of contemporary Koreans were shaped by Japanese Colonialism and the Cold war. The central role of the state in molding the Korean diet in colonial Korea and post-colonial South Korea is the focus of Park Kyoung-Hee's dissertation from 2013. Park's provides a convincing and strong argument for the tight links between changes in the everyday diet and state economic policies implemented to drive industrialization and sustain the national fighting power (K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 14). Both Park and Cwiertka argues that westernization of diets for many decades was considered the appropriate national diet that would fuel the rise of a strong South Korean nation. For decades more traditional Korean diets based were shunned and looked down upon by authorities for both economic and ideological reasons. Yet within the past decades this dominant perception of western diets as superior have shifted significantly and it is a shift that is particularly important to examine since it influences the perception of food import dependence as a food security problem.

In 2010, the Korea Journal published a special issue on food consumption as cultural practice and the transformation of lifestyle practices in contemporary Korea. The issue was one of the first collections of food studies in Korea to explore consumption of food as cultural and political practice. (O. Moon, 2010b). A number of these articles study the link between food and the construction of national identity focusing on the construction of a cultural meaning of rice around the philosophy of Sintoburi (K. O. Kim, 2010) and the questionable process of reinventing royal court cuisine within the framework of the Important Intangible Cultural Property system established by the Korean government to strengthen national identity formation (O. Moon, 2010a). Other articles focused on the negotiations and incorporation of ethnic cuisines into Korean food culture during a period of globalization (Bak, 2010), and the modification and nationalization of Japanese ramen and later globalization of Korean style Ramen (Kyung-koo, 2010). What these studies have in common is, as I mentioned earlier, a focus on the construction of contemporary food culture in the intersection of the global and the national through cultural processes of standardization, localization, and hybridization.

These studies provide insights into how different food items were given national meaning in contemporary South Korea and how Koreans engage ambivalently to forces of globalization. Nevertheless, their focus on consumption practices tend to ignore the links to production, and especially the impact of economic liberalization of agriculture and globalization what foods are produced and consumed in South Korea. One effort to link the politics of food culture and trade liberalization is an by Michael Reinschmidt (2007), in which he explores how protectionism has shaped the rice sector in between efforts of to protect rice producers on the grounds of national heritage while diversified diets caused by greater access to new food items as part liberalization efforts have led a decline in rice consumption. This has in Reinschmidt's view led to an anachronistic status quo in which the government, pressured by farmer's associations and popular

support, have continued to pour subsidies into an ailing production sector while trying to “reinvent” uses of rice (Reinschmidt 2007:108). Most of these studies show the national identity constructed around agricultural sectors and foods, and Reinschmidt’s article is informative in linking the consumption of rice with a range of production support systems despite heavy pressure to liberalize the sector. However, while the struggle over rice has been largely about maintaining heritage and status quo, Hanu is, arguably a more recent and hybridized product. The industry itself, the product characteristics, and cultural significance, has taken shape within the past 30 years during a time of economic and political liberalization.

This study seeks to integrate a political economy analysis and a cultural analysis of the formation of national identity in order to understand the politics of the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. It seeks to understand how economic interests and nationalism intersect in the formation of political coalitions that have the power to shape national policy. I focus my specific case on the beef sector because it is at the center of much political debate on trade liberalization in South Korea while also being a main cause of rising grain imports. The rise of the industry coincides with, and was shaped by, the political struggles over agricultural trade liberalization that has lasted for almost four decades. However, I study this rise of beef production not only in terms of political struggles over competing economic interests between farmers and the state, but also as a struggle over the importance food and agriculture in Korean national sovereignty identity.

Chapter Overview

In chapters 2 and 3, I present my analytical framework and my methodology. In chapter 4, I turn to the formation of agro-food policy in South Korea since 1970. It traces the political shifts and struggles over the role of agriculture in national political and economic development, centering on the transitions from authoritarianism to

democracy and from agricultural protectionism to trade liberalization. Chapter 5 traces the rise of the Korean beef cattle industry from a small side-activity to a major sub-sector of the agricultural economy within the broader transitions analyzed in the previous. It discusses how beef production emerged and transformed into its current form as a high-end, grain-fed premium product as a response to rising competition in a liberalized market. Chapter 6 focuses on how domestic agriculture and food became a matter of national sovereignty and identity in general and how Hanu beef became a national symbol in particular. It outlines the shift from perceiving farmers, and agriculture as associated with backwardness to symbols of national pride within the context of pro-democracy and anti-trade liberalization movements. It then turns to show how beef shifted from being associated with a western and modern diet to a food symbolizing tradition and national pride under threatened by foreign imports. In chapter 7, I turn to the OADS. Through a case study of twenty-six Korean farmers that ventured to Cambodia in late 2008 to grow feed crops to send back to Korea, I outline how these farmers perceived their venture not only as a way to protect their own economic interests, but also as a mission to defend national sovereignty. I then turn to the domestic political debate surrounding the OADS arguing that nationalist sentiments and the defense of the nation against foreign domination played a role in building broad political support for the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. I end the chapter by offering some critical reflections on how nationalism may pre-empt or obscure other problems of a more domestic character in South Korean agro-food politics. In the conclusion, I present a summary and discussion of my findings as well as some concluding reflections on how this study contributes to the broader academic debate on food security motivated land grabbing.

CHAPTER 2 – THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

“What kind of historical trajectory accounts for the society's grasping certain events as crisis points, and how do ideological representations respond to these purported crisis?” (Wolf, 2001, p. 9)

The objective of this chapter is to discuss the dissertation's theoretical reflections and the analytical framework for studying the formation of food and agricultural policy in South Korea. It is a framework that is developed to understand how South Korea came to be food import dependent, how the 2007 food crisis prompted South Koreans to perceive this import dependence as a food security crisis, and why the representation of the crisis prompted a solution in the form of the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. The framework developed helps illuminate the relationship between the politics of economic interests and the politics of nationalism in the formation of agro-food policy in South Korea. The framework is an attempt to overcome the limitations of analyzing food and agricultural policy from purely material political economy or constructivist cultural studies⁸.

In order to do so, the study is separated in to two distinct analytical sections: 1) a study of the political economy of agro-food politics in South Korea with a particular focus on the political-economic dynamics between agricultural sector and state interests have contributed to food import dependence during the age of trade liberalization. 2) a study of how national food and agriculture historically in the very same period of trade liberalization have come to be constructed as essential to national identity and sovereignty. These two analytical foci in turn provide broader insight into how food import dependence has come about and why the 2007 global food crisis

⁸ For discussion of the many challenges to such an approach see for example (Grossberg, 1986; Stuart Hall, 1996; Jessop & Oosterlynck, 2008; Merlingen, 2013; Olssen, 2004; Springer, 2012).

came to be represented as a national food security emergency that ultimately led to the overseas agricultural expansion as the solution to import dependency and food security. The politics of economic interests and politics of national identity are thus treated separately in part 1 and part 2 respectively.

For the two analyses, I draw on two different analytical framework. For the political economy section, I draw mostly on Bill Winders' (2009) framework for analyzing the formation of agricultural policy formation. Winders' framework is a variant of Food Regime Theory, which as discussed in the introduction, has been a prominent framework for theorizing the 2007 food crisis and the overseas agricultural investments of net-food importing states as response. I will briefly discuss food regime theory and its limitations in general as well as in analyzing the food crisis and states-sponsored overseas land investments in response before I turn to a discussion of Winders framework that seeks to overcome some of the limits to Food Regime Theory in analyzing national politics. The second part of this chapter will present the framework for analyzing the role of nationalism in the formation of agro-food policy. I first present the concept of Gastronationalism by DeSoucey (2010) as a useful conceptual term to start from, but one that needs further elaboration. I then turn to the concept of economic nationalism as it has been presented by Helleiner and Pickel among others (Helleiner & Pickel, 2005) who propose that policy is determined not by economic interests alone, but need to be studied in relation to nationalism and national identities.

Food Regime Theory

In the introduction, I questioned how much of the land grab literature treat the terms *food security* and *food import dependence* as objective descriptors to explain why certain states have resorted to purchase farmland overseas. The second question I sought to raise was that even if food security and food import dependence are used to describe the motivation for why certain states choose to invest overseas it does not

explain the variation among so-called food insecure or food import dependent countries. Food insecurity, food import dependence and subsequent overseas investments are regarded as signals of a broader crisis in the capitalist world economy. This viewpoint has been particularly promoted by Food Regime Theory derived analyses of the food crisis and its subsequent responses.

Food Regime theory has featured prominently in attempts to theorize what has been termed the global land grab (P. McMichael, 2013; Philip McMichael, 2009c, 2013; Schneider, 2014; Zoomers, 2010). Food Regime Theory was introduced by Friedman and McMichael (Friedmann & McMichael, 1987) as an attempt to historicize the role of food and agriculture in the development of the capitalist world economy and the trajectory of the state system. Food Regime was a response to the then dominant mainstream theories of articulated development and dependency theories. They criticized these theories as having the normative stand that developed countries had experienced articulated development while the underdeveloped had not thus explaining the difference of underdeveloped versus developed as a function of the articulation of agriculture and industry. Similarly, they criticized the focus on national articulation as the unit of analysis. Friedmann and McMichael instead proposed that 1. The industrialization of agriculture and global transnational agricultural specialization was an intricate part in the establishment of the state system, 2. The system was based on the logic of capital accumulation and it was organized in order to direct material flows to and from the hegemonic power in the interstate system (Friedmann & McMichael, 1987).

Friedmann and McMichael drew on Regulation Theory's two central concepts of regime of regulation and mode of regulation. In Food Regime Theory this came to mean identifying periods of stability and transitions in the global food system associated with hegemony and particular modes of capitalist accumulation. McMichael and Friedmann identified two stable periods that were labeled the colonial food regime

under British hegemony (1860-1930) characterized by a flow of agricultural products from the colonial territories and settler states. This inflow of agricultural products underpinned the quantitative growth in the industrial labor force back in the UK. However within this system, lay also the seeds of demise for the UK food regime. As competition grew from both Europe and the former settler states, Britain and those vying for hegemony turned to empire. Setting up colonies became part of a protective policy to secure the flow of agricultural products to fuel industrialization at home. This reinforced the shifts from colonial empires to the modern inter-state system and hence also its the seed of its own demise as the nation-state system grew to prominence.

The second food regime (1947-1973) began when the US after World War II consolidated its position as the world's most important food producer and military power shifting the balance of power from Europe to North America. The food regime was labeled the surplus food regime. US exports of grains, meat and durable foods on one hand and the export of US inspired national agro-industrial modernization lead to Fordist regime of accumulation. Here the flow of agricultural products and technologies flowed from the hegemon to its "informal" empire of old (European) and new (Third World) states. Cold War geo-politics and the global spread of the state system were two central aspects of this period. The new working classes to be fed were in the Third World while the agricultural producers and processors were located in the new political and economic center. However this trade in grains, meat and durable foods were, with support from the state, performed by merchant companies that over time, through the logic of capital accumulation, led to transnational corporate integration (Friedmann & Mcmichael, 1987, p. 112).

What came after the end of the US food regime in the 1970's has been subject to much discussion with Friedmann proposing the emergence of a regime dominated by private global regulation with transnational agro food corporations as the key agents in regulating the agro-food system (Friedmann, 1993, p. 52). These

transnational corporations emerged out of the U.S. surplus regime controlling both global sourcing and marketing of traditional and new commodities central to accumulation. International trade agreements such as GATT would only empower the corporations not only in terms of the freedom to trade, but also control over biotechnologies and standard. McMichael has labeled this regime the Corporate Food Regime. The passage of the Uruguay Round of the GATT negotiations was the marker for a new food regime that would consolidate Northern power and concentrate transnational capital (P. D. McMichael, 1992, p. 344). This process of agricultural restructuring began with the collapse of the Bretton Woods system. The nation-state system that was one of the stabilizing elements of the surplus food regime then became undermined by the dynamics of the internationalization of economic relations. The challenge to national protectionism by international finance will, in McMichael's opinion, eventually lead to national policy choices and regulatory frameworks based in the logic of global competitiveness rather than coherence of the nation-state. This in turn means that governments become increasingly mere conduits for transnational finance and corporations. These processes of rising economic integration and corporate concentration challenges the state-centered paradigm of international relations theory (P. D. McMichael, 1992, p. 344).

While slightly differing in their analysis of the contours of the next food regime both Friedmann and McMichael moves away from state-centered analysis to an analytical focus of transnational private regulation. In both cases ideas of transnational networks and spatial reconfigurations of food and agriculture play central roles, while the state and nation are pushed to the rear as nearly obsolete, or at least less relevant, units of analysis. In doing so, both authors though perhaps implicitly, predicts the fall of the state system in food and agriculture and diminished agency of the state and nation. The state, can either work in collusion with transnational corporations or work with the new consumer movements to protect local and regional

food systems against transnational capital. In short, they question the nation-state as the central unit of economy (P. McMichael & Myhre, 1990, p. 60). Instead, transnational capital “socializes” the state system through global regulatory mechanisms.

Food Regime Theory in the academic literature intends to describe and criticize the process through which certain states fund agricultural investments overseas, labeled by McMichael as security mercantilism. McMichael defines mercantilism as “...landgrabbing that overrides the multi-lateral trading system governed by WTO rules, substituting direct access to productive land for food and fuel supplies rather than relying on market access.” (P. McMichael, 2013, p. 48). To McMichael security mercantilism constitutes a *new territorialization* or *re-territorialization* of the corporate food regime (P. McMichael, 2013, pp. 50–54). States such as China, Saudi Arabia and South Korea are seeking to challenge to the northern agro-exporter dominated corporate food regime progressively instituted since the early 1980s (P. McMichael, 2012, p. 682).

McMichael situates the land grab phenomenon in a crisis of accumulation in the corporate food regime that produced the 2007-2008 world food crisis, and hence not a sign of hegemonic transition, which historically has been the primary focus of food regime analysis (McMichael 2009:283). Instead, he applies a food regimes approach focused on global value relations and the central role of food in the reproduction of labor power (Araghi 2010). The contradictions of the corporate food regime in McMichael’s analysis, become apparent in the 2007-08 food crisis. First of all, the corporate food regime, accelerates the process of displacing peasant agriculture and as a consequence expanded the production of global labor reserves. But this accumulation by dispossession in turn has stagnated the world’s food production as peasant farmers increasingly, as a consequence of dispossession, has entered the industrial labor reserve. That is, the reproduction of labor power occurs under declining conditions of social reproduction (McMichael 2009:285). This longer process of

dispossession and declining conditions for labor's social reproduction intersects with another capitalist crisis, that of climate change and peak oil (McMichael 2010). The rising demand for bio-fuels to deal with the climate and energy crisis, also caused by the logic of capital, accelerated the demand for agricultural crop production. Thus two crises of capital accumulation intersected and created the conditions for the 2007-08 food crisis.

In McMichael's analysis, the causes of the world food crisis and the rise in foreign land investments were not so much a signal of transition away from the corporate food regime, but rather a point in time in which the inherent contradictions of the corporate food regime became exposed. The intersection of capitalist crises and the inherent contradictions of the regime's value relations created the world food crisis. In response citizens rioted over rising food prices, and states and companies rallied to appropriate overseas farm land for food/energy security and financial speculation. In this sense, landgrabbing becomes the corporate food regime's response to the crises through the appropriating of more farm land partly to remedy the declining conditions of social reproduction. The rush for farm land is thus the outcome of the inherent contradictions (dispossession and declining conditions of social reproduction) in the corporate food regime and the acts of states rushing to secure land overseas is in McMichael's words a new kind of "agro-security mercantilism" that overrides the multilateral trading system in return for direct access to productive land (McMichael 2013:48).

Agro-food mercantilism in McMichael's analysis defies the principles of the WTO Agreement on Agriculture and it is in this context that South Korea gets a short mention. Quoting Pearce (2012:204-205) McMichael introduces South Korea as one of the countries resorting to overseas agricultural land investments as a matter of resource security (McMichael 2013:54). Unfortunately this is the closest McMichael comes to delving deeper into the historical trajectories of the new agro-food security mercantilists. By employing the term mercantilism, he also acknowledges that states

play an important role as investors in land grabbing. But, after the short mention of South Korea, McMichael turns to global governance and regulatory regimes that have undermined the capacity for state regulation/protection of agriculture and simultaneously implemented land governance regulation that facilitates land grabs by private and public (foreign) capital (McMichael 2013:56). Once again, the focus is turned towards the global regulatory regimes that enables the land grabs and those transnational flows of capital and power that govern this process. In doing so, food regime theory, as it has been applied so far does not further our understanding of what compel states such as South Korea to opt for overseas farm land acquisitions. This perhaps points to one weaknesses in the food regime analytical framework's inception as a response to state-centered analysis of food and agricultural politics.

As mentioned earlier, Friedmann and McMichael, when proposing food regime theory, wanted to bring in the transnational and global (capitalist) dynamics of the food system (Friedmann & McMichael, 1987), but in the process they ended up rejecting the nation-state as an essential unit of economy for analysis (P. McMichael & Myhre, 1990, p. 60). But how do we capture the actions of states in the global economy if we cannot see them as units of economy but only as conduits of capital and corporate interests? Pearce (2012) does so by arguing that what the Korean government in fact is doing is subsidizing national corporations to go abroad. That could be interpreted as state - corporate sector alliance, but as I have tried to make throughout this dissertation, the companies receiving financial support for agricultural activities overseas cover almost every conceivable spectrum of the Korean economy, public enterprises, transnational corporations, medium sized conglomerates, small private entrepreneurs and farmers. The heterogeneity of the Korean investors overseas in itself should perhaps question the notion that security mercantilism is the right descriptive term and even if we accept the term as descriptive concept where does the nation-state play a role analytically in food regime inspired analyses of land grabbing? Is it possible to speak about a new

mercantilism without a notion of the state or nation-state? Can we take the response of South Korea for granted as the inevitable outcome of the logic of capital?

Food Regime theory did provide interesting insights into the *longue durée* transformations of food and agriculture and provided an alternative to theories of articulated or non-articulated development. The theory however, also drew strong criticisms. Goodman and Watts (1994) provided a harsh critique of food regime theory. Food Regime Theory, along with a range of other similar explanatory frameworks, they argued, were too uncritically borrowing analytical concepts from regulation theory inspired research on capitalist industrial restructuring (Goodman & Watts, 1994). They questioned in particular the use of Fordism/post-fordism as adequately capturing the processes of spatial restructuring of agricultural production and consumption as well as the pervasive logic of “the general features of capitalist accumulation and of the capitalist labor processes” (Goodman & Watts, 1994, p. 4). They went on to argue that these approaches were inadequate because the similarities between agriculture and industry are “...radically overdrawn, forcing the analysis into a theoretical straitjacket that leaves little room for diversity and differentiation within and between agrarian transitions.” (Goodman & Watts, 1994, p. 5). A second key critique was that Food Regime Theory overstated the subordination of the nation state to transnational capital and global financial integration. Goodman and Watts argued that the subordination of the nation state to transnational capital “...remains a matter of degree that needs to be carefully calibrated rather than falling back on to a sort of capital-logic functionalism which impairs analyses of how global and national levels are articulated across spacial-economic structures and productive systems.” (Goodman & Watts, 1994, p. 22). This led Goodman and Watts to dismiss Food Regime Theory altogether (Araghi, 2003; Philip McMichael, 2009b). Unlike Goodman & Watts however, the challenge here is not to reject food regime theory altogether, as it raises important questions and had

provided valuable insights, but to somehow bring the nation-state back in to the analysis?

The critique by Godman and Watts seem relevant still to how Food Regime inspired explanations for the global food crisis and the acceleration of net-food importing countries' rush to invest in agriculture overseas situate both the food crisis and land investments within. The challenge of Food Regime Theory explanations of the food crisis and security mercantilism as one response is that it solidly focuses on transnational agri-business and global neo-liberal regimes of governance as the source of the crisis, while the state and other national economic actors are reduced to functions of subordination, collusion or resistance. This leaves little space for variation in agency of states or other economic actors. The explanation lumps together a very varied set of states together in explaining their food import dependence as caused by the corporate food regime and security mercantilism as its response. The problem with such generalized views is how it limits variation both in terms of how certain states became net food importers and as well as the variation in responses - not all net-food importing countries responded in the same way as I discussed in the introduction. These limitations, stem from the lack of analysis on the historical trajectories of individual nation states and national politics in entering this conjuncture and secondly responses are interpreted as expressions of capital logics.

It is important to accommodate Goodman and Watt's critiques and understand how a focus on national politics can inform our understanding of the food crisis and land grab without reducing explanation to capital-logic functionalism and the nation state as subordinated or in collusion with capital a priori. How do we, while conditionally accepting the insights that food regime theory brings about stable periods of hegemony in the global food system, develop an analytical framework that allow us to analyze the responses of smaller, but economically powerful, states deeply depending on trade. , to changes in the world economy? This is in many ways an open

question that does not pre-visualize standardized answers. That is, that while acknowledging hegemonic world food systems as a general structuring feature, there is significant room for national and intra-national agency especially for economically powerful states such as those that have been labeled emerging state-actors in the global land grab. Land-grabbing is only one of many responses to a world food crisis performed by states and not only states have responded with land investments and among those that did, domestic politics may have played a significant role in launching such particular responses rather than an abstract logic of capital. Secondly, these varied responses occur largely in a national political context, something that food regime theory, as presented so far, does not lend itself to easily. It is this national political context that this framework is designed for; one that takes Goodman & Watts' critique to heart by focusing on the national level as an analytical unit and does not reduce politics to capital-logic functionalism a priori.

The Politics of Agricultural Policy: The World Economy, the State, and Class Struggle

One attempt to combine Food Regime Theory with a national focus was developed by Bill Winders in his study of the rise, retrenchment, and decline of U.S. food supply policy in the twentieth century (Winders, 2009a, 2009b). The analytical framework used by Winders draws inspiration from both Karl Polanyi and Marx. Winders considers the rise and decline of food supply policy in the U.S. a form of *double movement*, which he draws from Karl Polanyi (Dale, 2010; Polanyi, 1957; Winders, 2009a), that is the oscillation in political struggles and policy between free markets and social protection. Agricultural policy in the U.S has fluctuated between these two opposites during the 20th century and in doing so they create *social conflict* between different economic groups or classes. The second aspect that Winders borrows from Polanyi is the notion that these shifts occur within the broader context of the *world economy*. According to

Winders, changes in the world economy, such as recession and or expansion, influences the economic interest of groups that try to influence national policy (Winders, 2009, p. 13).

The third aspect of Winders framework is the role of competing economic class interests in shaping national policy. Winders argues that Polanyi's analysis of the ebb and flow of state intervention in the market lacks an explanation of the underlying processes behind social conflict. For Winders, following Marx, social conflict arises because of different economic interests among various classes or *class segments*. Policy formulation is a social struggle between class segments to translate their economic interests into national policy through either *political coalitions* or *embedding interests*⁹ within the state (Winders, 2009, pp. 14-17).

Winders distinguishes between *class* and *class segments* and argues that class segmentation is important in understanding food supply politics and that classes per se rarely form because the social organization of capitalism not only cause inter-class conflicts but also intra-class conflicts leading to class fragmentation (Winders, 2009, pp. 19-21). Thus, Winders emphasizes class segments over classes as the analytical focal point in the struggle for political influence. Winders' point is that one class does not exist per se, but rather that a class is made up of a number of class factions that do not necessarily share economic interests because of different positions within the production process. According to Winders, paths to segmentation can formed along different fissures such commodity differences, regional lines, or position in class structures such as large and small farmers.

Winders thus proposes an analytical approach that regards national food and agricultural policy formation as occurring in the dynamic relations between the world

⁹ In Winders' framework, I tend to read this as similar to a social mechanism (Tilly, 2001). However, in my interpretation of mechanism, which will be discussed later, I argue that what the key variables that enable coalitions or embedding of interests should be regarded as social mechanisms. In my perspective, coalition building and embedding interests are too generic and broad to be used as explanatory mechanisms.

economy (market), the state, and national class segments (Winders, 2009, p. 12). Economic interests in turn determine these relations. It is important here to note that Winders does not see the market, state or class segments as static entities but as dynamic in the sense that policies are formed through political negotiation, consensus, and conflict between the state and class factions in relation to the world economy. National policies may in turn transform or reshape class structures, perhaps opening up possibilities for new class factions to emerge, or strengthen weaker classes. These dynamics in turn also sometimes reshape the market, as forces of production are freed (Winders, 2009, p. 25). Winders' analysis thus explains the rise and fall of U.S. food supply management in the dynamic relations between the world economy, the state, and factions of agricultural class interests.

For the political economy part of the dissertation's analysis, I draw on the analytical framework from Winders who sees policy formulation as a political struggle between class factions formed according to shared economic interests. Winders furthermore argues that policies are formed in the dynamics between the world economy, state, and classes is central to understanding the politics of policy formation. I also agree with his claim that national policies in turn can both transform the market as well as the economic interests of inter- and intra-class factions, thus leading to new class formations and coalitions. However, while Winders' framework provides a solid basic framework for understanding the formation of food supply policy that also applies to the South Korean context, it also requires some modification and qualification to fit a political, economic, and cultural context different from the subject of Winders' analysis. Another aspect I wish to address is Winders' solid foundation in a historical materialism. There are areas I want to supplement, and Winders' framework modifies some of the central concepts in Winders framework. I will turn to the latter first, discussing Winders central concepts: The World Economy, Class Factions, The State, and the Double Movement.

The World Economy

Winders argues that national agricultural production and producers' interest are formed in relation to "the world economy," which Winders delineates as the capitalist world economy, the interstate system, and the international division of labor between nation states. International trade in agricultural commodities and the position of national producers in the international division of labor shape the economic interests and policy preferences of class segments. In his definition of the world economy, Winders draws particularly on Food Regime Theory¹⁰ and its focus on identifying stable sets of economic relations in the global food system structured by domination and hegemony. (Friedmann & McMichael, 1987; Philip McMichael, 2009b, p. 143). Winders' analysis of U.S. food supply management examines a period in U.S. history that Food Regime proponents regard as the Second Food regime, which coincides with the consolidation of the nation state system and U.S. hegemony, on the back of the decline of the colonial food regime defined by British hegemony (Winders, 2009b).

The focus on national policies within the food regime's hegemon, in this case the U.S. and its domination over the global food system, raises the question of whether Winders' framework can be applied to non-hegemonic states, or perhaps rather how? South Korea has since its formation as a state following World War II depended to varying degrees on agricultural imports from the U.S. So whereas class segment politics in the U.S. has not only shaped national agricultural policy, it has also affected the world economy in ways that South Korean agro-food interests have not. This is not to say that Korean agro-food interests have been powerless, but rather that they have not been setting the agenda on the global scale. Thus, the conditions under which national agro-food policy in Korea has been formed and transformed has been determined by its relations to the world economy and the U.S. in particular, and hence also influenced

¹⁰ Food regime theory is a popular theory in agro-food studies, but also heavily criticized. See for example (Araghi, 2003; Friedmann & McMichael, 1987; Goodman & Watts, 1994; Heron & Lewis, 2009; Philip McMichael, 2009b).

the ability for various class factions and the state in South Korea to set their own economic conditions. This is particularly relevant because national agricultural production in South Korea has primarily been targeted for domestic consumption, unlike U.S. agricultural production, which has been export-oriented for much of its history.

The question of how food supply management policies in South Korea are formed is in many ways similar to the question Katzenstein raised almost 30 years ago. Katzenstein wanted to understand how small European states (Austria, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Sweden) navigate in a changing world economy (Katzenstein, 1985). In analyzing these small states, Katzenstein was seeking to understand the behavior of countries that do not fit easily into the experiences of larger states such as Japan and the U.S., who at the time of his study were considered the competing hegemonies in the liberal/capitalist world order. Katzenstein argued that economic change is a fact of life for the small states. They do not control it; "it is thrust upon them" (Katzenstein, 1985, p. 24).

Like the small European states, South Korea's dependence on trade makes them more vulnerable to instability brought on by shifts in the world economy, and changes in the world economy affect South Korea's domestic economy more than they do larger states with a less export-dependent economy. But as Katzenstein argues international changes are funneled through domestic structures shaped by different historical circumstances and thus also embody different political possibilities (Katzenstein, 1985, p. 37). External events may induce convergence, but internal political dynamics lead countries to respond differently. I think that Katzenstein's observations can be applied to analyzing responses by net-food importing states following the 2007 food crisis. Even if the external conditions had changed (financialization of agriculture, corporate food regimes, etc.), the responses of different countries differed widely because of their domestic political structures and dynamics. Not all net-food importing countries have

pursued overseas agricultural development in response to the food crisis and not all those that did respond approached it in similar ways. In my analytical framework, the world economy is primarily regarded as a structuring force that defines some material and conceptual boundaries of the arena in which domestic political struggles over political (im)possibilities are located.

Inter-class and intra-class factions

Winders argues that the locus of political power lies within class factions and draws on a Marxist interpretation of class formation as determined by relations of production. He places particular emphasis on what he calls intra-class factions that is the different economic interests and policy preferences of class factions within the agricultural sector rather than in conflicts between classes per se (Winders, 2009, p. 19). He argues that the formation of different class segments within, for example, the agricultural sector is determined by the position of the specific crops in the world economy, and the position of producers in the production process. This means that agribusinesses, farm owners, farm workers, and sharecroppers, for example, operating in the same crop production process may not have similar economic interests, which in turn can lead to intra-class conflicts or as Winders more precisely argues: "Class segments have particular immediate interests that often conflict with those of other segments or with their class as a whole." (Winders, 2009, p. 19).

Winders suggests that supply management policy in the U.S. has largely been determined by intra-class – state relations rather than interclass or intersectoral conflicts. In this aspect, he differs from most scholars who have examined the expansion of agricultural policy retrenchment in the U.S., as he ascribes the decline of agricultural protection to the conflicts between agricultural/rural interests and industrial/urban interests. He argues that these studies have largely emphasized the *decline of agriculture* explained as a causal mechanism between a declining farm

population and reduced political power (Winders, 2009, p. 10). However, Winders suggests that this focus diverts attention from the changes within the agricultural sector itself, which he considers the primary force in the expansion and retrenchment of U.S. supply management policy. Instead, Winders argues, the retrenchment of agricultural supply management policy was in large part caused by a change in political power between the southern cotton planters and the mid-western corn and wheat farmers. These different agricultural classes had distinct interests because of their class structures and position in the world economy. The relative power between these different agricultural segments shifted during the period of study due to changes in class structures, changes in the world economy, and the production process.

The rise, retrenchment and decline of agricultural supply management in the U.S. was thus the outcome of shifting power dynamics between agricultural class segments rather than inter-sectoral anti-agriculture politics. I think Winders' position here is a matter of empirical observation. The relative importance of intra-class and interclass dynamics in determining policy formulation remains an empirical observation that I cannot take as a priori in the case of South Korea, especially because of the historically much more centralized process of policy formulation in South Korea. It is an important analytical point, but rather than to dismiss agricultural vs. non-agricultural conflicts within a nation-state context may also miss other important aspects of the dynamics of policy formulation beyond competing intra-class interests. This focus on intra-class factions and coalition perhaps has to do with Winders' contextually specific conception of the state.

The State

Another central aspect of Winders' analytical framework is the state. Winders argues that the structure of the state determines the ability of class segments to influence policy formation and implementation (Winders, 2009, p. 15). The decentralized

structure of the U.S. state enables class segments to influence policy at different points in the state structure through election of congress members, congressional committees, senate, etc. Factions can exert influence on state policy by *embedding interests within the state* and through *coalition building* (Winders, 2009, p. 21). Embedding interests within the state system can be done through election of members to the U.S. Congress or through lobbying of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The second strategy available is class-segment coalitions that can exert stronger influence on state policy formulation by combining forces. Coalitions often shift because the dynamics of the market and coalitions can form based on economic interests, and according to Winders, economic interest-based coalitions tend to endure the longest because of a stable mutual interest.

A key premise of Winders' analysis is that class factions can exert a great influence on policy in the U.S. thanks to its *porous* and *permeable* state that the decentralized structure engenders, allowing multiple class factions access – albeit unequal – to various state channels (Winders, 2009, p. 21). Winders' conception of the state as mediator for competing class segment interests, however, leaves little room for independent state agency. This, Winder argue is the case for the U.S. But, unlike in the case of Winders' analysis of U.S. policy dynamics, the state in South Korea, or more specifically state-controlled institutions, have played a more independent and active role in successive formulations of agricultural policy and in this regard I depart from Winders. The South Korean state has a history of heavy political centralization not only in the agricultural sector. The state and its institutions were not only the site of political contention between intra-class interests. The centralization of development policy in general has allowed the state a more active role in formulating agricultural policy. Thus, the state cannot be considered merely a conduit for special interests a priori as Winders argues is the case in the U.S. a priori. This is not a disagreement with Winders

framework, but a contextual difference between the terrain of politics in the U.S. and South Korea.

Thus, we need a conception of the state that encompasses more than simply a site of struggle for class interests. This does not mean that the state is autonomous or operates as a coherent entity, but rather that political struggles operate in relation both within the state as well as in relation to the world economy and class interests. Following Pickel, (2006) I suggest a thin realist and materialist conception of the state as defined by Michael Mann:

1. The state is a differentiated set of institutions and personnel embodying centrality, in the sense that political relations radiate to and from a center, to cover a
2. territorially demarcated area over which it exercises
3. Some degree of authoritative, binding rule making, backed up by some organized physical force. (Mann, 1993, p. 55; Pickel, 2006, p. 139)

The state as such can be considered a subsystem within the broader social system of society, but with some exclusive powers to govern that society as a whole. Externally, the state bilaterally or multilaterally represents that particular society or specific class interest in interstate relations. For the purpose of the analysis, this definition seems to be sufficient in that it delineates the state system while allowing the state to be both differentiated and coherent, and structured in power relations with other states as well as other segments of society within the territory it commands. Mann argues that this definition falls short of proposing what the state does¹¹ and limits itself to the analytical conception of what the state is.

¹¹ According to Mann, only Marxist and some realist theories specify what the state does. For example in Marxist theory for example the capitalist state reproduces the social relations required by dominant modes of production while some realists regard the state to pursue territorial security needs (Mann,

One ongoing debate among scholars in the field of East Asian studies is whether economic growth in East Asia was the product of export-orientation and free markets, or heavy state intervention (Glassman, 1999). This debate in turn reflects ongoing disagreements over the role of markets and the state, and the extent the South Korean state's autonomy. The dominant view in the early 1980s took the free market position, but a number of studies in the 1980s, often grouped under the label of *Developmental State*, argued that the economic success of East Asian states was in large part due to heavy state intervention in industrial policy, markets, and finance. Proponents of the developmental state thesis in particular emphasized the role of an autonomous bureaucracy in setting policies, and the directing of financial resources into designated industrial sectors (Amsden, 1989; Johnson, 1982; Kohli, 2004; Woo, 1991). This conception of the state is almost the direct opposite of Winders' pluralist and open definition of the state. The developmental state thesis is today perhaps the most dominant framework for understanding South Korean development, but as several authors have pointed out, their focus on state autonomy has undermined the role of social struggle as well as changes in global politico-economic system in shaping South Korean development policies. In the words of Agnew, they are caught in the territorial trap or methodological nationalism. (Agnew, 1994, 2010; Glassman, 1999; Jessop, 2005). To not fall into the territorial trap or methodological nationalism, it is necessary to study South Korean food and agricultural policy formulation as a process through which policies come into being in the relations between the world economy, state, and class interests, not only as the product of rational and technical bureaucratic decision-making processes, or as political struggles based in economic interests, but as social process in which policies are shaped by changes in the world economy within the social formation of the nation.

1993, p. 54). However, whether this is true in every circumstance, should most likely be subject to empirical analysis.

What the state does is a matter of empirical analysis, as it may change over time according to contextual circumstances. It is important here to stress, that I do not consider the state as a coherent unit, but as a system of differentiated segments, in the same manner as the conception of class constituted via its social relations to other segments of the society it has the official power to govern, as well as its relations to the world economy. In short, the social relations that conditions "stateness" extend beyond national boundaries. Similarly, just as class factions are transformed by changing policies and the world economy, so is the structure of the state. The state is not a static entity, and its power relations are not static among the state institutions themselves in relation to class factions or to the broader world economic and political system¹². What were once sources of power and domination may shift and turn against the dominant state institutions, shifting the balance of power. Nevertheless, this analytical framework is proposing a more state-centric approach than that of Winders' simply because the role of state institutions in agricultural policy formulation and the centralization of power has been more pronounced in South Korea during certain periods than what Winders finds in the U.S. case. A number of scholars who have studied the rise and decline of statist agricultural policy in South Korea from this angle argue that Korean state intervention in food and agricultural policy has been significant (perhaps significantly underestimated in most research on South Korean economic development) and that these interventions were shaped in large part by broader macro-economic development objectives (Burmeister, 2000; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006; M. Moore, 1984; K.-H. Park, 2013; Reinschmidt, 2009). The conflict between broader state

¹² Bob Jessop's strategic-relational approach to understanding the "state" provides some useful guidelines to how I accept a Weberian ideal-type definition such as Mann's as an analytical concept. Yet the object of analysis is not the definition of what the state is, but rather how state institutions are embedded in social relations both within and without the formal state structure as defined here by Mann (Jessop, 2007; Sum & Jessop, 2013). Jessop argues, for example, that "...the state is the site of class(relevant) struggles and contradictions as well as the site of struggles and rivalries among its different branches." (Jessop, 2007, pp. 36-37).

objectives and sectoral economic interests should therefore also be taken into account because it may limit or allow the sectoral class factions' ability to influence state policy formulation. Thus, it is necessary to have at least a conception of the state that enables the state, or branches of it, to play a role in policy formulation according to the state or state branch's own objectives. This does not mean that class interests do not have an impact, but that class interests and state interests may collide, and that different branches of the state may work against each other in the process of policy formulation.

The Double Movement (State intervention vs. free market)

Finally, it is necessary to discuss the concept of the double movement. A central aspect of Winders' analytical framework is Polanyi's concept of the double movement. It is a concept that has become popular in both academic and political circles to the extent that it has come to signify any sort of resistance to what advocates consider the dominant neo-liberal, or perhaps more precisely, a dominant market-fundamentalist order¹³. Winders defines the double movement as the shifts between state intervention and a free market economy. He regards it as an oscillating process in which both the market economy and state intervention create their own opposition (Winders, 2009, p. 13). In Winders' use of the double movement concept, he identifies a period of free markets up until the 1920s when the first organized class faction attempted to get the state to regulate the market. When advocates for state intervention finally won and the Agricultural Adjustment Act was announced in 1933, it was in part because of the effects of the Great Depression in the early 1930s. The following decades were then a long period of retrenchment, which finally led to the FAIR Act¹⁴ in 1996. In Winders' view, the FAIR Act, ended price supports and production controls (Winders, 2009, pp. 159-193).

¹³ For a thorough discussion of how Polanyi's concept of the double movement has been deployed in recent decades, see Dale 2010, pp. 207-234

¹⁴ The Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-127).

This conception of the double movement, in which periodization of state intervention and free market policies domination oscillate, is one of many uses of the concept of the double movement, a concept which has been applied to a host of debates around trade liberalization and trade protection. What is compelling in Winders' analysis is how the focus on class transformation and differentiation makes this shift in agricultural policy a dynamic process in which the prevailing policy approach is always contested by some class segments while supported by others according to their own economic interests. As such, Winders convincingly argues that the mechanisms through which the double movement occurred in U.S. agricultural formulation was a dynamic political process in which class, state and market interact and transform each other, and lead to shifts in agricultural policy.

While Winders' use of the double movement as a concept is convincing, it does seem to be limited in some aspects. Here, I will first discuss the limitations I consider in his analytical framework in terms of the periodization or timing of double movements, and secondly his focus on economic interests as the main aspect of political struggle over policy formulation. How do double movements occur? Does the double movement, as in Winders' analysis, occur as dominant periods of either free market or state intervention? Or could the double movement also be conceived as a continuous process in which both free market policy and state intervention protect the interests of class segments? I do not see a reason for why the latter could not occur. Winders' use of the double movement is based primarily on the balancing of power between opposing economic interests and the ability of these opposing economic interest factions to shift the power balance in their favor through either coalition building or embedding interests within the state institutions. In doing so, Winders focuses on two aspects of agricultural policy: That of production and that of producer segments' economic interests. Thus, the object of debate is the regulation or deregulation of production and that debate is in turn based on the balance of economic interest

between different economic interests of class factions. This material base for analysis seems insufficient for this study.

That the double movement between “free” markets and market regulation only occurs at the level of economic protectionism verses economic liberalism fails to acknowledge that in an era of economic globalization states, or other economic actors, seek to protect their economic interests by reinforcing the invisible or conceptual borders around products and services by fortifying their meaning to national identity (Goff, 2000). This observation introduces the possibility that the cultural interests, not only economic interests, can influence policy decisions. In essence, it means that the balance of power between economic interests alone do not determine policy outcomes. It also allows us to develop a more complex discussion on the politics of agricultural and food policy formation in which the double movement becomes a more multifaceted movement wherein expansion of the market and protection of society can operate simultaneously. According to Patricia Goff, some states have pursued trade liberalization and free trade agreements while also managing to strengthen cultural barriers to protect the domestic economy and society. This is a process in which states accept more permeable territorial borders allowing for goods and services to flow across borders, while simultaneously reinforcing the invisible and conceptual borders held in place by notions of cultural particularity, collective identity, and common understandings that underpin a distinctive political community (Goff, 2000). This aspect opens up for a more dynamic conception of the double movement as operating in both directions at the same time. The free market can be pursued in its material form, such as reducing import quotas and tariffs, while protectionism simultaneously is pursued by reinforcing conceptual barriers against the very same products and services that are allowed to flow more freely.

This follows in line with Gareth Dale’s objections to what he calls a sprawling smorgasbord of policies assembled under the same category of protective responses.

To Dale, the "...countermovement makes sense but as a heuristic that refers to the way in which, when the self-regulating market undermines the security of their livelihoods, human beings look to political ideas and organizations that claim to defend society against market excess." (Dale, 2010, p, 220). Dale's conception is thus quite different from Winders' definition of the double movement, which oscillates between government regulation and free markets contingent upon dominant economic interests. Dale's conceptualization of the double movement is broader and it does not eliminate the field of politics in the material realm as Winders' does. This leaves space where political struggle can occur on grounds other than economic interests – that is we need to study the political ideas that people turn to in times of crisis. It also speaks to the quote from Eric R. Wolf that I started this chapter with. There is a need to specify what ideas people turn to in times of crisis rather than simply lumping together a whole range of responses together as protective responses. This is what the next section seeks to elaborate on.

So far, I have tried to outline the basic structure of my analytical framework of how policy is formed through the dynamic social relations of power between the world economy, state, and class factions, who themselves are transformed by policies as outlined by Bill Winders. To this basic framework, I have sought to add a conception of the state as differentiated but also able to pursue objectives independent of the interests of class factions, yet this ability is limited by the world economy and class politics. Thus, I expand the notion of coalition building and embedding interests as not only reserved for class factions, but applies also to the differentiated set of institutions that the state is composed of. For example, coalitions between a set of class factions and state institutions would be able to struggle over the ability to determine policy against another set of class factions aligned with other state institutions, yet the structure of the state as well as class under structured relations of power may change over time. As Patricia Goff argues, a simultaneous process of increasing permeability

of territorial borders can occur in conjunction with the strengthening of conceptual boundaries of a political community. Thus, the concept of a double movement between free markets and protection can occur at different levels, material and/or conceptual¹⁵.

Gastronationalism

One attempt to study how economic actors and the state have attempted to construct conceptual boundaries around food has in recent years centered on the concept of gastronationalism and its role in shaping contemporary food systems in a time of economic liberalization¹⁶. Introduced by Desoucey (2010), "Gastronationalism connects foods' social and cultural attributes to politics by making the material, commercial, and institutional processes that shape foods the very objects of investigation." (Desoucey, 2010, p. 434). Desoucey argues that in conflicts over the impact of globalization on national identity and the economy, states intervene in the market as an ideological agent and broker for food production and distribution as cultural goods¹⁷.

"[Gastronationalism] wed notions of cultural tradition to the idea of nation as protector of cultural patrimony, alleging uniqueness vis-à-vis other nations. In these schemes, action in the market and patriotism become one and the same.

¹⁵ This is somewhat similar to the notion of bifurcation in agricultural policy formulation, but McMichael and Kim's focus is only on the material level (Philip McMichael & Kim, 1994, pp. 32–37). I argue that bifurcation can occur both at the material and conceptual level in line with Goff.

¹⁶ Desoucey is of course not alone in making the observation that foods that appear national, local, authentic, or traditional often are of a more hybrid and transnational/global character. This has been studied by Sidney Mintz (1986), Richard Wilk (1999; 1998), Marianne Lien and Bridgette Neerlich (2004), Katarzyna Cwiertka (2004; 2012), Sidney Chung (2007), and many others. However, Desoucey's concept of gastronationalism best fits in my opinion best to my study.

¹⁷ Desoucey argues that "...gastronationalism facilitates national claims of cultural patrimony for foods because it performs similar symbolic boundary work in creating exceptions, under the veneer of culture, within otherwise open-market structures." However, this definition of protectionism under the veneer of culture is in my opinion a bit too cynical in the sense that it argues that cultural protection necessarily only operates as a "hidden" form of economic protectionism rather than keeping open the idea that national claims of cultural patrimony does not necessarily mean a particular economic policy preference.

For the food item and enterprise in question, successful gastrnational claims contribute to increased economic power and valorized cultural status as tied to national identity.” (Desoucey, 2012, p. 1).

Desoucey’s own work explores the case of foie gras in France as an subject of intense national and international debates over whether foie gras production should be banned on the grounds of animal cruelty. Claims to foie gras’ historical and cultural importance for French rural life, and by extension national identity, was invoked by a multitude of actors to defend the production and consumption of foie gras. An attack foie gras was not just an attack on the practice of producing and consuming foie gras, but an attack on the nation itself (Desoucey, 2010). In Desoucey’s perspective, the defense of foie gras on the grounds of national cultural heritage is an example of how gastrnationalism links culture to the material. The concept of gastrnationalism as an analytical entry point is useful as it points to the co-constitutive roles of the politics of meaning/identity and economy in shaping food systems. Since its introduction, a number of other studies have used the concept as the entry-point to examine how certain kinds of food become constructed as “national” in the broader contexts of what most people conceive as periods dominated by economic, political, and cultural integration and homogenization. A number of studies have followed Desoucey in tracing the rise of gastrnationalism in a range of countries (Bowen & Gaytán, 2012; D. Hirsch & Tene, 2013; Dafna Hirsch, 2011; Mincyte, 2011). What is notable about these studies is the variety in locating the center of political action behind the rise of gastrnationalism. Desoucey posits the state as the ideological agent and broker, whereas Hirsh and Tene argue that the linking up of industrial interests with the desires of Ashkenazi Jews for objects that symbolized their integration into the Mediterranean space explains the rise of hummus as an Israeli culinary cult (D. Hirsch & Tene, 2013). Mincyte, on the other hand, locates the rise of Zeppelins as a Lithuanian national dish primarily in the urban middle class desires of a cosmopolitan modernity (Mincyte,

2011). These studies show the flexibility of gastronationalism as a concept that does not determine the loci of politics a priori.

Gastronationalism enables us to link food's social, and cultural attributes to material, institutional, and political processes that intersects the dichotomies (traditional/modern, global/national, industrial/artisanal, material/cultural), which dominate public and political debates on food, agriculture, and national heritage in the age of globalization¹⁸. Gastronationalism posits that the use of such dichotomies should be the very object of critical analysis¹⁹. How are they used, by whom, and for what purpose? However, the studies that use gastronationalism as an analytical entry-point draw on widely different theoretical traditions such as organizational sociology, Commodity Chain Analysis, anthropology, etc. Thus, while the concept of gastronationalism as an overarching concept provides guidance and focus for my analysis, it does not by itself provide enough analytical capacity for my purpose of policy formation analysis. For this I turn to the idea of economic nationalism as it has been proposed by Eric Helleiner and Andreas Pickel among others.

Economic Interests and Economic Nationalism in an age of Globalization

As I have mentioned several times in the previous section, one aspect of my framework requires a more fundamental examination is the question of how political coalitions form²⁰ or how economic interests of specific class segments become national policy.

¹⁸ As Richard Wilk and numerous other scholars in food studies argue, these dichotomies are analytically problematic because the world of food is often more complex than any binary or evolutionary sequence (Wilk, 2006, p. 15). This is also the position of authors such as Melanie DuPuis (2002) and Susanne Freidberg (2009).

¹⁹ Marianne Lien argues that food should be studied as a political object. Lien emphasizes the role of food's capacity to make connections and to dissolve most preconceived distinctions between nature and culture, production and consumption, body and mind and so forth (Lien, 2004).

²⁰ Stuart Hall for example argues that an analysis of the political and ideological must be grounded in the material conditions of existence. However, while the economic or materialist level is necessary, it does not provide sufficient conditions for explaining operations at other levels of society and we cannot

For Winders, class segments are principally defined by the group's relation to the production process (Winders, 2009, p. 19). But what defines a group materially does not need to be the only defining aspects of a group's self-identification, or more importantly the basis on which they engage in politics. The embedding of economic interests in the state system and political coalition building does not need to happen on the grounds of economic interests alone²¹. In fact, in the case of South Korea, I argue that claims to defend one's own class economic interests alone do not lead to political power. Rather, class identity and political coalitions are co-determined by claiming one's economic interests to be important to the nation, and that includes a cultural aspect or a conceptualization of what and who constitutes the nation. Policies can be defended and opposed not only on the grounds of economic impact, but also on its cultural importance to the maintenance and survival of the nation. This is not limited to South Korea. As we have seen in Europe in recent years, policies on immigration and integration have not been based only on economic interests, but increasingly on the impact of immigration on national cultures. Political coalitions form not only according to traditional blocs of economic policy but also on value-based politics.

Thus what is of interest here to study how agro-food politics come into being not only as the outcome of economic interests, but also how these special economic interests become associated with or contested by a broader national purpose (Abdelal, 2001)? In a 2005 anthology edited by IPE scholars Eric Helleiner and Andreas Pickel, the question of whether we have entered an age of globalization rather than nation building is put into question (Helleiner & Pickel, 2005, pp. 1–17). The contributors argue that the juxtaposition of nationalism and globalization, and its usual economic

assume necessary correspondence between them. They are historically specific and the correspondence has to be shown (Hall 1996, pp. 329–330).

²¹ Here, I follow Stuart Hall's argument that "Material conditions are the necessary but not sufficient condition of all historical practice." (Grossberg, 1986, p. 57)

sidekicks of economic protectionism and free markets are difficult to sustain in practice. The authors advocate for the continuing salience of the national as a unit of analysis in an era of globalization, but argue that the ascription of a specific economic doctrine (protectionism) to economic nationalism is problematic (Helleiner & Pickel 2005, p. 5). They find the argument that national states and societies are disintegrating as a result of economic globalization as fundamentally flawed, as it is based on an economistic and shallow conception of the economy (Helleiner & Pickel 2005, p. 6). They especially object to the idea that economic nationalism should equal protectionism or any other particular economic theory²² while arguing that “...the economic dimensions of specific nationalisms make sense only in the context of a particular national discourse, rather than in the context of general debates on economic theory and policy.” (Pickel, 2003, p. 106). In this aspect, Helleiner and Pickel depart significantly from Winders.

What Helleiner and Pickel propose is instead to understand economic nationalism not as an explanandum or any specific doctrine, but as a generic phenomenon (Helleiner, 2002; Pickel, 2003, p. 118, 2006, p. 8). They posit that economic nationalism is agnostic to economic doctrines as long as it strengthens or is perceived to strengthen the nation and/or national survival (Helleiner, 2002; Nakano, 2004; Pickel, 2005). Thus, economic nationalism is rather a facet of national identity than a specific

²² Theories on Economic Nationalism are normally traced to Friedrich List in particular, but Adam Smith’s advocacy for free trade would also fall into this category (List, 1909, p. XVII) not because of the particular policies he recommended, but because his main interest was the wealth of the nation. That Friedrich List’s political economy recommended infant industry protection and trade protectionism rather than free trade was, again, not because he thought these policies were necessarily optimal in all cases at all times, but because they were the most appropriate for the nascent German nation’s efforts to catch up with the more industrialized powers in Europe. Thus, it was a particular policy recommendation to a particular nation at a particular time (List 1909, p. 93). The same could be said about Adam Smith, whom List criticized, though Smith perhaps claimed universality for his principles of trade and individual interest as maximizing national wealth. Yet again, it was the nation that was of his primary concern. Smith argued that national interests were best protected by allowing individual interest to be maximized and that one specific system of trade would ensure this, whereas List argued that national interest and individual interest may collide, and that national interest should come first in such cases (Helleiner, 2002, p. 312). Thus, according to Helleiner, List and Smith’s ideas differ from those of later economic liberal thinkers in the explicit nationalist ontology of List (Helleiner 2002, p. 312).

economic doctrine, and studying economic nationalism is about studying how national identities shape economic policies and processes in the encounter with the forces of globalization. Helleiner and Pickel further question the idea that economic interests or other rationalist approaches to the study of politics alone determine social identity formation and political/economic preferences. The idea that an actor or social group's economic preferences can be determined only by examining their class or sectoral position within the economy, and propose a more constructivist²³ approach in which interests are ideationally bound²⁴:

"Ideas are important because they can transform interests. Instead of seeing interests and ideas as separate and competing explanatory variables, this approach sees them as intricately linked interconnected...interests are "ideationally bound" because the content of interests is inevitably linked to a set of ideas of beliefs that an actor has about what is desirable and how the world works....This approach challenges rationalist assumptions that actors' preferences can be inferred simply by examining their class or sectoral position within the economy or a state's position of power within the interstate system." (Helleiner & Pickel, 2005, p. 231)

Helleiner and Pickel thus challenges Winders' premise of political coalition formation based on shared economic interests alone. It is also a matter of how competing ideas, of what/who constitutes the national, intertwine with economic interests to form certain policy preferences. However, conceptualizations of what constitutes the nation or national interests are not predetermined. Just as class identity

²³ Here Pickel draws on the studies of the rise of nationalism, such as Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* (1983), Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1991), and Hobsbawm and Ranger's *The Invention of Tradition* (1983), which have provided valuable insights into the construction of national identities as part and parcel of the formation of the modern state system.

²⁴ This approach does not preclude IPE scholars from continuing to refer to infant- industry protection or autarchic policies as inspired by an ideology of "economic nationalism." It simply asks them to recognize that these are only particular strands of a broader ideology whose core content is best defined by its nationalist ontology instead of its specific policy prescriptions. (Helleiner, 2002, p. 326)

transforms over time, so do ideas of what the nation constitutes or who constitute the nation.

“... an agent’s interests are best seen as social constructs heavily influenced by the agent’s social context. But this social context is not seen as static. Instead, it is assumed to be constantly contested and remade in response to political struggles and changing conditions. Indeed, a central research agenda for constructivists is to understand the political construction of social identities. In other words, this approach holds a dynamic view in which agents and structures are mutually constituted.” (Helleiner & Pickel, 2005, p. 231).

This leads us to the question of asking what economic nationalism is, a question that is not easily answered, because nationalism should not be considered a static entity. Just as state, class, and the world economy needs to be specified by its historical and social context so does nationalism and how certain economic sectors and products become constructed as important to national identity. Eichler (2005) argues that economic nationalism should be considered a form of domestic political struggle and that economic nationalism should be conceptualized as “...the attempt to link a particular understanding of national identity to certain economic prescriptions, and thus take advantage of the legitimating effects that the concept of “nation” brings with it.” (Eichler, 2005, p. 73). Helleiner proposes that nationalism should be considered an *ontology* or the objective to serve the interests of the nation as a collective community (Helleiner, 2002, p. 312). Meredith Woo-Cumings mirrors Helleiner’s position by arguing that nationalism is a *vacant but efficacious binding agent*. An idea whose policy content must be filled in by specific temporal and spatial contexts. (Helleiner & Pickel, 2005, p. 234; M. Woo-Cumings, 2005, pp. 93–95). The specific context in which this study takes place is within the political debates about the economic and cultural impacts of trade liberalization and globalization. Patricia Goff, another scholar who has studied economic nationalism, has made this her central focus. In her work on the

processes of economic liberalization and national identity, Goff argues that states may seek to protect some sectors²⁵ from trade liberalization, not by opposing an economic opening (quotas, tariffs, etc.) of territorial borders, but rather by reinforcing conceptual borders, or *endowing borders with meaning*.

“Permeable territorial borders may no longer be effective in keeping out the “outside”—goods, people, ideas, and capital from “outside” continually flow into national territories and vice versa. But reinforcement of the identity that underpins political community has the effect of demarcating “inside” from “outside” at the conceptual level.” (Goff, 2000, p. 538)

Goff’s central point is that protection of particular economic sectors or products in an era of economic liberalization is not only a matter of what can be considered conventional economic protectionist measures, but that protectionism in some cases increasingly operates at the conceptual level. This conceptualization of protectionism as endowing borders with meaning seems relevant to the study of agro-food policy formation in South Korea, that is in line with Gareth Dale who argues that the double movement should be regarded as people’s turn to political ideas and organizations that claim to protect society’s interests. In order to understand how particular policy preferences come to dominate national policy formulation in a period defined by multiple pressures for trade liberalization, we need to lay bare these understandings of agriculture in national identity. How did they come into being, how these representations provides the basis on to which something comes to be grasped as a national crisis, and support particular economic prescriptions at a particular moment. Economic Nationalism as interpreted as agnostic to economic prescriptions provides a different lens through which to analyze what appears as contradictory political

²⁵ Goff’s own work focuses on cultural industries in Europe and Canada in free trade negotiations (Goff, 2000).

responses to the re-opening of U.S. beef imports on the one hand, and the decision to pursue overseas agricultural development in the aftermath of the 2007 food crisis.

Gastronationalism and Agro-food Politics in South Korea

In this chapter, I have elaborated on an analytical framework that draws on the framework on agro-food policy formation by Bill Winders as well on the concepts of gastronationalism and economic nationalism. Following Winders, I argue that policy formulation is a political relational process between the world economy, the state, and class. These three entities are not considered static. They are dynamic with varying degrees of fragmentation and cohesion and are continuously transformed by previous policies, which therefore requires attention to the specific temporal context and social relations in which a particular policy takes shape. One question is the hierarchical order of power between the world economy, the state, and class. In the case of South Korean food and agricultural policy, I regard the world economy as a structuring force that determines the space for political possibilities, or the limits of political possibilities, yet there is considerable room for the determination of policy direction within this space. In short, it structures but does not determine national policy in detail.

In adapting Winders' analysis of U.S. agricultural policy formation, one could ask whether the state in South Korea should be considered to have significant more power to determine national policy than in the case of the U.S. given its historical legacy of centralized militant authoritarianism? Yet it is neither isolated from class interests or the world economy, and its power to determine policies may shift over time. Neither does the state necessarily operate as a cohesive unit. This leads us to Winders' notion of how policies, state structure, and class structure reshape each other over time. This dynamic view of the relationship between national policy, state, and class is of importance in order to see class and state not as static categories but as differentiated and structured by their social relations between each level and in between. Political

coalitions can form across state/class and inter-class/intra-class divides. It is possible that such coalitions advocate for policies that promote and limit free markets at the same time as both Goff and Desoucey have argued. The precise constellation needs to be examined empirically.

In Winders' framework shared economic interests determine the formation of political coalitions and hence policy outcomes. Winders argues that economic interest is the determinant for class formation and formation of political coalitions. Drawing on both the concept of gastronationalism and the work on economic nationalism, I argue that economic interests and ideas of the nation are both important in understanding political struggles over policy formulation and coalition formation even in the context of economic globalization. Gastronationalism is a useful concept in analyzing how agro-food politics weds material and symbolic interests. In the view of Helleiner and Pickel, political struggles over economic doctrines such as protectionism and free markets often occur within a national ontology, or what it does for the nation. Thus, economic nationalism points to an aspect of politics that Winders' framework does not take into account, but happens to be an aspect of policy formulation that is central to understanding how South Korean food and agricultural policy is shaped. Thus, what I intend to do is to study how the politics of food and agricultural policies is a struggle that occurs both on the material (economic interests) and ideational (nationalism) level. In line with Eichler's argument (2005, p. 73), economic nationalism should be regarded as a form of domestic struggle of attempts to link a particular understanding of national identity to certain economic prescriptions, thus taking advantage of the legitimating effects that the concept of nation brings with it.

Firstly, to study how food import dependence came into being not merely as the inevitable outcome of outside pressure for trade liberalization, I first turn to how the state and the agricultural sector struggled over the course of food supply policy within the broader context of economic and political liberalization. Since the

1970s. How did broader shifts in the world economy affect state food supply strategies and how did political liberalization affect political coalitions in agro-food politics? What kind of new alliances became possible formed between various factions of the state bureaucracy, farmers, and their representative political organizations? What policies were they able to oppose and promote to defend the economic interests of farmers vis a vis the broader economic objectives of the state's development policy? How did these political struggles over attempts to liberalize trade contribute to rising import dependence at least until the food crisis. This is treated in chapter 4.

In chapter 5, attention is turned to how the cattle sector came to be dependent on imported feed grains through intra-sectorial political decisions made to protect the sector from foreign competition. It studies how cattle farmers have struggled with the state to protect their economic interests in the face of rising beef imports caused by trade liberalization. To accommodate some of the farmers' demands shifts in production methods were made which in turn changed the structure of the industry leading to increasing specialization and intra-class segmentation between cattle farmers positioned in different places in the production chain and thus leading to competing economic interests amongst cattle farmers themselves leading up to the 2007 food crisis.

In chapter 6, I turn to the concepts of economic nationalism and gastronationalism. The focus is here to understand how the idea of agriculture and food became embedded into nationalist discourses of sovereignty and identity. Here I turn attention to how the political struggles over the direction of agricultural policy analyzed in chapter 4 and 5 came to be linked to nationalist historiographies of subjugation to foreign powers and how did agriculture and certain foods lay claim to representing an authentic Korean identity in need of protection? That is, how have political coalitions historically been able to gain legitimacy for their proposed economic

policies, or oppose policies, by claiming that such policies are defending or eroding national identity and sovereignty?

In chapter 7, the focus turns to the political coalition that promoted the OADS based in particular sectoral economic interests. How did this coalition in promoting and defending the OADS use claims of protecting national sovereignty to justify the economic policy, what historical claims were made about the causes of South Korea's food import dependence and how did that preempt critique and alternative policies from being articulated?

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

“The solution to a problem is generally determined by how the problem is defined.” (Winders, 2009, p. 39)

In the public debates that arose during the KORUS FTA negotiations and in the aftermath of the 2007 food crisis in South Korea, the dominant narrative was that South Korea’s food system had come under the domination of foreign states and corporations. This foreign domination of South Korea’s food system became the key problem representation. A central challenge has been to uncover an implicit logic in the representation of what caused the ‘crisis’ (the problem) and its response (the solution). In the previous chapter, I argued that Polanyi’s concept of the double movement is a useful heuristic that refers to the way in which people turn to political ideas and organizations that claim to defend society against market excess. Following the quotes above, what I set out to do in this dissertation is to understand how food import dependence came into being, how this came to be represented as a food security problem, and what the effects were of the particular problem representations that became dominant? What came to be regarded as the main problem about food import dependence and trade liberalization and what ideological representations did these problematizations draw upon?

The ‘crisis’ was according to most Korean observers induced from the outside by a global food system dominated by foreign states and corporations beyond the control of the Korean nation. Food import dependence and food security became represented as problems caused by events imposed from the outside on to the nation-state, thus suggesting that what was at stake was not just food but also national sovereignty. What this problem representation did however, was also to promote a particular narrative about the historical causes for food import dependence embedded in a broader narrative of South Korea’s position within the capitalist world economy.

The quote above illuminates how particular problem representations also promotes certain problem solutions. There is a need to call into question the representational politics of what is construed as the 'problem'. Why is something perceived to be a food security crisis, and how does the representation of the problem determine the proposed solution to the problem? What is interesting is that food import dependence in itself is not represented as the problem in the public debate. South Korea has been food import dependent for decades, but the political mobilization since 2007 has been rather centered on how to gain control over overseas agricultural resources. In questioning the problem representation I draw on Carol Bacchi's approach to analyzing policy formulation in which a central aspect is to question the problem representation itself (Bacchi, 2009, p. xii). The question of why a policy came into being is thus also a question of how the representation of the problem itself came into being.

What's the Problem Represented to Be?

Carol Bacchi's approach to understanding how problem representations determine policy solutions has been formative in trying to uncover the underlying assumptions in how policy problems become constituted. Drawing on a Foucauldian analytical approach (Bacchi, 2010, 2012b), Bacchi argues that policy concepts rarely are descriptive of anything, but rather prescriptions for where we ought to go from here (Bacchi, 2000, p. 45). Her interest lies in inquiring how certain social conditions become social 'problems' that need to be resolved and what is left implicit in both the problematizations and policy solutions. To this purpose, Bacchi proposes a six-step methodology to analyze policy known as What's the Problem Represented to Be (WPR) approach.

1. What's the 'problem' (for example, of 'problem gamblers', 'drug use/abuse', 'gender inequality', 'domestic violence', 'global warming', 'sexual harassment', etc.) represented to be in a specific policy or policy proposal?
2. What presuppositions or assumptions underpin this representation of the 'problem'?
3. How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?
4. What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?
5. What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?
6. How/where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How has it been (or could it be) questioned, disrupted and replaced?

Bacchi's WPR approach provides, in my opinion, a methodology for how to study policy formulation not as problem solving but problem constituting, and that the solution is determined by how the problem is defined. Therefore, it is important to study how particular problem representations come about and what these representations tend to ignore. I do not follow Bacchi's methodology meticulously (I primarily follow steps 1-3, and 5-6²⁶), but the approach has been useful in examining not only what the problem is represented to be, but also my own assumptions and presuppositions, something that Bacchi stresses is necessary for any researcher attempting to use a WPR approach.

In most policy analyses, policies are regarded as acts seeking to solve 'social problems'. As such problems exist *outside* the policy-making process in most policy analyses. In opposition to this approach, Bacchi argues that 'problems' are endogenous

²⁶ Step four in Bacchi's approach is only discussed briefly in the conclusion. Nevertheless, the major parts of this dissertation are about how dominant problem representations limits attempts to think about the 'problem' differently.

to the policy process, i.e. that policies 'shape' or 'constitute' problems; they do not address them (Bacchi, 2009, p. X). For this reason, a WPR approach "...makes the case that it is important to make the 'problems' implicit in public policies explicit, and to scrutinize them closely." (Bacchi 2009, p. X). A WPR approach seeks to understand policy rather than policy makers by examining the underlying implicit assumptions and conceptual logics behind problem representations (Bacchi, 2012a). What I set out to do in my research questions is to make the implicit presuppositions in the Food import dependence and food security 'problems' more explicit and to scrutinize them closely.

It was Bacchi's questions that guided my investigation into the 'problems' of food import dependence and food security. What is implicitly referred to when media, politicians, farmers and intellectuals use these terms? It was through Bacchi's approach of questioning the problem representation that the question of nationalism in policy formulation became apparent to me. As I worked through my interviews and literature review, the idea of food and agriculture's relation to national identity as a shared implicit presupposition appeared in much of my material. But Bacchi's approach also provided challenges to my theoretical framework. There is a significant Foucauldian influence in Bacchi's approach, which challenged my own more materialist political economy approach in which the relations of production are regarded as constituting the base of society. While some may consider these two approaches to be mutually exclusive, I find that applying Bacchi's approach enabled me to overcome this analytical challenge. Examining the problem representation in agro-food policy required me to analyze both its material and conceptual premises.

Problematizing South Korea's Food Security 'Problem'

Perhaps the most instructive way of looking at how problematizations govern as Bacchi argues, is to take a look at the concept of food security, which has been used as the central reason for South Korea's need for an overseas agricultural development policy

following the 2007 food crisis. The pervasiveness of references to food security and the implicit assumption behind the term's use did not occur to me until my first round of interviews and fieldwork. The Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy for Food Security in itself implies that food insecurity is the problem. But the understanding of food security in the South Korean context differs from more internationally recognized interpretations of the term "food security." Food security as a concept was introduced following the first World Food Summit organized by the UN in November of 1974 (FAO, 2003). The conference was convened due to the global food crisis of 1972-74, a crisis that bore many resemblances to the one experienced in 2007 with sharply rising commodity prices (Headey & Fan, 2010). The outcome of the summit was a definition of food security as: "...availability at all times of adequate world supplies of basic food-stuffs., to sustain a steady expansion of food consumption., and to offset fluctuations in production and prices." (United Nations, 1975). Maxwell (1996) argues that since the term's introduction at the World Food Conference in 1974, the concept has evolved, developed, multiplied and diversified (Maxwell, 1996, p. 155). There are, according to Maxwell, close to two hundred different definitions of the term. It has been applied at all levels from the global and national to the household and individual.

What Maxwell's analysis shows is that food security is a concept, whether political or academic, which is impossible to pin down a priori. For my study, a central challenge has been to pin down how food security is interpreted in the South Korean context. To do so, it is useful to begin with Carol Bacchi's observation that concepts are rarely descriptive of anything, but rather prescriptions for where we ought to go from here (Bacchi, 2000, p. 45). Policy concepts are dynamic, designed to particular purposes, and redefined to fulfill other purposes. As Bacchi has also noted, government policies are given particular shapes and understandings of how to address issues of policy concerns (Bacchi, 2009). This is also the position here. Food security as a policy concept changes definition in relation to what it seeks to do policy wise (Hettne, 2010).

Inspired by Bacchi, I began to explore the term “food security” as a mobilizing policy concept, rather than descriptive of a state of being, a concept which has been employed by different political actors in post-war South Korea in order to dictate/influence desired food and agricultural policies in the name of the national development project. In doing so, I began to see how a number of competing narratives emerged about the causes of the lack of food supply control. The dominant economic narrative is that South Korea’s diet has evolved in a “natural” pattern as incomes have risen and that the protection of agriculture in South Korea is crucial to the South Korean economy (Beghin et al., 2003). This is a position that has been supported especially by major agricultural exporters such as the U.S., Australia and New Zealand in trade negotiations with South Korea. Such narratives represent what Dupuis refers to as *stories of perfection* (DuPuis, 2002):

“Stories of perfection are acts of power. In contexts where certain people have greater privilege than others, the social contingency of ideas tend to be replaced with one particular idea, a “perfect” idea of what society should pursue as a goal, and how people should lead their lives.” (DuPuis, 2002, p. 10).

Yet stories of perfection by those in power are often countered by equally perfect stories of oppression and resistance. One such dominant counter narrative in Korea is the historical subordination of Korea to foreign interest. In these stories, South Korea’s food system has been subordinate to the interests of large agricultural export nations, in particular the U.S. As a former agricultural minister said in one of my interviews: “...*food and agricultural production policy and programs concerned, I think Korea is nothing better than a colony [of the U.S.]*” (Kim Sung-Hoon, personal communication, October 11, 2012). While I do not want to dispute that the U.S. has played a major role in shaping South Korea’s economy, I argue that these stories, which were dominant in

the debates around 2007-2008 are equally stories of perfection. According to Dupuis, they are simply the mirror image of the story of perfection (DuPuis, 2002, p. 12). Dupuis requires a third story that critiques the perfect story of progression without simply becoming its “Janus face” (Dupuis 2002, p. 2). This story brings to the forefront social explanations that make apparent the relationships of power disguised by the other stories (Dupuis 2002, p. 13). In Dupuis’ study of the rise of milk consumption and production in the U.S., she argues that a less than perfect story requires seeing (milk) as neither perfect nor poison, but as a food that has been an intrinsic but problematic part of American society of over a century. Similarly, I argue that to understand the rise of import dependence, we need to study agro-food policy as an intrinsic but problematic part of South Korea’s post-colonial struggle for development and sovereignty.

Pursuing this question also required me to study transformations of production in South Korea as interconnected processes between the world economy, state development priorities, the agricultural sector and civil society. They need to be seen as interwoven in order to understand how the current food system with its high dependence on food imports came into being. The history of Korean agriculture in Korean development and the rise of food import dependence are neither stories of the perfection of corporate food globalization undermining Korean agriculture and food culture, nor is it a perfect story of rising affluence leading to higher meat consumption. The story I am trying to account for is centered around studying the transformations of Korean food culture and food systems as contingent and contradictory filled with political struggles between different social groups and the state, over the role of food and agriculture in the economy and the national imaginary – struggles that are both material and cultural in character. Rather than arguing whether one of these stories of perfection is more right than the other, I found it more useful to ask what is not being told in these accounts.

Initial data collection and identifying the ‘problem’

My initial data collection was focused on mapping the actors involved in the formulation of overseas agricultural development strategy and its implementation. Who were involved? How and to what extent were they involved? And what roles did they perform? During my the first six months of my field research in 2012 in South Korea and Cambodia, I conducted interviews²⁷ with researchers in government research institutes, private think tanks, and academia who had been prominent in the public debate about the overseas agricultural development strategy. The interviewees were identified through newspaper articles and snowballing method. I also interviewed a former minister of agriculture who was critical of the strategy. Through these exploratory interviews, I sought to understand the economic and political arguments for the strategy as well as mapping out the institutions and organizations involved in implementing the strategy. I participated in investment seminars in which government officials from countries such as Brazil, Russia, and Indonesia came to promote agricultural investment opportunities to Korean investors. I also interviewed farmers and representatives of local food movements in South Korea in order to situate the mainstream debates over food import dependence within a broader context of food and agricultural political movements. I highlight this in order to stress that the mainstream debate was dominant, but not the only voices in South Korea. However little political weight the marginal movements were able to wield, I wanted to get an understanding of these underrepresented voices.

While I was able to conduct interviews with the central agencies and organizations put in charge of implementing the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy, it was much more difficult to obtain interviews with companies who had received financial support from public funds allocated for the new strategy. The CEO

²⁷ A total of 26 recorded interviews were conducted in South Korea and Cambodia between September 2012 and September 2013. Another 14 unrecorded interviews and meetings were conducted during field work.

of one company, however, did agree to an interview. The interview proved to be a key moment in the exploratory stages of my research. The CEO was also a cattle farmer from a province south of Seoul and his story of how he had become involved provided a new perspective to my research project. To him, the motivation to get involved was the effects of rising feed prices on his fellow farmers. His interest in the project was to help desperate farmers get access to cheaper feed to avoid more suicides among cattle farmers, as he explained. Together with twenty-five fellow cattle farmers and the provincial government as co-investors, he had started a company to grow feed in Cambodia. He was the first person I encountered who was a direct link to the 2008 beef protests in which he had been actively involved as a protester, and the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. For him, the rising competition from reopening U.S. beef imports and the rising cost of feed were the two main reasons for the declining economic conditions for Korean cattle farmers.

The interview was decisive in three ways. As a result of the interview, I decided to go to Cambodia to visit the project started by these farmers as well as some other Korean-owned farms I had identified. Secondly, it pointed me towards seeking to investigate the correlation between livestock production and rising South Korean food imports. Finally, it challenged my ideas of Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy as being only a state-sponsored subsidization for overseas expansion of profit-seeking Korean companies. I had to take the food security discourse seriously, not only as a thinly veiled cover for South Korean capitalist expansion, but as something that was truly a concern to a lot of observers. For the CEO of this company, the project was about the survival of his Korean farmer colleagues and for the future of livestock production in South Korea. My fieldwork in Cambodia also highlighted this extra-economic logic. Even after the farm project of the Korean farmers collapsed financially with several farmers having lost their life-savings in the process, the CEO was still

determined to push ahead. While economic considerations were important, they could not be considered the only motivation.

Research Design and Data Collection

My research design developed from this first round of interviews following what can be termed a mixed methods explanatory sequential design (Creswell, 2014, p. 37). According to Creswell, an explanatory research design first uses quantitative methods to understand what results will need further explanation using qualitative research methods. Following the first round of interviews in South Korea, I needed to understand the food import dependence phenomenon in depth. I needed to understand how food imports had developed over time. This led to further exploration of statistical databases to establish an overview of food imports and domestic production and consumption. The USDA Foreign Agricultural Service database on production, supply, and distribution was perhaps the most consistent data sets for the period since 1960. These datasets, combined with statistical data on import, production, and consumption from the Korean Ministry of Agriculture provided a set of quantitative data that allowed me to outline how food imports and consumption had changed over time, and the periods in which significant changes had occurred.

Using the quantitative data, I identified periods of stability and moments of significant change or *periodization*²⁸. The periodization drawing on the quantitative data allowed me to identify key moments where significant changes in domestic food production and food imports occurred. The analysis of quantitative data sets also allowed me to test some of the dominant theories of the causality and correlation between meat production, consumption, feed imports, and rising income. In

²⁸ The use of periodization has been discussed by Stuart Hall (S. Hall, 1986) in which he draws on Antonio Gramsci. Periodization is also a central aspect of food regime theory (Friedmann & McMichael, 1987; Philip McMichael, 2009b). However, the two approaches tend to differ as Food Regime theory tends to focus on periods of stable hegemonies while Hall is more focused on moments of social transformation.

agricultural economics, a dominant hypothesis is that rising incomes lead to higher meat consumption (Cole & Mccoskey, 2013; Francks et al., 1999; Schneider, 2014; Weis, 2013b). The rise in consumption should then explain higher meat production and rising feed imports as a function of rising meat consumption. However, the data showed significant variation, which cannot be explained by statistical data alone. It required an exploration of the politics surrounding these key moments of transformation for which I had to turn to qualitative data. The focus for my literature search was to identify how these transformations between self-sufficiency and food import strategies had been interpreted by both contemporary sources as well as accounts produced in hindsight. What causes were seen as leading to shifts and what did they identify as the effects? And how did these interpretations align with, or differ from, the ways in which researchers, politicians and media described the food import “problem” in the debates following 2007? This required me to do a very broad literature search that included not only academic books and articles, but also industry reports and policy documents, not only from Korea but also from some of South Korea’s most important agricultural trading partners, namely the U.S. and Australia.

What this literature review revealed was that the idea of food import dependence as a “problem” that political groups thought needed to be addressed depended on the period under study. Food import dependence was problematized by dominant political groups during some periods, while in other periods, it was encouraged. In fact, during several periods in post-war South Korea, food imports were considered beneficial to the national development objectives. This connection between agro-food policies and broader state development objectives was an aspect that needed further elaboration. In earlier literature from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, this connection seemed to be drawn by a number of scholars, but it was less clear and perhaps more implied than explicit in the literature that discussed the 2007 food crisis. In the latter, the “problem” representation did not to the same extent single out the

governments' policies as external factors. The role of agro-food policy in state development policy was thus an aspect that needed a critical revisit. This aspect became even more apparent as I gained access to the policy documents and laws that were passed following the 2007 food crisis during which the central role of government institutions in attempting to manage and control food supply became evident, and the government institutions' involvement needed to be placed in a historical perspective. However, the state did not limit itself to managing production. Food consumption was also subject to state intervention in South Korea using various methods such as nutritional science, claims to modernity and tradition, all sanctioned for the sake of national development. Thus, the first part of my research design focuses on an investigation into the history of the politics of agro-food policy in relation to national economic development policies. The central focus here is to understand how shifts between food import and food self-sufficiency strategies have been shaped by the politics of economic development.

The second aspect that the literature review revealed was that the rise of meat production and consumption as a primary cause for the rise of food imports since the 1980s. But the quantitative data revealed that the links between rising meat consumption, meat production, and food imports were complex. The rise of beef production and consumption in particular became increasingly interesting as a case that could highlight the complexities of agro-food policy in South Korea. While beef production and consumption correlated with rising incomes, a closer look at the history of beef indicated a less linear trajectory. First of all, beef as a food did not become mainstream consumer goods until the late 1980s and 1990s. Secondly, reports prior to the late 1970s did not predict the rapid rise in beef consumption or the rise of a significant domestic beef cattle industry based on imported feed grains. While the more recent literature on cattle production systems in South Korea seemed to regard the trajectory in more linear ways, as a natural progression, it became clearer that the

beef cattle industry's trajectory is less of a straightforward process of economic determinism, but characterized by political conflicts. Furthermore, the literature review showed that beef consumption was historically not associated with a traditional Korean diet until the late 1990s or early 2000s. Thus, a central question is how Korean consumers came to associate beef with tradition and cultural heritage, a national symbol that could be a platform for political mobilization.

The second part of my research design came to focus on the rise of beef production in South Korea. The section on the trajectory of beef production and consumption operates as a case to illustrate the ambivalent and complex politics of food imports or self-sufficiency. The relevance of the beef sector as a case of how food import dependence came to be, and how it came to be problematized, is based on a number of criteria. Beef production accounts for more than 40% of total feed imports, making it similar in size to the pork industry even though the quantitative output of pork production and consumption is higher. The beef sector however, is characterized by including much higher numbers of the agricultural farm population whereas pork production primarily takes place on industrial scale farms. Beef production, on the other hand, has strong roots in the Korean multifunctional mini-farm structure, which has characterized Korean agriculture and agricultural politics since land reforms in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Furthermore, the political struggles related to trade liberalization had a significant impact on the beef sector compared to other livestock sectors exactly because of its importance to a larger percentage of the agricultural sector. Of the agricultural sectors, only rice producers have a broader political base and rooting in Korean notions of traditional culture, which kept rice exempt from trade liberalization until the summer of 2014. The rise of beef production and consumption thus coincides with the political struggles between advocates for self-sufficiency and domestic market protection on one hand, and those advocating for market liberalization on the other. I argue on this basis that beef, compared to any other sector,

more fully illustrates the ambivalent political compromises that had profound impact on how Korean beef is produced, and what cultural significance came to be associated with it.

Another important aspect of my research design is the challenge of conducting a historical analysis. What time periods should be considered relevant to the particular research question as well which parts of those specific moments in history are important? Historization as method indicates a certain interest in identifying continuity and change over longer periods of time. For me, this method seemed the most relevant because my main objective was to challenge notions of *inevitable* historical trajectories of food import dependence, by demonstrating that food import dependence was the outcome of political choices and that food import dependence represented a particular and historically specific political problematization, that foregrounded certain politically charged explanations of how South Korea had arrived at this situation. Periods of drastic growth and decline in domestic meat production, consumption, and feed imports did not always follow the same trajectory.

The method of historical periodization in itself is not very telling. I am drawing particularly on the methods of Marxist-inspired historical materialism and more constructivist genealogical approaches²⁹ not to identify periods of stability, but rather moments of rupture or what Stuart Hall calls conjunctural movement (S. Hall, 1986). In those moments of change, what determined the direction of policy? My central claim as presented earlier is that the dynamic relations between competing economic interests and competing claims to national identity are central in understanding change and continuity in policy. But whereas I continue the historical materialist path in understanding changing economic interests proposed by Winders, a historical understanding of how variants of national identity were formed requires a more

²⁹ The discussion on periodization and combining historical materialism and genealogical approaches is complex. In my method, I see no inherent contradiction in combining these approaches. See for example (S. Hall, 1986; Merlingen, 2013; Olssen, 2004)

constructivist approach. That is, an understanding of policy outcomes requires an understanding of national identities and economic interests as competing and constitutive variables (Helleiner & Pickel, 2005, p. 231). Because these are not assumed to be static, a historical methodology allows the study of how economic interests and national identities are constructed, contested, and remade.

With this in mind, the second step in an explanatory sequential research design was to determine which qualitative methods to use. First of all, I needed to reassess the interviews conducted during my first period of fieldwork in South Korea to assess more specifically how interviewees talked about food import dependence as a “problem” waiting for a solution. The interviews showed a near total consensus that food import dependence was a major problem for South Korea, but there were variations to the proposed policy solutions to the problem. Following Bacchi as well as Winders’ quote at the beginning of this chapter, it became clear that what the interviewees identified as problematic also determined the political solution they advocated for. For most of the government officials and researchers, the problem about food import dependence was not food import dependence per se, but rather how the lack of control over supply chains could negatively impact the Korean economy. At the other end of the spectrum, those who disagreed with the overseas agricultural strategy identified food import dependence itself as the major problem. They argued that overseas agricultural development did nothing to improve the livelihood of Korean farmers or contribute to greater national self-sufficiency. Their disagreements also extended to subtle differences explaining the causes of food import dependence in terms of which was more to blame, national policy, or the U.S.? The interviews were also telling in the sense of what was not problematized, such as the rise of livestock production in South Korea and the production system’s dependence on feed imports. Also, even those who were critical of the overseas agricultural development strategy referred to national interests just as did those who were supporting the strategy. The aspect of national interests as

a social mechanism in line with economic interests proved more difficult to operationalize as an independent variable that has led to rising food imports, but as the economic nationalism literature presented in the previous chapter argues, economic nationalism should not be associated with a particular economic doctrine such as protectionism or self-sufficiency, but rather with its national ontology.

My qualitative data collection first led to the exploration of existing literature on South Korea. This material can be divided into three major fields: 1. Academic literature on the political economy of agriculture, 2. Academic literature on food culture, and 3. Academic literature on nationalism. These three fields of study vary widely in terms of their philosophical and methodological viewpoint. They also vary in the historical periods they cover. For example, English language literature on the political economy of agriculture is particularly detailed from the 1970s to 1990s, but little research has been published in the 2000s. Critical studies on food culture, on the other hand, covers mostly the period from the late 1990s. This disparity makes it difficult to obtain balance in information available. Nevertheless, my data collection did provide information on the contours of how economic interests and national identities have shaped agro-food policy. Other important secondary sources that proved useful in understanding historical trajectories of beef production and consumption have been reports from the U.S. Department of agriculture and their yearly reports on Korean agriculture and food consumption, which date back to the early 1990s. The Australian Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries have also published detailed reports since the late 1970s on Korean beef production and markets. These reports have provided detailed snapshots of particular time periods and information on which direction experts anticipated production and consumption to be headed. These were particularly insightful because, they clearly indicated that the trajectory of the beef industry was unanticipated in the early 1980s and even the early 1990s.

In studying the construction of national identities and of consumer nationalism in South Korea, two major sources for knowledge on how people have come to *know* food has been scientific and cultural production. In terms of science, I draw on material from nutritional science, science related to the production of beef, as well as science related to linking particular foods to national historiography. Cultural production such as literature, art, and movies is important in producing our knowledge³⁰ of food and agriculture, but it also represents social experience that connects the past, present, and future in particular ways (Morris-Suzuki, 2005; Nelson, 2000). As Tessa Morris-Suzuki argues, popular conceptions of the past are swayed by mass-marketed narratives of history, narratives that operate in the field between history as identification and history as interpretation. Our knowledge of the past is not shaped only on an intellectual understanding. It involves imagination and empathy:

“By remembering a particular piece of the past, by making it our own, we create a sense of belonging to a certain group of people – whether a nation, local society, ethnic minority or religious group. In this way we also define our place in a complicated and changing world. Indeed it is the very act of historical commemoration that calls group identity into being” (Morris-Suzuki, 2005, p. 23)

I would argue that popular media representations of the past produce both intellectual and emotional connections, but they also serve as a repository of knowledge of how people situate their own lives between past, present, and future. These sentiments expressed in popular culture can provide us with an insight into both dominant and emergent interpretations of history as well as the emotions and forms of identity. Thus, in this study I draw on art, song lyrics, and contemporary popular

³⁰ It expresses what Raymond Williams calls emergent, dominant, and residual *structures of feeling*. (Filmer, 2003; Williams, 1977)

movies and documentaries to study how people come to see their own place in history through the Korean cow as an object of identification, linking particular historical struggles to contemporary ones. The material collected has been based primarily on a criteria of popularity. The campaign materials on Sintoburi and the films used for analysis figure solidly in the memory of many Koreans. By connecting these representations to scholarly work on nationalist historiography in South Korea, it becomes possible to see how political claims around agro-food policy are shaped by certain narratives about the role of agriculture and food in the formation of national identities as well as perceptions of South Korea's position in the broader geo-political economy.

In addition to the interviews conducted during the first period of field work in the fall of 2012, the second part of my data collection involved recorded semi-structured interviews with food historians, beef industry representatives, as well as follow up interviews with some of the government officials responsible for the implementation of the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. These interviews took place during the late summer of 2013. These interviews allowed me to establish an outline of key periods in the development of beef as a food as well as its rise as a national symbol. I also spent considerable time talking to farmers, colleagues, and friends in South Korea about their own relationship to Korean Hanu beef and the promotional campaigns that had formed their perception of Hanu. Interviews with historians, industry experts, and informal discussions with friends of colleagues confirmed that Hanu and its high marbled production characteristics, was in fact quite a recent phenomenon. It also showed the generational gap with people older than their mid-30s having only vague recollections of eating beef in their childhood, while people in their early 20s had memories of how beef constituted an integral part of their diet during their upbringing. These interviews and discussions then further the ability

to identify key transformations in South Korean agro-food policy, but with a more direct focus on beef production.

Validity and Limitations

As I have sought to emphasize throughout this chapter, my analytical methodology is inspired by both historical materialism and constructivist methods of genealogy. The combination of the two historization methods is used in order to incorporate the cultural and material aspects of agro-food policy formulation in South Korea. In short, how people have come to *grow food and know food* in particular ways. The method has required a broad collection of data to understand how the debate around food import dependence has unfolded over time, and the effects of chosen agro-food policies. A major limitation in both my data collection and analysis, is without doubt my limited Korean language skills. This means that my qualitative interviews were conducted with an interpreter or in some cases in English if the interviewee felt comfortable doing so. However, whether using an interpreter or conducting the interview in English, particular wordings or expressions are very prone to misinterpretation or overinterpretation. Thus, I have refrained from using more discursive analytical methods on my interviews. Rather, interviews have been used primarily in an exploratory manner, while my explanatory analysis is based predominantly on written sources. Most of those written sources have been in English while Korean language articles and documents were translated by professional translators. There is no doubt that with stronger Korean language skills, I could have collected much richer data on political and public debates on Hanu beef and food import dependence.

Nevertheless, the validity of my findings were verified by using multiple different authors' interpretation of the same political events across political and disciplinary spectrums as well as across time. On the statements of interviewees, I have attempted

to verify those statements by cross-checking with other sources, both their own writings if available, as well as related literature, policy documents, and news media. In doing so, I have tried to reach a point of saturation in which data collecting ceased to develop new perspectives (Creswell, 2014). Representation (Stuart Hall, Evans, & Nixon, 2013) has been another major analytical strategy particularly in relation to analysis of representations of food, agriculture, farmers, and cattle in political campaigns and popular culture. I have sought to understand both how these were represented as political objects in contemporary struggles, and how they were represented in particular historical interpretations of the past. These analyses have been backed up by verifying with secondary literature drawing primarily from anthropological studies of political movements in South Korea.

A limitation of this study is that it tends to ignore what can be considered alternative food movements and politics in South Korea. My main interest has been to understand how policy has been shaped in struggles between mainstream political groups. This focus renders many of the alternative movements invisible and may lead to what Gibson-Graham's critique of Marxist accounts of capitalism argue subordinate and renders invisible non-capitalist forms of social relations (Gibson-Graham, 2006). My point is not to render those movements invisible, but rather to highlight how economic nationalism and cultural nationalism have been powerful social forces, that made certain pathways more "possible" than others. I do not wish to ignore movements working to address issues such as environmental sustainability, safety, gender equality, and social justice in the South Korean food system, but rather to understand how these perspectives become ignored in political struggles when caught in binaries such as free trade/protectionism, modernity/tradition, national/global. I acknowledge that these movements are present and were present historically, but that their ability to enter into mainstream political debates are limited by or become subordinated to the dominant forces of economic and cultural nationalism.

Positionality

A final reflection on my methodology is the issue of self-reflexivity. As Bacchi argues, self-analysis or reflexivity is necessary because we as researchers are, just as anyone else, immersed in the conceptual logics of our era and who we are is shaped by the very same problem representations we are trying to analyze (Bacchi, 2009, p. 19). As Bacchi further argues, the study of problem representations has an explicitly normative agenda. It seeks to think of how resistance and challenge occur in politics and to identify potential for strategic interventions. This is also the intent here. The study seeks to explore the possibilities and limitations of food activism in South Korea at a time when the grip of direct state regulation has loosened, but the challenges faced by the food system have become more complex. What limitations are there to political activism directed towards national policy? Under what conditions do such activism need to inscribe itself in order to be heard and gain influence?

This related directly to my own experience with food activism in South Korea and my own relation to food as an affective and political object. I was adopted from Korea to Denmark at a young age, and my own relationship to South Korea was thus distant for decades. It was not until 2007, when I reunited with my Korean birth family that my interest in South Korean food politics began. Reuniting with my family was a complex affair that involved mostly non-verbal communication, as I did not speak Korean and my immediate family spoke limited English. Thus, much of our relationship was and still is expressed through food. Food and agriculture quickly became my dominant mode of "reconnecting" with a family and history erased by false documents and cutting of ties. I still remember the evening I arrived at the airport after twenty-eight years of separation. My father, older brother, and interpreter were waiting for me in the arrival hall. After an emotional reunion in the airport, we drove from the airport to a restaurant to have our first meal together. As we entered the restaurant, the interpreter told me that my father must have missed me very much because this was a

very expensive and fancy Korean beef restaurant. In the years to come, when I came to visit my Korean family, my father always wanted to take me to a beef restaurant for barbeque. Knowing the prices of such restaurants, I came to associate eating beef with my father's attempt to show affection in non-verbal ways.

During my visits to Korea in the coming years, I also came to meet other Korean adoptees both in Korea and abroad. For most of us, food is a central object for expressing our connection to a heritage that for most of us is difficult to connect with given limited language abilities. Eating Korean food thus has become a principal way to connect both materially and symbolically. Eating Korean food grown in Korean soil can thus be interpreted as was a way to reconnect both our bodies and minds to a land and culture that we involuntarily became disconnected from. My own "romantization" of Korean food and heritage came from a desire to connect to a people, a past, and a contemporary society that I had been forced to leave years back. In this sense, I think my own need for "belonging" mirrors some of the sentiments prevalent in broader Korean society. Through food, many experience a sense of connection to lives not lived. Conducting this research has been a personal journey through which I was required to critically reflect on my own affective relationships in order to challenge my own presuppositions of Korean food and agriculture as sites of authenticity and progressive political struggle. This is not to distance myself from it, but rather to see how my own problematizations may have limited my ability to look at agro-food policy in a more nuanced light, not as an arena of tradition versus modernity, but rather as contemporary struggles in which tradition and modernity are political tools to achieve certain political outcomes.

Having worked in agricultural and food activism for a number of years prior to my family reunification, mainly in the US, my entry point into understanding South Korean history came through food and agriculture. It was an entry point that stimulated both my intellectual and affective desires. I began visiting Korean farmers and urban

activists who were working to transform the South Korean food system. This activism combined anti-capitalist political economy critique as well as cultural critiques of modernity and South Korea's development history. However, most of these activist organizations operate on the margins of Korean politics and an important part of my own motivation to study agricultural policy formulation is to shed light on the marginalization of these groups but also to examine how some of these political initiatives travel into mainstream politics, though rarely in the way they were originally proposed. This study is thus also an attempt to provide knowledge that allows for critical reflection on the political possibilities and limitations to activism directed towards national agro-food policy formulation ³¹. Most importantly, through problematizing dominant mainstream narratives of imperial subjugation and economic miracles, I have been able to apply a critical perspective on the formation of agro-food policies and their political effects. This analytical perspective has provided insights into how to understand Korean history and contemporary Korean society, and thus to conceptualize the unfolding of South Korea's developmental trajectory in the past 50-60 years as a history of struggle and conflict full of unpredicted twist and turns.

³¹ I have attempted to follow de Sardan's warning against ideological populism (Olivier de Sardan, 2005). Yet, where Sardan argues that researchers should not comment on the value and validity of the knowledge and strategies of social groups, I argue that it is still possible to comment on how knowledges and strategies foreground certain political possibilities while backgrounding others. This is not to say that the particular knowledge is neither valuable nor valid, but rather that they perhaps are only one of many knowledges and strategies.

Part I
**The Making of Food Import
Dependence**

CHAPTER 4 - STATE AGRO-FOOD POLICY

"Agriculture needs to be brought back into the Korean development debate. This requires a discussion that connects state co-optation of the agricultural sector with its agro-industrial linkage implications...The role of selective market segmentation and protection has been lost in the recent new orthodoxy emphasis on the export promotion dimension of Korea's success." (Burmeister, 1990b, pp. 199–200)

South Korea's development history is subject to much interest in development studies as a case of successful rapid economic development. The role of the state in fostering rapid industrialization and economic growth has been a field of particular interest. It has reached a point in which South Korean economic development has come to be synonymous with the developmental state (Amsden, 1989; H.-J. Chang, 2006; Evans, 1995; E. M. Kim, 1997; Kohli, 2004; Woo, 1991). The developmental state thesis itself was a challenge to the dominant notion in the 1980s that East-Asian development was an example of market-based development. With the obvious danger of glossing over differences in these accounts, focus was on the role of the state, and the state bureaucracy in fostering South Korea's economic 'miracle'. The developmental state thesis, despite its popularity in a whole range of academic disciplines and policy circles, was also subject to intense criticism, especially after the 1997 East Asian financial crisis. Some critics questioned the autonomy of the South Korean state bureaucracy (D. C. Kang, 2002), its methodological nationalism (Agnew, 1994; Glassman, 1999), or lack of considerations of domestic class conflicts in development policy (Doucette, 2009).

Another critique is the one represented by Burmeister's quote above. The almost exclusive focus on finance and industry overlooks the role of agriculture. The transition from an agrarian economy to an industrial one is predominantly regarded as an articulated one, if treated at all. Cristobal Kay for example argues that what made South

Korea's development remarkable was "...that the state managed not only to squeeze agriculture but that it did so while at the same time ensuring agriculture's sustained growth and thus the production of a large economic surplus." (Kay, 2002, p. 1094). Today this view seems to be dominant in understandings of South Korean agriculture in the country's economic development trajectory. I think that this view oversimplifies the ambiguous relationship between agriculture, industrialization, and the state in South Korea's development history, which in turn supports an "economic miracle" narrative that has a tendency to gloss over the conflictual and political aspects of South Korea's development experience. This criticism also extends to many developmental state theorists who argue that bureaucratic autonomy was key to development success (Amsden, 1989; Evans, 1995). While the state indeed played a strong role in directing South Korea's economic development, it never did so uncontested, especially not in the agricultural sector (Burmeister, 1990b; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006; M. Moore, 1984). Geo-political and geo-economic shifts played a significant role in altering state development strategies and so did domestic politics (Doucette, 2009; Glassman & Choi, 2014; Glassman, 1999; Winders, 2009a).

In this chapter, I try to trace the trajectory of South Korean agro-policy and its relation to national development policy and the broader geo-political economy. I do so first by arguing that economic development policy in general, and agro-food policy in particular, was the outcome of shifts in the world economy and domestic political struggles between competing inter-sectoral economic interests. Secondly, I argue that state development policy has supported both food import and food self-sufficiency strategies according to national development objectives and shifts in the geo-politics yet rarely without opposition. I am thus seeking to locate the decision by the government to launch the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy to address the high level of import dependence within a historical context of changing food supply strategies. It is a complex political story of how the state favored different food supply

strategies in various historical periods. This analysis of shifts in agro-food policy preferences focus on the time from 1961 when Park Chung-Hee became president after a military coup that ousted the democratically elected government in 1960. It does so because one always has to make difficult choices of when history begins, but also because the agricultural restructuring efforts of Park Chung-Hee in his early years would become important for the trajectory of agro-food policy in the following decades. This is not to say nothing changed before his ascendancy to power. South Korean agriculture had experienced numerous significant transformations since the mid-nineteenth century when South Korea was forced to open up its borders by the Japanese in 1876. New opportunities for profit led to increased land concentration and introduction of new taxation systems, which in turn led to the Donghak Revolution³² of 1894 in which peasants across the kingdom rose up against what they considered a corrupt and rent-seeking aristocracy (S. Shin & Lee, 2008).

The exploitation of tenant farmers only worsened with the Japanese colonization. To feed the expansion of the Japanese empire, Korean agriculture underwent significant modernization under an increasingly oppressive land-lord tenant system (O.-I. Chung, 2006; Fedman, 2012; Hayami & Ruttan, 1970; Y.-S. Kim, 2005; C. Moon, 2013; Pang & Shin, 2005; G.-W. Shin, 1998, 2006b). With the end of World War II, the big question of political significance was the division of the peninsula by the Soviet and U.S. occupying forces. The other pertinent question was land reform, a question that was addressed first by North Korea in 1946 (S.-B. Kim, 2005). In the south, the provisional government under Syngman Rhee dragged their feet (S.-B. Kim, 2005; Lie,

³² The rebellion was suppressed not by the king but by Japanese military intervention, which came after a government minister had requested military intervention from Qing China. The Japanese used the landing of Chinese troops as an excuse to land their own troops in Korea, seize the royal palace, and install a shadow cabinet of ministers. These events led to the first Sino-Japanese War on Korean soil from which Japan emerged victorious, ending China's suzerainty claims to Joseon. The rebellion, which lasted for about a year, is estimated to have claimed 300,000-400,000 lives out of a population of approximately 12 million (S. Shin & Lee 2008, p. 175).

1998; Mitchell, 1949). It took a devastating civil war before the South Korean government committed to land reforms for political stability. Thus by the mid-1950s, the Japanese imperial-capitalist/Korean landlord alliance was completely dismantled (Cumings, 2005; Hsiao, 1981; Kay, 2002; Kohli, 1999; G.-W. Shin, 1998). The result was the establishment of an agricultural system, which Larry Burmeister has named the multifunctional *minifarm structure* (Burmeister, 1992) where the majority of farm households owned less than 1 hectare and characterized by multi-functional farm operations (Hsiao, 1981, p. 81).

In the 1950s, South Korean economic policy focused primarily on political stability, military security, and industrial import substitution (Woo, 1991). Syngman Rhee's interest in agriculture was limited. The peasant uprisings in the late 1940s against his rule made him distrust the rural population whom he suspected of harboring pro-north and pro-communist views. He was also not very interested in agricultural modernization, which he largely ignored (Hsiao, 1981, p. 83). His primary concern as stated earlier was to secure the new South Korean state against its northern rivals and internal agitators. But he was head of a state severely short of capital, industries, and food. Syngman Rhee thus turned to the United States for assistance. Though he was not particularly liked by his U.S. allies, the U.S. accepted his autocratic and authoritarian behavior as he was a staunch anti-communist. South Korea was one of the main frontlines against the spread of Communism and Syngman Rhee craftily uses South Korea's position on the anti-communist frontline to extract resources and capital from his U.S. allies even when interests diverged (Woo, 1991, p. 48).³³ Lee for example, went against U.S. recommendations to stabilize the economy and exploitation of the relative South Korean comparative advantage in agriculture (Lie 1998). Rhee wanted to rapidly develop import-substituting industries that could help

³³ At the eve of the Korean War, the U.S. Embassy in Seoul had a staff of 2000, making it the largest U.S. embassy in the world and the Economic Cooperation Administration in Seoul had its biggest operations in Seoul (Woo, 1991, p. 50).

build strong defenses that would prevent another invasion from the North, and the U.S. reluctantly supported Lee with upwards of 2 billion U.S. dollars in aid (Lie, 1998, p. 29).

The most significant agro-food policy initiative under Syngman Rhee, besides land reform, was the passing of the Grain Management Law³⁴ in 1950. The purpose of the Grain Management Law was to control the supply of food to urban residents in order to maintain social order and control in a time of social, economic, and political instability³⁵. The Law, which emerged from the 1948 Grain Purchasing Act gave the government sweeping powers over the purchase, storage, distribution, and price setting for strategic agricultural commodities (Burmeister, 1990b, p. 199). The government set production and consumption targets for rice and barley, and required producers to sell to the government specified amounts up to one third of production, at a government-fixed price. Under Lee, the farm-gate price was consistently below the cost of production (Francks et al., 1999, p. 122). The Grain Management Law also gave the government direct control of all imports and exports. The law did however also open up for a limited amount of "free" markets in agricultural products for commodities above the quotas set by the government (Francks et al., 1999, p. 82; K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 122). During Syngman Rhee's reign from 1953 to 1960, the annual average growth rate was 10.8 percent for industry compared to 2.5 percent in the primary sector (Woo, 1991, p. 59), and only two relatively minor rural development programs were implemented in his reign (W. W. Boyer & Ahn, 1991, p. 31). The increase in agricultural productivity after the Korean War was, according to Francks et al, due to the knowledge and experience gained during Japanese agricultural modernization (Francks et al., 1999, p. 106).

³⁴ The law and its implementation drew on the institutions, experiences, and practices of Japanese Colonial administrative practices, first reinstated by the U.S. occupying forces (Burmeister, 2000, p. 446; K.-H. Park, 2013, pp. 56–85) (Burmeister, 2000, p. 446; K.-H. Park, 2013, pp. 56–85).

³⁵ The 1950 Grain Management Law is seen by some as key to understanding later state interventions into production, distribution, and consumption. It created the legal basis for tight government regulation of food consumption and agricultural production (Burmeister, 1990b, p. 205; K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 75).

When Park Chung-Hee came to power, the agro-food sector was the major revenue source for the government through the state monopoly on U.S. PL480 food aid distribution, compulsory grain collection, monopolization on food prices, imports, and revenue from land reform repayments. In 1961, 48.4 percent of the total national budget came from food sales (K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 329).

Food Aid, Light Industrialization, and Squeezing of Agriculture 1961 - 1970

President Syngman Rhee was forced to resign in April of 1960 after popular protests against what many regarded as rigged presidential elections. Accusations of rampant corruption in his administration, political repression, a stagnant economy, and poverty all contributed to his unpopularity and eventual downfall in the aftermath of the student-led April 19 Revolution (Lie, 1998, p. 39). A democratically elected government was installed for the first time in South Korean history on August 13, 1960 with Yun Po-Sun as President and Jang Myeon as Prime Minister. The new government put strong emphasis on economic development through industrialization, but they only lasted eight months. A military junta led by General Park Chung-Hee took power in a coup on May 16, 1961. For the next 17 months, the country was governed by a military council, with Yun continuing nominally as the President. President Yun resigned in March 1962, and Park Chung-Hee became acting President. He was elected President of the Third Republic on October 15, 1963. Park Chung-Hee's ascent to power was not uncontested. His past as a military officer in the Japanese Imperial army made him suspicious in the eyes of both right and left nationalists, while his membership of the Communist South Korean Workers Party in the 1940s, made him a questionable leader in the eyes of the U.S. (Woo, 1991, p. 79). But to the majority of the rural population, which still made up a majority, Park Chung-Hee, a man of peasant origins, was considered a welcome break from the elitist Syngman Rhee.

With the backing of the military, he built a powerful populist nationalist platform, promising rapid industrialization, equality and material well-being, and a radical break with Rhee's corrupt and elitist regime (E. M. Kim, 1997, p. 100; Lie, 1998, p. 52). Under the Park Chung-Hee regime, South Korea's industrialization began to gain steam. Policies shifted from import substitution to export-oriented development and centrally guided capitalism. Institutionally, the era led to further political control of the bureaucratic system and centralized control of finance and credit. At the onset of the Park Chung-Hee era, North Korea was still ahead in both industrial and military power and Park's administration's drive for industrialization must be understood in this context of continued threat of a potential war with North Korea. U.S. military and economic support provided in the 1950s to contain the North Korean threat was no longer certain as the U.S. shifted attention to developments in South East Asia, making President Park more weary of relying on U.S. military for defense against a potential attack from North Korea (D. C. Kang, 2002, p. 38).

Industrial and Agricultural Politics in the Third Republic's Early Years

President Park's political legitimacy was not only dependent on the ability to industrialize and achieve economic progress. One of the promises of Park Chung-Hee was to reign in the chaebol corporations owned by a small elite that had benefited from Rhee's favoritism. The chaebol business ventures had flourished through interpersonal relations and preferential treatment under Syngman Rhee, especially in the agro-food sector where contracts with the government could provide windfall profits. Furthermore, the provisional military government officers that preceded Park's election victory in 1963 were of predominantly rural origin and harbored "...a peasant's suspicion of the wealthy" (Woo, 1991, p. 81). To show the general populace their commitment to clean up the system, the military junta arrested the wealthiest men in South Korea who had profited under the Lee government (Lie, 1998, p. 53; Woo, 1991,

p. 83). But the promised punishment of the chaebols never materialized. President Park instead struck a deal with the ten biggest chaebols, in which they were exempted from prosecution in return for their cooperation in Park's industrialization plans, effectively letting the old system continue under stricter state control of business and finance (Woo, 1991, p. 84).

Park Chung-Hee's industrialization efforts required further capital. The funds for the regime's program came firstly with the normalization of relations with Japan and later with the Vietnam War. The normalization of relations with Japan, though extremely unpopular among the public, led to reparations in the sum of 300 million USD in grants, 200 million USD in government loans, and USD 300 million in commercial credit (Lie, 1998, p. 60). To secure continued U.S. support to South Korea, the regime agreed to dispatch 300,000 troops and personnel to the war in Vietnam in return for military contracts worth more than 1 billion USD in the period from 1965 to 1970 (Woo, 1991, p. 94). These two political maneuvers, the normalization of relations with Japan and support for the U.S. war efforts in Vietnam paved the way for Park Chung-Hee's ambitions of building a strong industrial nation not only financially, but also through transfers of technology and knowledge in both light industrial manufacturing and construction. Thus, the dream of Park Chung-Hee and other nationalists, including President Syngman Rhee, to build a strong nation state continued through the 1960s by developing domestic industries with the loans and grants from Japan and the U.S. rather than depending only on direct U.S. military aid. These two countries furthermore provided key markets for South Korea's new export-oriented manufacturing industries. Chaebol corporations, foreign capital, and export orientation appeared to be the recipe for success for Park Chung-Hee's aim of building a strong and prosperous nation.

Institutional Restructuring of Agriculture

Industrialization and economic growth as the means to bolstering national military capacity remained central to strengthening national security and safeguarding sovereignty under Park Chung-Hee. However, Park devised a quite different strategy compared to that of Syngman Rhee who regarded the loyalty of his senior bureaucrats more important than their professionalism (Kohli, 2004, p. 65). For Park, building domestic industrial strength was essential and the centralization of the state bureaucracy was instrumental to this purpose. The state administration became ordered hierarchically with the Economic Planning Board (EPB) and Ministry of Strategy and Finance at the top. Park also purged the bureaucrats that under Syngman Rhee had established rent-seeking relationships with private industry³⁶ (Lie, 1998, p. 53).

The Ministry of Agriculture, as all other ministries, became subordinate to the Economic Planning Board and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance that allocated financial resources to preferred productive sectors and companies. Agricultural cooperatives and credit institutions on the local and provincial level were nationalized and centralized in the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation under the direct control by MAFF in 1961 during the period of military emergency rule (Burmeister, 1999, p. 114). Agricultural research and extension services were consolidated in the Office of Rural Development (ORD), also under the control of MAFF (Burmeister, 1990b, p. 205). The rural infrastructure development was centralized by consolidating local and provincial irrigation associations under the Union of Land Improvement Association, which would later become the Korea Rural Community Corporation (KRCC). Finally, the Agriculture and Fisheries Development Corporation (AT Corp) was established in 1967 to handle both domestic and international trade in food commodities.

³⁶ Whether the purge led to a more effective and professional bureaucracy is debatable. David Kang sees little difference in the composition or qualifications of bureaucrats between the Rhee and Park regimes. What did make a difference according to Kang was the enforcement of compliance under Park, which to some extent can be explained by the very different tasks that Lee and Park undertook. (D. C. Kang, 2002, p. 65)

These institutions would all come to play a significant role in the rural modernization program of the 1970s. What is notable here is not only the process of centralization of agricultural institutions during the early period of Park Chung-Hee's reign, but how the organization of the agricultural sector differed from other industrial sectors important to the Korean government. The developmental deal that Park struck with a handful of chaebol families allowed the government to control significant parts of the industrial sectors through personal relations. This was however not a possibility in the agricultural sector comprised of millions of small landowners. Thus, the strategy for reigning in these millions of small producers under the control of the state was done through the centralization of agricultural organizations into a few government and parastatal organizations such as the National Agriculture Cooperative Federation (NACF). Larry Burmeister describes how NACF's structure characterized the centralized control of agricultural institutions:

"An elaborate organizational interlock subordinated the NACF to the MAFF and other state agencies. The highest NACF executives were appointed by the South Korean president following MAFF recommendations. Representatives of state agencies most involved in directing NACF activities formed an important decision-making bloc of the Board of Directors." (Burmeister, 1999, p. 115).

Thus, the most significant organizational consequences of agricultural policy in the 1960s was the centralization of almost every aspect of agricultural production and distribution such as extension services, agricultural infrastructure, agricultural credit, agricultural inputs and marketing under MAFF, which in turn was under the control of the Economic Planning Board and the Ministry of Strategy and Finance.

The Squeezing of the Agricultural Sector

Park Chung-Hee and several other high-ranking military officers who originated from rural areas in North Gyeongsang Province initially led them to focus more heavily on rural development than Syngman Rhee did. For example, the military government increased access to low-interest agricultural credit and offered to take over private high interest loans that had become commonplace during the Rhee regime (Cheng, 1990, p. 159; Hsiao, 1981, p. 86). But by the end of designing the First Five-Year Economic Development Plan, the focus on agriculture had been relegated to the bottom of development priorities. The agricultural policy was in effect designed to squeeze the agricultural sector for the purpose of maximizing industrial growth (Hsiao, 1981, pp. 87–88).

President Park reneged on the interim military government's promise to continue fertilizer subsidies to farmers, and scrapped the previous relatively liberal credit policies. Instead, Park emphasized new land development, technological improvement, and greater market efficiency (Hsiao, 1981, p. 87). It was to this purpose the abovementioned state agencies such as KRCC (land improvement), ORD (agricultural research), and AFDC (marketing) were established. Park Chung-Hee did announce a rural development program as early as in 1962 in conjunction with the formation of the abovementioned rural development institutions under MAFF. The implementation of rural development projects, however, was characterized by limited funds and a top-down blanket approach that did little to improve rural living conditions (W. W. Boyer & Ahn, 1991, p. 32).

Economic growth between 1962 and 1971 averaged 9.7 percent and the gross national product grew from USD 2.5 billion in 1961 to USD 12.4 billion in 1971 (Boyer & Ahn 1991, p. 32). However, industrialization led to a shifting of balance in urban-rural relations. Despite the fact that food self-sufficiency was stated as a target in the first two five year plans under Park Chung-Hee, economic development policies favored

industrialization at the expense of agriculture (J. Boyer, 2010; Hsiao, 1981). Food imports continued to play a central role in food supply policies. U.S. Food aid actually increased during the 1960s even though total aid dropped. The value of PL480 rose from 42.6 million USD in 1960 to 122.3 million USD in 1964. Total volume of U.S. food aid increased steadily from 669,000 metric tons in 1965 to 3.6 million tons in 1972 or one-fourth of South Korean grain consumption (Hsiao, 1981, p. 242).

Food imports through aid thus continued to play a significant role in Korean food and agricultural politics. It limited the government's need to invest in agriculture, continued to generate revenues for the government, and kept agricultural prices low, thus indirectly subsidizing industrial sector development during these early years of export-oriented industrialization. Therefore, economic development policy remained underwritten by PL480 through the first phases of rapid industrialization (Philip McMichael & Kim, 1994). The large amounts of food aid in the 1960s were, according to Hsiao, not pushed by the U.S. government, but rather strategically requested by the Park regime. Because food aid distribution was directly under government control, revenues from the sale of PL480 and mandatory grain collections were a major source of income for the administration. Hsiao argues that PL480 "...allowed and encouraged the Park government to take an industrial bias and at the same time to maintain its stranglehold on the country's grain supply, and through it, the agricultural sector" (Hsiao, 1981, p. 243). The squeezing of the agricultural sector also supplied industrialization efforts with the cheap labor. Millions of young people migrated from the countryside in search of economic opportunities³⁷ and wages could be kept low by the continued influx of new workers as well as the cheap food guaranteed by PL480.

³⁷ South Korea experienced a population boom especially between 1955 and 1966. Because of the lack of economic opportunities and land in rural areas, many people had few options than to migrate to urban centers looking for education and employment in the new industrial sectors. Between 1960 and 1975, rural to urban migration averaged 445,000 people a year. Urban population grew from 28 percent to 50.9 percent during this period (J.-S. Shin & Chang, 2005, p. 19).

On the domestic side, the Grain Management Law originally introduced by the Syngman Rhee government in 1950 remained the central pillar in keeping consumer prices low in combination of food aid and government collection of land taxes in the form of grains. The government used various practices to maintain low food prices for urban consumers including dumping surplus rice on the market during harvest season and closure of commercial channels, thereby forcing producers to sell to the government at below market prices. The consequence was that productivity gains in rice cultivation were limited and total production of rice remained stagnant in the 1960s, leading to a need to import rice from overseas beginning in 1966 (Francks et al., 1999, p. 110). By 1971, South Korea's food self-sufficiency rate was at 69.4 percent (Young & Dong, 1981, p. 55).

Discouraging Rice Consumption

By the time Park Chung-Hee rose to power, Koreans, especially those in urban areas, had already been accustomed to a western diet. Under Park, the promotion of wheat and dairy became a national effort. Park instituted a range of programs that highlighted the nutritional and ideational superiority of dairy and wheat based foods. The economic objective was to limit consumption of rice and increase consumption of the cheaper wheat and dairy products. The Korean government was interested in changing diets for both economic, political, and ideological reasons. First, food aid from the U.S. saved money and generated government revenue. Second, this revenue could in turn be spent purchasing industrial and military equipment from the U.S. and maintaining a U.S. military presence in the country. Third, the Korean government sought to raise healthy citizens who could withstand potential aggressions from the North, and a western diet was considered the superior way to raise strong and healthy citizens. The General School Lunch Program was introduced in 1968, and it provided each child – whose parents paid for it – with a piece of factory-produced white bread and/or a cup

of powdered milk³⁸ dissolved in water (K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 319). By 1977, 800,000 children participated in the school lunch program. But the purported nutritional value of wheat-based foods was not the only rationale for their promotion. Korean authorities actively discouraged the consumption of rice on patriotic grounds. Campaigns emphasized the backwardness of a rice-based diet and the detrimental effects rice consumption had on the economy in terms of foreign exchange expenditures (K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 345). Simply put, eating rice was backward and unpatriotic.

These programs became increasingly systematic in the 1960s and 1970s, focusing especially on educating consumers about the superiority of a western diet based on PL480 products (C.-H. Lee, 2013, p. 35). The Korean school lunch was one of the action areas for re-educating Koreans about “proper” diets. School meals were provided by UNICEF and CARE in the aftermath of the Korean War to ease malnutrition and starvation, but USAID took over the school lunch program in 1966 as part of a new food aid contract, and the system was consolidated with the creation of the Department for School Lunches in 1968. For the U.S., the program was driven not just by humanitarian concerns but economic and political objectives as well. South Korea was at the front-line of the Cold War and the U.S. was interested in developing a healthy work- and military force that could withstand Communist expansion. Secondly, the U.S. was interested in developing future export markets for its agricultural products in the developing world (K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 318).

The government did not stop at informational campaigns. As part of the campaign to encourage western diets, the government introduced lunch box inspections. Teachers would inspect lunch boxes and praise the children who brought

³⁸ According to Park, milk was in short supply and many schools did not offer milk. Park questions the nutritional value of the school lunch programs. She cites a study conducted in 1969 of 2130 children at five schools in Seoul in which it was found that the school meal only provided 465 calories, while children bringing home made lunch boxes received on average between 560 and 830 calories (Park 2013:324).

boiled rice mixed with other grains. Children also participated in various school contests in which they produced essays, posters, slogans, and songs on the virtues of reducing rice consumption. Meanwhile, South Korea managed to contribute to the government's foreign currency savings by increasing rice exports primarily to Japan, reaching 50,000 MT in 1966 (Young & Dong, 1981, p. 50).

The government thus appealed to both the national desire to be seen as "advanced" in the eyes of the world and to be patriotic in a country where "unpatriotic" behavior was quickly associated with harboring pro-north viewpoints. The re-orientation towards westernized diets runs somewhat counter to Desoucey's (2010) definition of gastronationalism inasmuch as the particular foods were not wedded to notions of cultural traditions, but rather to notions of cultural aspirations. However, it does fall in line with Nelson's treatment of consumer nationalism in which consumption is wedded not only to an idealized past, but also to an idealized national future (Nelson, 2000, p. 20). The government campaigns played on these desires of national advancement and greatness, which were synonymous with westernization. The programs discouraging rice consumption enrolled consumers in a powerful control apparatus that targeted adults and children to eat according to the macro-economic and political objectives of the state. This kind of dietary patriotic mobilization were reinforced under Park Chung-Hee, and it would be used by successive governments, even after political liberalization, to "guide" consumption behavior according to broader economic and political objectives.

From the moment of independence until the late 1960s, state policies thus favored dependence on food imports rather than national self-sufficiency. It allowed successive governments to focus on industrialization, rather than agricultural modernization and rural development that could have augmented national self-sufficiency. Food imports through PL480 was a major source of food and more importantly a vital revenue source for the government. The centralization of the state

bureaucracy at the beginning of the 1960s, further entrenched this policy preference for food imports and left little autonomy in the hands of agricultural producers now organized in the centralized and politically controlled cooperatives. Inter-sectoral politics and especially the state's priority of strengthening industrial-military capacity determined agro-food policy during the 50s and 60s in favor of a food import model.

The 'Big Push' for Agricultural Self-Sufficiency 1971 - 1979

Deteriorating economic conditions for farmers by the end of 1960s led to changes in agricultural price policy. In 1968, the government decided to push the farm gate price of rice higher in order to support farmers (Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006, p. 135). In 1970, the government introduced a two-tier price scheme for barley and rice in which the protection of both consumers (continued low prices) and producers (higher rice purchasing prices) became subsidized by the state (Hsiao, 1981, p. 93; Hanho Kim & Lee, 2003, p. 3). The dual-price support scheme implemented under the Grain Management Law would become the crux of the government-farmer relations in the coming decades. One reason for the implementation of the new scheme was the widening rural-urban income gap, which led to "excessive" migration to the cities and hesitations about the political legitimacy of the regime among the rural population (Francks et al., 1999, p. 121). On the international level, shifts in U.S. geo-political priorities, the broader global food system, and domestic political concerns led to a major policy shift in how to secure food supplies. 1970 was the last year that the U.S. provided PL480 food aid in local currency, thus creating a greater burden on the country's balance of payments. Secondly, the PL480 Title II program designed to provide direct donations of food aid also ended in 1970 (Hsiao, 1981, p. 244). As a result, South Korea could no longer rely on PL480 to generate revenue and meet food needs at virtually no cost (Burmeister, 1990b, p. 206).

Another pressing concern for Park Chung-Hee was the withdrawal of 20,000 U.S. forces in 1970 and the underlying shift in focus of U.S. foreign policy under the Nixon Doctrine (Woo, 1991, pp. 122–125). This left the Park regime with a weakened defense against North Korea, a country that still remained economically and industrially ahead of South Korea in spite of the advancements South Korea had achieved (Burmeister, 1990b, p. 202; Lie, 1998, p. 78). The heightened security threat and declining rural political support for Park in the 1971 presidential elections, led Park to impose martial law in 1972 and install a new constitution, known as Yusin, which gave the President even more power and allowed him to stay in office for an unlimited number of terms. The Yusin constitution was in effect the legalization of dictatorship, but Park was also well aware that to legitimize his rule he needed to gain back the confidence of rural voters. The 1972 Five-year National Economic Development Plan set out a significantly different path than the previous two five-year plans under Park Chung-Hee. Policy priorities were now given to self-sufficiency and national economic autonomy. This had significant impact on the policies for national development. New industrial development policies sought to transition from light industry to heavy industries (Steel, chemicals, automotive, shipbuilding) in order to bolster military capacity. In addition, unlike the previous decades during which aid, grants, and open access to the U.S. and Japanese markets had financed industrialization, this new round of heavy investments were to be financed by foreign loans and domestic savings. Managing foreign currency became of central importance to the regime and augmenting domestic agricultural production served this goal.

Agricultural Modernization and Import Substitution

As part of new government priorities, President Park Chung-Hee announced a set of new and ambitious rural modernization programs to increase domestic agricultural production and improve rural livelihood in 1971. The stagnation of rural economic

growth was becoming a problem for Park Chung-Hee as the rural population was an important political pillar for the regime and its political legitimacy in turn was in part hinging upon promises of growth with equity. In the 1971 presidential elections, some rural voters turned against Park and voted for the opposition candidate Kim Dae-Jung (M. Moore, 1984, p. 584). The mobilization of agricultural producers for food self-sufficiency thus made sense both politically and economically. The rural population still made up fifty percent of the population, and self-sufficiency would improve the balance of trade so vital to the government's industrialization strategy.³⁹ By boosting domestic agricultural production, foreign exchange savings could be reserved for building heavy industries (Francks et al., 1999, p. 144). A productivist food and agriculture policy and strict food import restrictions now became central in the government's attempt to finance heavy industrialization. This strategy required agricultural sector investments and modernization and hence a more explicit and direct role of agriculture in the national development project (Burmeister, 1990b, p. 205).

The agricultural institutions set up by Park almost a decade earlier had so far not received the attention required to prop up domestic agricultural production, but by the 1970s, their resources and powers expanded. The rural and agricultural modernization efforts centered on four main pillars: The mobilization of the rural population through local government agencies under the supervision of the Ministry of Home Affairs, provision of agricultural credit and fertilizer through the NACF, strengthening of R&D and extension services through ORD, and the establishment of the rural modernization program New Community Movement or Saemaeul Undong, (W. W. Boyer & Ahn, 1991; Brandt, 1979; Burmeister, 2006). For this reason, the 1970s has also been labeled the apogee of the statist Korean agricultural system (Burmeister, 2000; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006). The statist period of agriculture was defined by the deep

³⁹ In 1975, for example, grain imports amounted to 689 Million USD or 14 percent of the country's foreign exchange earnings (Young & Dong, 1981, p. 51).

penetration of the state and parastatal organizations described earlier into the everyday economic, social and political life of rural Korea. Through these institutions and the new Saemaeul Undong movement, the central state bureaucracy controlled virtually every aspect of agricultural production and rural life and used this control to augment agricultural production through both coercion and encouragement.

The financial budget allocations for agriculture were not higher in the third five-year plan (1972-1976) than in previous plans. According to Young and Dong, agricultural investment as share of total government expenditure was 9.8 percent between 1962 and 1966, 6.4 percent between 1967 and 1971, and 8.9 percent in the Third Five Year Plan (Young & Dong, 1981). These actual expenditures were however all much lower than budgeted in all three plans. But budgetary allocations were just one aspect of agricultural investments. The government also dictated inter-sectoral transfers of commodities such as cement and machinery, which helped alleviate the industrial overcapacity that many heavy industries faced, while providing raw materials for the modernization of rural infrastructure. These commodities were distributed to farmers via the Saemaeul Undong program or sold to farmers using agricultural credits controlled by the NACF.

Saemaeul Undong and Rural Mobilization

The most controversial initiative of these modernization programs was Saemaeul Undong. Park Chung-Hee conceptualized it in April of 1970 and the purpose was to provide the organizational and ideational foundation for rural and agricultural modernization and development. Saemaeul Undong was conceived to accelerate rural and agricultural modernization through a mobilization of the peasantry for the goal of national self-sufficiency. Saemaul's principal objective was to raise the awareness and spirit to "...cure the malaise of idleness and complacency which sprouts in the shade of stability" (Speech by Park Chung-Hee cited in Moore, 1984, p. 580). It was a self-help

program where the rural masses would help themselves escape from poverty through a change of mindset and their own labor.

The “awakening” program was initiated in the winter of 1970-71 by providing 335 free bags of cement to villages throughout South Korea, which the villagers then could use to construct improvements according to their own wishes. The initiative proved very successful and welcomed by most villages that still lacked very basic infrastructure including roads, dikes, barns, etc. By 1973, the government expanded the program significantly and introduced an element of competition in order to accelerate development and reward the villages that showed the most fervent spirit of modernization. Villages were classified as undeveloped, developing, and developed according to a set of evaluation criteria including level of organization, communal facilities, and development performance (W. W. Boyer & Ahn, 1991, p. 38). In the early stages, the government only supported those villages that appeared to make the most significant improvements thus creating inter-village competition for funds and resources, but in later stages, the program distributed resources more widely (W. W. Boyer & Ahn, 1991, p. 38).

The Saemaeul Undong organization ran parallel to the conventional lines of hierarchical authority at the village level. The organization’s headquarters in Seoul, under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs, dictated the direction of rural modernization and its organization partly embedded in existing bureaucratic structures and partly outside in new institutional structures developing into a powerful tool of political power for the now openly dictatorial Park Administration (W. W. Boyer & Ahn, 1991; M. Moore, 1984). The ideology behind Saemaeul Undong was in Moore’s retrospective observation based on “...a kind of populism which bears more than a passing resemblance to Maoism” (Moore, 1984, p. 580). It seems however, that most villages in the 1970s were engaged enthusiastically in the Saemaeul mobilization

because of the concrete material benefits accrued such as roads, irrigation canals, and improved housing conditions (S.-M. Han, 2004).

The Green Revolution Comes to South Korea

Inspired by Green Revolution initiatives elsewhere in Asia, new cultivation techniques, seed varieties, and machinery were introduced. In the late 1960s, research collaboration with the U.S. funded International Rice Research Institute⁴⁰ in the Philippines and the ORD developed a new high-yielding rice variety. This new breed, given the name Tongil (Unification) rice, was introduced to Korean farmers in 1971. The proliferation of Tongil was supported by a massive campaign by ORD to convince farmers to shift to this new breed through credit and price incentives and sometimes by physically destroying fields with non-Tongil rice (Moore 1984:686). Government officials, police, village chiefs, and fellow farmers were all mobilized to ensure that the government's mandate of growing Tongil rice was obeyed (M. Moore, 1984, p. 209). By 1977, more than half of the rice acreage was planted with Tongil varieties.

Mechanization was another aspect of agricultural modernization. In 1972, there were only 272 tractors in South Korea. Eight years later, this number had increased to almost 3000 by allocating credit through NACF for the purchase of domestically produced machinery (Burmeister, 1990b, p. 213; Feffer, 2004, p. 17). Budget allocations for rural infrastructure also quadrupled in the 1970s with investments in dikes and irrigation systems. Finally, fertilizer use was expanded by NACF at government-determined prices. The Park regime had encouraged the establishment of a national fertilizer industry a decade earlier, as a precursor to the development of a national petro-chemical industry. The production of domestic fertilizer was limited in the 1960s

⁴⁰ For the role of IRRI in the dissemination of Green Revolution technologies throughout the Third World see Smith (E. Smith, 2009).

but with the new food self-sufficiency strategy, domestic fertilizer production increased from 599MT in 1971 to 1438MT in 1979.

The concerted effort did bring results in terms of boosting rice production. By the late 1970's South Korea became self-sufficient in rice for the first time since World War II. From 1971 to 1977 domestic rice production increased by 33 percent. Production of fruit, vegetables, livestock, and dairy also grew significantly during this time (Francks et al., 1999, p. 136). The modernization strategy also accelerated the transformation from subsistence production to commercial production, which rose from 24.3 percent in 1961 to 75 percent of agricultural output in 1980 (Y.-S. Chang, 1989). Producers still sold less than half their grain production on commercial terms, and most of those sales were to the NACF or as repayments for land to the government (Y.-S. Chang, 1989, p. 46). The restrictions on agricultural imports also raised the need to diversify commercial agricultural production from grain production to also include vegetables, livestock and fruit in particular. During the 1970s the total share of agricultural value from these three sectors from 29 percent to 41.7 percent (Francks et al., 1999, p. 137).

Protecting National Markets, Regulating Consumption

Despite rising farm-gate prices, consumer prices were kept at a low by selling rice to consumers below the farm-gate purchase price. The government absorbed the cost of keeping farm gate prices high and consumer prices low. This was considered economically acceptable, as the alternative was to import food from overseas using precious foreign exchange (Burmeister, 1988, p. 69). The rate of loss incurred on rice purchases, however, increased every year from 8.3 percent in 1973 to a peak of 27.2 percent in 1979. In fact, grain-purchasing programs was the single largest item of lending to the government from the Bank of Korea. It is estimated that the MAFF incurred losses upwards of 4.5 billion USD from 1970 to 1986 (Francks et al., 1999, pp.

144–146). The NACF played a central role as the marketing channel for rice. In 1971, 13 percent of the total rice harvest was marketed through NACF. By 1979, this number had risen to 23 percent. The rice-purchasing program subsidized both the rural and urban household economy in order to continue industrialization plans as well as build tighter linkages between industrial sectors (fertilizer, machinery, construction, and cement) and domestic agriculture. For farmers the dual price support scheme had significant effects on farm household income. In 1970, farm household income was only 75.6 percent of urban household income but by 1974, farm household income rose above urban incomes (Francks et al., 1999, p. 141).

The government also instituted severe restrictions on imports of strategically important agricultural commodities to limit foreign exchange expenditures. Since all agricultural imports were managed directly by government agencies, rice, soybean, beef, pork, and chicken all enjoyed high levels of protection by the second half of the 1970s (K. Anderson, 1983, p. 332) while grains such as wheat, corn, and barley, in which South Korea was not self-sufficient was allowed to the extent that the government deemed necessary. The government would estimate import quotas for all agricultural commodities each year. As a result, many agricultural products were in fact unavailable to consumers even if they desired these goods. According to Laura Nelson, even the wealthiest had to accept a limited market for foreign products, food or manufactured goods all in the name of national development (Nelson, 2000, p. 85). For most people, this meant that what was consumed was more or less dictated directly by the central government that regulated both supply and demand.

Harvest Failure and Economic Liberalization Pressures

The years from 1971 to 1979 were thus characterized by a heavy industrial development strategy and an import-substitution food supply strategy. It was a decade of agricultural sector articulation with the industrial economy (Burmeister, 1992). Agro-

food strategies in the 1970's and the objective of self-sufficiency became closely linked to economic development policies in which growth in the industrial economy financed economic growth and development in the rural and agricultural sectors. Farm households and agricultural production were systemically drawn into the national economy supporting capital accumulation, social incorporation, and political legitimation (Burmeister, 1992, p. 150). By the end of the 1970s, average rural income was again higher than urban incomes, and the country had become self-sufficient in its most important food staple, rice and other important grains. The agricultural modernization also had wider economic effects. Surplus capacity in construction manufacturing industries found new markets in the rural modernization program and the improved purchasing power of rural households provided direct benefits to manufacturing industries by enabling rural consumption of manufactured goods. As such, the "Big Push" period of the 1970s was a time in which agricultural development, rural development, and national development had clear synergetic links.

These policies however, did not prove sustainable economically or politically. On the national level, the government worked up massive deficits in its nationalized grain and fertilizer operations, and the international economy was beginning to favor market liberalization. As such, changes in the larger global economy were already in motion to challenge the statist and economic protectionist food strategy. These global pressures along with changes in food diets induced by rising incomes led to new challenges for South Korea's self-sufficiency strategy. Another aspect that stopped the momentum of the big modernization program was a series of bad harvests in the late 1970s. Following a record harvest in 1977, rice output declined in the following two seasons and in 1980, the rice harvest was disastrous due to a cold summer, a climatic variation that the Tongil variety did not respond to well. Rice harvest fell from 5.5 million tons in 1979 to four million tons in 1980. Consequently, Korea had to import grains worth 1 billion USD mostly from the U.S. and Japan (The Christian Science Monitor, 1981). South Korea

agreed to buy all available stocks of California rice and wished to buy the rest in Japan. U.S. rice growers however, heavily protested this move as Japan had signed an agreement with the U.S. to not export its heavily subsidized rice. The incident led to a scandal that to many Koreans became an example of U.S. imperialism and fueled the rising anti-U.S. sentiment that grew throughout the 1980s. The pressure from the U.S. resulted in Korea maintaining a desire to remain self-sufficient in rice despite heavy external pressure to liberalize agricultural markets (Henriques, 1993). The antagonistic relationship between the Korean agricultural sector towards U.S. trade policy saw its birth in the economic crisis of 1979-1980. For the student movement, pro-democracy activists, and the farmers, U.S. pressures for trade liberalization became symbolic of U.S. imperialism, giving rise to anti-U.S. sentiment. In the following decades, Korean agriculture would come to operate in an environment of increasing external trade pressures and domestic political unrest.

The 1970s was as such a period in which food self-sufficiency became a major objective of national development policy for both geo-political and domestic political reasons. The self-sufficiency drive was implemented through a heavily centralized bureaucratic system and in an environment of authoritarianism leaving little autonomy to agricultural producers. Agricultural inputs, infrastructure, credit, and marketing were all controlled by organizations run by political appointees from Park's now explicitly dictatorial regime. Meanwhile food import restrictions grew significantly to prevent spending precious foreign currency. The combination of agricultural modernization and heavy import restrictions led to a more self-sufficient food system, for a few years at least.

Political and Economic Liberalization

The biggest political event of 1979 was the assassination of Park Chung-Hee on October 26 by the head of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. It followed riots that

began in Busan when the opposition and Busan native politician and later president Kim Yong Sam was expelled from the National assembly during the summer of 1979 (Lie, 1998, p. 117). The assassination in 1979 led to domestic political chaos. Combined with the wider international economic recession in 1980, the assassination signaled a new economic and political order for South Korea. In the turmoil following Park Chung-Hee's death, another military general, Chun Do-Hwan seized power and repressed violently, as in the Gwangju Massacre, opposition to his rule (Haggard et al, 1994, pp. 79–82; Katsiaficas, 2012).

Chun Do-Hwan had to operate in a global economy much different from the one Park Chung-Hee had ruled. South Korea's trade surplus had increased in the 1970s, and the U.S., its largest trading partner, was no longer ready to accept the heavy protection of South Korean economic sectors from foreign imports. The world economic crises of the 1970's had put the Keynesian mode of economic governance into question and the U.S. had already abandoned the Bretton Woods Agreement in 1970.⁴¹ With the assassination of Park Chung-Hee, the Saemaeul Undong program also lost its momentum. The organization itself continued mostly as a political tool for President Chun Do-Hwan, the economic importance of the agricultural sector declined and the government reoriented its focus towards export industries.

South Korea had managed to avoid major economic liberalization until 1980, but the economic crisis caused by slumping exports, high debt load carried by South Korean industries, and inflation threw South Korea into its worst economic crisis since the Korean War (Woo, 1991, p. 179). To overcome the crisis, the new president accepted loans from the IMF and the World Bank. In return, South Korea committed itself to a range of structural adjustments of its economy including opening up of markets and reducing government spending on agriculture among other things. South Korea

⁴¹ South Korea entered the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) in 1967, but restricted imports of many agricultural commodities important to domestic production such as rice, barley, maize, etc.

agreed to open up markets for U.S. wheat, tobacco and cereals. Otherwise South Korean industrial exports would be subjected to penalties from its major trading partners because farm protectionism limited export markets for surplus agricultural producers such as the U.S., Australia and New Zealand (Philip McMichael & Kim, 1994). The concession was unpopular among the general population, but it was pushed forward by the president's economic advisers, most of whom had been trained in the U.S. in neo-classical economics (Woo, 1991, p. 191).⁴²

Decline of the Rural Economy and Bifurcation Policy

The rice harvest failures of the early 1980s was the first of a range of economic setbacks that led to the economic deterioration among Korean farm households (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 40). From 1983 to 1988, farm household debt increased from 1.3 million KRW to 3.131 million KRW and the debt to household income rose from 27.3 percent in 1983 to 38.5 percent in 1988 (Burmeister, 1992, p. 160). The debt increase was caused by declining market conditions, capital investments made as part of rural modernization programs, and rising rural consumption expenditures. Compared to their urban counterparts, the consumption and education expenses of farm households were to a larger degree financed by debt, which led to economic and social marginalization of farm families in the 1980s compared their urban counterparts (Burmeister, 1992, p. 153).

For the agricultural sector, structural adjustment meant liberalization of trade in select agricultural commodities, but the government maintained the right to protect important agricultural markets such as beef and rice for balance-of-payment reasons. Thus, despite economic liberalization following the acceptance of IMF loan packages, some key agricultural markets remained protected. This government strategy of

⁴² This shift was a significant departure from earlier cadres of government technocrats who were trained in the Japanese educational and bureaucratic system with its more Listian perspectives on economic development (H.-J. Chang, 2002; Woo, 1991).

protecting strategically important sectors such as rice and beef while allowing liberalization of other agricultural markets is described by McMichael and Kim (1994) as an agricultural bifurcation strategy in which a: "...subdivision into a heavily protected national circuit of rice, as the basic food staple, and other agro-food circuits involving varying degrees of international commodity relations, such as the livestock complex and processed flour goods." (Philip McMichael & Kim, 1994, p. 31). The bifurcation strategy protected the domestic production of rice, fruits, and beef and other products, but at the same time gradually opened up for imports of, among other things, livestock feed.

Structural adjustments did not mean that government initiatives to promote domestic production ended, but rather that competition in certain agricultural markets such as tobacco and cotton intensified. Some domestic agricultural sectors, which for more than a decade had been heavily protected on the grounds of national food self-sufficiency and maintaining a trade surplus, now had to compete with imports. To compensate for this economic pressure on the agricultural sector, the new government encouraged farmers to specialize in new growth sectors such as livestock and fruits by earmarking agricultural credit to these purposes and propping up import quota restrictions in those sectors. The government introduced the Future Farmer's Loan program in 1980, in which young farmers could receive low interest loans. Encouraged by the government, many young farmers decided to specialize in livestock farming (J.-S. Choi, Zhou, & Cox, 2002, p. 7).

The rapid expansion of livestock production in the 1980s came to be defined by the bifurcation policy. While domestic markets for livestock were protected, the government gradually abandoned attempts to develop domestic feed grain sources. Instead, feed grain from overseas became a main source of feed for the expanding livestock sector. Consumption of the main feed grain, corn, grew from 2 million tons in 1980 to 5 million metric tons in 1989. Total corn imports grew from 2.4 million metric

tons to 6.1 million metric tons during the same period. (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014). Thus, during this seven-year period feed grain consumption almost tripled while consumption for other uses only grew by 36 percent. The consequences for South Korea's food import balance were significant. The total import of corn, wheat, and soybean meal grew from 4.8 million metric tons in 1980 to 8.5 million metric tons in 1989. In chapter five, I will discuss how this dependence on imported feed developed in the cattle sector. The numbers show that the expansion of livestock production in the 1980s under trade protection was a key contributing factor to rising grain imports (See appendix A). But the 1980s was not only a time of rising livestock production and feed import dependence; it was also decade in which the centralized control of agricultural production loosened due to changes in domestic politics and the world economy.

Political Disillusionment and Political Liberalization

The brutal suppression of the 1980 Gwangju Uprising by Chun Do Hwan sowed the seeds for more organized political discontent which had been brewing under Park's dictatorial regime of the 70s. Political mobilization against the military regime, which started in religious and intellectual circles in the 1970s gradually spread to different sectors of society during the 1980s, including the agricultural sector. Dissatisfied university students and religious organizations expanded their political activities to rural areas in order to mobilize and organize farmers against the ruling military regime. Farmers had become increasingly disillusioned with the government as the material gains achieved during the big push for rural modernization in the 1970s could not be sustained. They came to regard the structural adjustment policies that demanded agricultural trade liberalization as a sign of the government's failure to protect them and hence questioned the legitimacy of its rule. As a result, many farmers joined anti-state political movements in the 1980s, demanding democracy and trade protection.

The pressure from broad-based social movements during the 1980s and the general softening of Cold War politics eroded Chun Do-Hwan's ability to stay in power (Lie, 1998, p. 151). The heightened international attention on South Korean politics due to the upcoming 1988 Olympic Games further spurred political dissidents to demand democratic elections and the end to Chun Do-Hwan's rule. He was forced to step down in 1987 and was replaced by his second in command General Roh Tae-Woo. Nevertheless strikes and demonstrations continued until the summer of 1987 when Roh Tae-Woo announced that democratic elections would be held in December 1987. Even though Roh was elected president in the first free elections since 1960, owing to the pro-democracy opposition being split by internal disagreement, he was still under pressure to implement democratization reforms.

In the agricultural sector, democratic reforms included reform of the centralized national agricultural cooperatives (Burmeister, 2000; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006). According to the new cooperative law, election for cooperative leadership positions were to be chosen through a "non-partisan" election format. In effect, this meant that national and local leadership was no longer appointed by the MAFF but by the cooperative's members, and cooperative leadership in turn had to answer directly to its electorate (Steinberg, 1994, p. 165). The cooperative organizations that for decades had been the extended arm of the MAFF and the EPB thus increasingly had to justify their right to exist based on defending the interests of farmers. Burmeister called this shift a transition from parastatal control to corporatist intermediation (Burmeister, 1999). But the democratization of the agricultural cooperatives also opened up for a whole new arena of agro-food politics.

The structure of the cooperatives, which expanded into every rural village, had been an essential tool in the government's control of rural life and production. In the process of political liberalization, this penetrating structure enabled the cooperatives to become a significant political pressure group despite the continued declining

importance of agriculture in the national economy. The cooperatives now answerable to its members rather than the state began to demand a strengthening of agricultural protectionism. According to Steinberg, agricultural protectionism became one of the most important matters of domestic political importance in South Korea in the late 1980s and 1990s (Steinberg, 1994, p. 159) owing to the organizational power that the cooperatives could mobilize against government liberalization. This power was not based in their economic importance in the economy, but rather in their organizational power. But protectionism was not the only a matter of concern to agricultural producers. Agricultural protectionism also became one of the defining aspects of U.S.-Korea relations. A survey in 1990 showed that 60 percent of the population held anti-American sentiments and a major reason was the pressure to open agricultural markets. 87 percent of respondents in the survey were strongly in favor of restricting agricultural imports⁴³. This anti-American sentiment in the general population and the role that the U.S. had played in forcing agricultural markets open made farmers, along with students, the most significant sources of anti-American sentiments (Steinberg, 1994, p. 159).

Political Liberalization of State Agricultural Institutions

Democracy ushered in a new era of intra-government tension as well. The Economic Planning Board under the direct command of the President no longer commanded the power it had under the Yushin regime and the MAFF was no longer just the extended arm of the EPB. The MAFF was staffed by bureaucrats supporting farmers' demands for agricultural protectionism, unlike the free-trade economists on the Economic Planning Board. For this reason self-sufficiency in rice and beef in particular and protection of the agricultural sector in general became the major focus for MAFF in the 1980s, often in direct opposition to the central economic agencies' objectives (Burmeister, 1990a, p.

⁴³ The question of how agricultural sector politics became part of a broader political debate about trade liberalization will be treated in depth in chapters six and seven.

718). Under the more liberal political system, the MAFF was able to build political alliances with the now more powerful National Assembly⁴⁴, farmers, and civil society (Burmeister, 1990a, p. 718). In the 1988 National Assembly election, the ruling Democratic Justice Party that had been in majority since the founding of South Korea lost its majority. The Reunification and Democracy Party (RDP) was the largest victor of the three opposition parties with 70 seats out of 299. The party was led by Kim Dae-Jung, who would later become president, a longtime dissident who had been imprisoned and under house arrest for years in the 1970s and sentenced to death in 1980. The RDP's voter base was in the Jeolla Provinces of the South West where agriculture was the main economic activity. For the first time since the 1940s, rural voters had overwhelmingly sided with the opposition and thus established a strong advocacy base in the National Assembly (Y. S. Lee, Hadwiger, & Lee, 1990, p. 422).

Thus, while the MAFF had to accept an opening of agricultural markets for some products, it defended the need to protect sectors of particular importance to Korean farmers including rice and livestock against the recommendations of the economic advisers sitting at the top of the government administration. In this struggle, MAFF became increasingly aligned with the opposition in the National Assembly in calling for price support for farmers, national food self-sufficiency, and protection of agricultural markets (Burmeister, 1990a). The MAFF after democratization thus, in some ways, became the defender of the continuation of agricultural protection policies while other ministries pushed for economic liberalization. The conflict between the interests of a domestically oriented agricultural sector on one hand and an export-oriented industrial economy on the other would be a central source of debate and conflict in South Korean politics both domestically and in international trade negotiations in which the

⁴⁴ The National Assembly's legislative oversight was restored in 1987 after being suspended under the two previous administrations, giving them the ability to limit the power of the president.

economic interests of the export-oriented chaebols clashed with the economic interests of farmers.

The 1980s was as such a period in which external pressures and the considerations of South Korea's export oriented industries took precedence over protecting domestic agriculture. 1980s however, was also a decade in which political opposition to the authoritarian state grew larger leading to political democratization in 1987. This also meant that farmers gained more control over the national agricultural cooperatives that had been extensions of the central government since the early 1960s. Political liberalization also softened the tight grip of the state apparatus by the President, the EPB and Ministry of Strategy and Finance and put more power into the hands of the National Assembly. This led to new political coalitions between MAFF and state run agricultural institutions, the National Assembly and agricultural cooperatives in opposing and slowing down the process of agricultural trade liberalization. The late 1980s in particular was as such a period where new and politically powerful inter-sectoral alliances enabled farmers to mobilize political support against trade liberalization and maintain a policy of national self-sufficiency in agricultural sectors particularly important to a majority of producers.

GATT disputes and the Uruguay Round Negotiations

South Korea acceded to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1967 at a time when GATT allowed considerable freedom for developing countries. Benefits such as non-reciprocity, infant industry protection, and balance-of-payment measures, which allowed Korea to ban imports of goods considered to have a negative impact on trade balances, made GATT an attractive option to an export-oriented developing economy (D. Ahn, 2003, p. 599). Korea gained access to a number of important export markets for its manufactured goods, while other sectors such as agriculture could remain relatively protected under the BOP exception and infant industry protection

clauses. In the 1980s, however, major trading partners wanted to curb those benefits. Major agricultural exporters such as Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S. pushed for greater trade liberalization as South Korea's trade surplus began to grow from the mid-1980s and South Korea was becoming a potentially lucrative market for agricultural products as consumer purchasing power increased.

The Uruguay Round Agreement of Agriculture of the GATT negotiations began in 1986. The main drive behind the negotiations was a push by major agricultural export nations who regarded the restricted trade opportunities in agriculture as asymmetrical in comparison to the more liberal trade in manufactured goods (Josling et al., 1994, p. 1). During the Uruguay Round of the GATT and the Agreement on Agriculture of the WTO, South Korea sought to reduce trade restrictions for important export oriented industries such as heavy manufacturing, electronics, and textiles. The GATT/WTO, however, argued that South Korea in return would have to eliminate agricultural protectionism, as it could no longer qualify for status as a developing country. Internally, South Korea was faced with a conflicting situation in which large corporate export oriented industries co-existed with a small-scale non-specialized and highly protected farm sector and a relatively under-capitalized domestically oriented food processing industry (OECD, 1999).

In 1989, South Korea initiated negotiations with the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand. The issue was South Korea's balance of payment exception (BOP) list under GATT Article XVIII:B, under which the government maintained 358 items including beef (D. Ahn, 2003, p. 603). The GATT dispute panel decided in 1989 that South Korean import restrictions based on BOP were not consistent with GATT guidelines. South Korea protested the decision over several meetings, but when the U.S. announced that they would impose a retaliation list of Korean exports to the U.S., if South Korea did not comply, the government gave in and signed a memorandum of understanding with the U.S. on April 26, 1990 (D. Ahn, 2003, p. 605). South Korea agreed to phase out all

non-compliant BOP restrictions by 1997 (Yoo, 1993, p. 133). This decision was domestically regarded as a visible concession to the Korean export manufacturing industries for whom the U.S. was the largest export market, a dependence that had increased steadily over the 1980s (Burmeister, 1990a, p. 718).

South Korea's engagement in negotiations on agriculture was hesitant because of the strong popular support that Korean agricultural producers could mobilize against liberalization of agriculture. Public protests by farmers and consumers against GATT and WTO were widespread during the late 1980s and early 1990s (Abelmann, 1996, p. 223). I will discuss these protests in greater detail in the coming chapters. The Korean food and agricultural market was very important to U.S. agricultural trade interests. In 1988, South Korea had become the second largest agricultural export market for the U.S. with purchases in the area of 2.25 USD billion in 1988 (Burmeister, 1990a, p. 716). In the end, South Korea agreed to open markets for all agricultural commodities except rice, but the opening of markets were still based on tariff provisions that usually only applied to developing countries, a category that South Korea no longer fell into. Yet South Korea was able to keep those provisions as a compromise (Josling et al., 1994, p. 75). Rice was the most sensitive area of negotiation for South Korea because of the important economic role it played for farmers and the important cultural role of rice production and consumption⁴⁵ (Abelmann, 1996, p. 223; Reinschmidt, 2007, p. 9). While other sectors such as livestock were scheduled to be liberalized, rice was able to maintain its protected status⁴⁶ (Burmeister, 2000, p. 443).

The outcome of the negotiations was that import quota restrictions on all agricultural commodities, except rice, were lifted and that tariffs would be reduced by 24 percent over a ten-year period. 285 agricultural commodities in total had their

⁴⁵ Ninety percent of all farmers in South Korea were engaged in rice farming at the time of negotiation. An estimated 50 percent of total farm income came from rice (Josling et al., 1994, p. 76).

⁴⁶ The minimum-access provisions of the URAA required Korea to gradually expand imports of rice from 1 percent of base- period domestic consumption in 1995 to 4 percent by 2004 (J. Choi, Sumner, & Lee, 2006, p. 109).

import quotas removed. 143 of these, including soybean, corn, barley, and potatoes, would be subject to tariffication and reduced by 10 percent over ten years. The Korean government would administer import of 97 of those commodities, thus still maintaining government control to some extent. The remaining 142 items, which had been subject to the agreement of opening markets since the BOP ruling in 1989 would see their tariff rate quotas eliminated over ten years. Items in this group included beef, poultry, pork, and dairy products. Finally, South Korea agreed to reduce subsidies on rice, barley, corn, soybean, and vegetables (Josling et al., 1994, pp. 76–77).

Agricultural Adjustment Policies

In order to adjust the agricultural sector to the new realities of an increasingly liberalized market, a number of initiatives were put into place to effect a restructuring. The UR round limited the government's ability to regulate domestic production putting limits to production-based subsidies such as Korea's long-standing farm gate price support schemes. The MAFF implemented direct payment systems instead as a form of basic income support in replacement of the former production-oriented system. The Korean government announced a 42 trillion KRW (40 billion USD) Agricultural Investment and Loan Program to strengthen the agricultural sector's competitiveness in 1992.⁴⁷ The program first scheduled to run until 1998 was later extended until 2004 with an additional 45 Trillion KRW (Y.-K. Lee & Kim, 2003, p. 5). This new program prompted by the UR negotiations was a significant shift in Korean agricultural policy from a more productivist-oriented approach to one of structural adjustment. A central aspect of the adjustment policies was to enhance the competitiveness through agricultural modernization and specialization targeted at a new generation of farmers

⁴⁷ Funds were intended for increased mechanization, readjustment of arable land, water resource development, agricultural facilities modernization, enlargement of farming size, technological development, training an elite farmers group, improvement of marketing structure, diversification of income sources, and improvement of rural life environment and welfare (Hanho Kim & Lee, 2003, p. 6).

(Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 416). Young, promising farmers selected on the basis of education levels and land holdings were offered low interest loans. By 1996, 30,000 young farmers had received these loans to assist in upgrading farm operations. Burmeister uses this example to illustrate how, even after economic liberalization, the state continued to pick winners according to old practices dating back to the statist period (Burmeister, 2000, p. 449). Other examples of adjustment policies was the 1992 lifting of land ceiling laws that since the 1950s had prohibited land ownership of more than three hectares,⁴⁸ as well as designating certain agricultural areas with high rice production potential as agricultural production zones.

To Burmeister, these initiatives of the 1990s were responses to the *disarticulation* of the non-specialized mini-farm structure in Korea. They were attempts to restructure the agricultural sector in the face of both declining relative farm household income as well as external trade pressures (Burmeister, 2000, pp. 449–450). The government significantly increased budget allocations to the agricultural and rural sectors from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s in terms of percentage of the total government budget.

This rise in budget allocations for the rural and agricultural sector was enabled by the declining power of the central government vis-a-vis the National Assembly, MAFF and agricultural cooperatives mounted pressures against the President's office, the EPB, and the Ministry of Trade and Industry. As such, the rise in government budget allocations for agriculture indicates that the power balances within the political environment under which agricultural policy formulation occurred had shifted. The statist system was no longer a monolithic state apparatus, but had grown into a much more prominent arena for negotiation with a multitude of political actors including

⁴⁸ Even with these ceilings on land holdings, absentee land ownership had increased significantly. As a result, tenancy rose to 31 per cent in 1985 (Lie, 1998, p. 134). The rise in tenant farming and absentee ownership can be contributed to the rural exodus in which people left rural areas but held onto the land as a safety measure.

ministries, assembly members, cooperatives and other producer organizations. The effects of these programs had little effect however. Agricultural growth did increase, but only at 1-3 percent in the 1990s (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 416).

Multi-functionality, Food Safety, and Cultural Protection of Food and Agriculture

With the diminished ability to protect Korean farmers using import restrictions, the government took a “cultural” turn to protect the interest of farmers who were infuriated by the government’s acceptance of agricultural trade liberalization. Patricia Goff argues in her study of culture industries in Free Trade Agreements that as the permeability of territorial borders increase, some states respond by reinforcing the invisible and conceptual borders to emphasize cultural particularity and collective identity that underpin the political community (Goff, 2000, p. 533). The government began to stress non-economic measures such as the “multi-functionality” of agriculture to defend the agricultural sector in international trade negotiations. During the Uruguay Round negotiations, South Korea, together with Japan and the European Union in particular, argued that non-trade concerns (NTC’s) such as national food security, cultural heritage, eco-systems services and socio-economic stability were important by-products of the agricultural sector (Sakamoto et al., 2007, p. 25). In 1999, multi-functionality was written into the new Korean Basic Law, which stated that agriculture is “...the key industry that performs economic and ‘public functions’ such as food security, environmental conservation, and balanced growth” (Cited in Sakamoto, Choi, & Burmeister, 2007, p. 31). Through the introduction of the multi-functionality clause in the UR negotiations, MAFF maintained the ability to financially support programs that were deemed necessary to protect domestic agriculture (Sakamoto et al., 2007, p. 32).

The cultural turn also manifested itself in new marketing campaigns launched by the NACF with financial support of the MAFF. One such campaign that would be central in developing a “culturally” based defense of domestic agriculture was the Sintoburi campaign, or Eat Korean campaign, which will be discussed in detail later. It was part of a broader package of campaigns targeting the “excessive consumption” of foreign goods that had spread in the late 1980s and that the government feared would threaten the country’s trade balance (Nelson, 2000). In 1990, The Korean government launched an anti-*gwasobi*, or “anti-excessive consumption” campaign in anticipation of trade liberalization. The campaign emphasized the importance of frugality and of buying Korean goods. People suspected of excessive consumption became subject to government scrutiny. For example, the Bank of Korea launched investigations into people who had spent more than 3000 USD on trips overseas, and people who purchased foreign cars were notified that their taxes would be subject to investigation (Nelson, 2000, p. 133). This was not the first time that nationalism was mobilized by Korean governments. The same was the case during the Park Chung-Hee regime during which frugality was an act of patriotism, but the prohibition against consumption of foreign goods – except cheap food aid and foreign travel – had been enforced through import and travel restrictions under Park’s rule. In the 1990s, consumer nationalism understood as consuming only domestically produced goods for the sake of the nation and living frugally became the main bulwark against trade liberalization.

In the agro-food sector, the government tried to support the domestic agricultural sector through a number of initiatives targeting the consumer. As domestic rice surpluses increased due to declining consumption and continued high production rates, the government refocused school lunch programs to absorb the rice surpluses in the early 1990s. This meant a drastic departure from earlier school lunch programs that had encouraged wheat and dairy based consumption. Wheat and Western

nutrition recommendations were no longer promoted as symbols of advancement, but rather as the cause of children's health problems (K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 337). Rice became the center of a "patriotic" diet for health and cultural reasons as well as for supporting Korean farmers against agricultural market liberalization. This "return" to recommending "native and traditional" diets at a time when agricultural trade liberalization threatened Korean farmers and the trade balance was not coincidental. Foreign foods, especially those associated with the U.S., were pointed out as the culprit in undermining Korean food culture and agricultural heritage. Even though the incongruity of the South Korean government's own active participation in negotiating trade liberalization in the name of the nation's greater economic good had not gone unnoticed, the agricultural sector was behind these "cultural" campaigns because farmers could still rely on the support of urban consumers - many of whom had been born in rural areas and were sympathetic to agricultural producers and the sacrifices they were asked to make in the name of national development (Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008, p. 66).

The UR negotiations of the GATT spelled an end to most conventional agricultural protectionist measures that had relied on production-centered state subsidies and strict import restrictions. This did not mean that the central government gave up entirely on protecting domestic agriculture, but the support took on new forms such as direct payments to farmers, new loan and credit programs, and not the least campaigns designed to promote the consumption of Korean produced agricultural and food items. The agricultural sector as such still had significant political power to, if not effectively oppose trade liberalization; at least obtain considerable economic concessions from the central government through the National Assembly, Agricultural Cooperatives and MAFF. The power balance, that allowed agricultural producers to advocate for their interests were however in for a tough time due to the 1997 financial crisis.

Financial Crisis and Bilateral Free Trade Agreements

In 1997, South Korea was hit by the deepest economic crisis since the Korean War. The East Asian financial crisis that began in Thailand quickly spread throughout East and South-East Asia. The crisis had severe consequences, not only for the Korean economy, but also for its national identity. For the first time in post-war history, many South Koreans doubted that development would mean continued progress⁴⁹ (Cho, 2000). At the international level, South Korea had to accept many conditionalities in return for IMF loans to rebuild the economy. Austerity measures, liberalization of the banking sector, and opening of investments markets for FDI were some demands. These structural adjustment policies further fueled the dislike for the U.S. in particular, as people perceived the U.S. were the real puppet masters behind the deal. To progressives and conservatives alike, structural adjustment demands was a blow to national sovereignty, but as Kalinowski has pointed out, these structural adjustment programs did not necessarily mean the end of the state's role in economic development (Kalinowski, 2008, 2009). Rather, Kalinowski argues, the economic recovery was characterized by the state's continued capacity to forcefully intervene in restructuring the financial sector and disciplining of the chaebols who lost their financial, political and popular credibility in the wake of the crisis⁵⁰ (Kalinowski, 2008). Kalinowski's argument has been supported by a number of other scholars who reject the argument that the financial crisis may have signaled the decline of the

⁴⁹ Cho argues that the rapid development of South Korea depended on a notion of the nation as family with the state as the patriarch. While this identification with the national development project produced economic growth, it left no room for the development of a civil society or self-reflexivity. In Cho's perspective, the 1997 financial crisis brought back the nationalist fervor and commitment to the nation that had been on the decline during the democratization period. (Cho, 2000).

⁵⁰ Kalinowski's interpretation runs counter to the thesis that the crisis led to the dismantling of interventionist state policy and the restructuring the economy towards becoming an open market economy. Along with other developmental state theorists, Kalinowski sees economic liberalization in the early 1990s as the source of the crisis rather than cure. Kalinowski argues that two developmental state features led to the rapid recovery: export-orientation, and a strong state that was able to intervene and regulate (Kalinowski, 2008).

developmental state, but not the interventionist developmentalist state (Y. Lee, 2012; Wong, 2004). While several sectors such as finance became privatized, the government centralized certain aspects of its policies as well in order to improve control over the economy⁵¹. South Korea's government decided to revert to old proven recipes for success and embarked on an export-led recovery, which was facilitated by a devaluation of the Korean Won (Kalinowski, 2008).

To strengthen exports, the government turned to bilateral trade agreements to gain preferred access to important export-markets. The first FTA was with Chile, and negotiations concluded in 2002 and went into effect in 2004 (This will be discussed in chapter 7 as well). The negotiations with Chile would set a precedent for other bilateral FTA's to come. To facilitate these bilateral trade negotiations and reign in more reluctant ministries such as the MAFF, trade negotiations were centralized in the new Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MOFAT) in 1998 (B. Choi & Oh, 2011; Yoshimatsu, 2012). The MOFAT trumped the interest of the MAFF and Korean agricultural producers. In the coming years, free trade agreements were initiated with a host of countries, many major agricultural exporters. By 2011, South Korea was engaged in or had completed negotiations with over 50 countries (Kalinowski & Cho, 2012, p. 245). The most contentious FTA negotiations had been those involving the U.S. and China, two major agricultural exporters, which experts argued would be the most detrimental to Korean agriculture (Chang-hyun Ahn & Ryu, 2012; Cooper et al., 2008; Y. Song, 2011). In these negotiations, liberalization of agriculture, with the exception of rice were all embraced by MOFAT and having centralized trade negotiations curbed farmers' ability to exert influence since MAFF no longer sat at the negotiation table. Farmers consistently

⁵¹ In December 1997, Kim Dae-Jung, a well-known political dissident and pro-democracy activist, became the first president of South Korea from outside the conservative parties that had ruled South Korea since its founding. Kim Dae-Jung's presidency was defined by significant democratic reforms, but also a pursuit of liberal economic policies. It was under his tenure that bilateral free trade agreements and a renewed export orientation took place (Ji, 2013).

protested, often violently, against both multilateral and bilateral FTA's, but to little effect (B. Choi & Oh, 2011, p. 524).

The explanation for the government's eagerness to complete with major agricultural producers can be found in the almost consistent trade surplus that South Korea has been able to record since 1998, a surplus driven primarily by manufacturing industries. According to OECD, South Korea's trade balance had been positive between 1998 and 2007, driven primarily by strong performance in electronics and heavy industries (OECD, 2008). At the same time, global agricultural commodity prices stayed low (Valdés & Foster, 2012), easing the burden that rising agricultural imports had on the Korean trade balance and Korean consumer prices. As such the beginning of bilateral FTA's following the 1997 financial crisis also signaled a new direction in South Korean agro-food policy in which food imports were favored over self-sufficiency. The government was able to implement such policies by centralizing trade negotiations in MOFAT rather than relying on decentralized negotiations involving individual ministries. This significantly curbed agricultural producers' ability to exert influence on trade negotiations since MAFF no longer sat at the negotiation table.

The financial crisis and multilateral/bilateral trade agreements put increasing economic pressure on the agricultural sector. The financial crisis resulted in a sudden drop in market prices, and farmer's access to credit became limited. The lack of access to credit for agricultural investments further eroded the competitiveness of South Korean agriculture against imports. As part of the political agreement surrounding the first bilateral FTA with Chile, the government announced a 1.2 trillion KRW fund to compensate farmers who would be negatively affected by the FTA (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 422). However, the general negative effect of trade liberalization on the agricultural sector was difficult to ignore. The number of farm households declined from 1.5 million in 1995 to 1.27 million in 2005. The declining terms of trade for agriculture also led to a rapidly aging farm population. In 1995, 91.3

per cent of farmers were aged 40 or older, a number that increased to 96,7 per cent in 2005 (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 76). Farm household debt increased by a factor of three between 1995 and 2005, but relative debt invested in agricultural production fell in comparison to consumer debt, indicating that farmers were investing less in their farms. Trade liberalization also brought about an accelerated drop in cultivated farmland. Between 1990 and 2008, cultivated farmland declined by 300,000 hectares, or 16 percent. The reduction was not only related to the abandonment of farmland. Conversion to other uses also accelerated. Up until the early 1990s, farmland conversion was strictly regulated as part of government policy to protect the country's food supply. But since 1990, more than 70,000 hectares of farmland has been converted into mostly urban and industrial areas. The trade balance in agricultural products showed a negative balance of 7.7 Billion USD in 2005 up from 4 billion USD in 1998 (OECD, 2008, p. 92). Grain imports and livestock imports accounted for 50.1 percent of the total value of imported agricultural products.

The liberalization of agriculture, however, was not forced upon South Korea – at least not since the early 1990s. From the late 1980s to the late 1990s agricultural trade policy was a time in which agricultural producers were able to at least maintain some protection of domestic agriculture because of the political coalitions they were able to form with the National Assembly and MAFF. The aftermath of the financial crisis however led to recentralization of certain aspects of state activities, most notably for farmers, the centralization of trade negotiations in MOFAT. In the ensuing decade, South Korea aggressively pursued multilateral and bilateral FTA's in order to strengthen market access for the expert-oriented manufacturing economy, and in the process abandoned trade barriers based on quotas. Only rice maintained import quotas, but for most other agricultural products, the government now favored food imports. The favorable world market conditions of low food prices did, in fact, only benefit the

overall Korean economy in the eyes of the government – at least until the 2007 food crisis.

The Global Food Crisis and South Korea's Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy for Food Security

The 2007 food crisis prompted the Korean government to reconsider decades of agricultural liberalization measures. The reliance on international agricultural commodity markets no longer seemed as secure as it had done only a few years earlier. The rise of grain prices was a potential threat to Korea's economy by putting inflationary pressures on the competitiveness of the Korean economy and Korea's trade balance (J.-Y. Chung, 2011, p. 11; H. Park, 2011a, p. 9). According to OECD inflation statistics, Korean consumer price inflation (CPI) was above the average of OECD countries from 2008 to 2011 as a direct impact of the food price inflation. Compared to the OECD average, it was 2-5 times higher than the average level except in 2008. Food price inflation⁵² of Korea was 8.1 percent in 2011, which was the second highest among all OECD countries (OECD Stats, 2013). Besides price inflation, the food crisis in 2007 led to other concerns as several major grain suppliers restricted or banned exports to prevent food from crossing borders. This rose concerns over possible future-scenarios in which strategic agricultural commodities simply would be in short supply in global markets (Eo Dae-Su, personal communication, July 24, 2012). To prepare for such scenarios President Lee Myung-Bak announced the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy for Food Security in 2008. The Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy was the government's main initiative to reassert control over

⁵² Data of itemized contributions to consumer price inflation sourced by the Bank of Korea also showed that food price inflation was an important reason for higher rates of consumer price inflation in 2009 and 2010 accounting for 35-50 percent of total CPI. Thus, food price inflation accounted for the largest proportion of consumer price inflation compared to other factors such as manufacturing products and services in 2011 (Bank of Korea, 2012).

the country's grain supply (Yoon Seok-Won, Personal Communication, October 18, 2012).

The 10-year Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy for Food went into effect in January 2009. The strategy set targets for overseas production and provided a framework for supporting overseas agricultural development in order to gain greater control over overseas agricultural production and trade. The strategy had two major components: first, to establish overseas trading companies that could secure commodities and stabilize prices through the futures market; and second, to support overseas agricultural production, processing and logistics. In July 2011, the Overseas Agricultural Development and Cooperation Act⁵³ was promulgated and went into effect in early 2012 (National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, 2011). Apart from making the strategy a piece of legislation, it also adds additional measures to ensure more effective overseas food production as setting the terms of state support in the form of financing, subsidies, taxation, and technical support services (National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, 2011, Article 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27). By presidential decree, the new act obliged the MAFF to formulate a comprehensive 10-year plan every 10 years in consultation with central administrative agencies (Article 5). The plan itself needs to assess the prospects of international supply and demand of agricultural products, provide a plan for surveying overseas agricultural resources, implement measures to support and nurture Korean companies operating overseas, and identify potential collaboration with international agricultural organizations (National Assembly 2011). The new act also established the Overseas Agricultural Development Deliberative Council (Article 6) to monitor and review policies and projects. Under the new act, the Minister of the MAFF was given the responsibility of appointing members

⁵³ An interesting aspect is that the name of the act differs from the original strategy name, which included the term "food security." It was replaced with "international cooperation" in the act perhaps due to international criticism.

among public officials, experts and industry representatives and the vice-minister of MAFF was appointed as chairperson of the council.

Thirdly, the act established the 'Overseas Agricultural Development Association' (OADA)⁵⁴ as a private industry association to protect the rights and interests of operators of overseas agricultural projects (Article 29). The definition of an operator is any Korean national developing agricultural projects overseas alone, through joint ventures with a foreign partner, by providing technical services, or imports agricultural products from a foreigner to whom the Korean national has provided development funds (Article 3). Any Korean national to whom this definition applies is required to report annually to the relevant government agency if engaging in planning (Article 7) or incorporation in Korea or overseas (Article 9). Once in operation, any company or Korean national is required report back on progress and activities according to the requirements of the agency in charge (Article 10). In effect, this means that any Korean national or Korean corporation involved in agricultural production overseas is required to report to the government about its activities, progress and results.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the Act is Article 33, as it shows the power that the government is able to wield over any company or individual operating under the Overseas Agricultural Development Act. Article 33 stipulates that:

"Where a serious setback that affects or is likely to affect the supply and demand of domestic and overseas agricultural products, livestock products and forest products harms or is likely to harm the stability and smooth management of the national economy, the competent Minister may order the operator of an overseas agricultural development project to bring all or some of overseas agricultural resources he/she has developed into the Republic of Korea on appropriate and

⁵⁴ The Overseas Agricultural Development Association is on paper a private industry organization, but the offices are hosted by the public corporation KRC and the Chairman and vice chairman are both senior KRC managers.

reasonable conditions to stabilize the supply and demand of such agricultural products, livestock products and forest products.” (National Assembly of the Republic Of Korea, 2011, Article 33 §1)

In effect, this means that any overseas development project operator can be required to import all or some of the harvest back to Korea if the government deems it necessary in the case of emergency, such as a food price crisis that may affect the national economy. If the operator fails to do so, the operator is punishable with prison sentences of up to two years or a fine of up to 10 million KRW (10,000 USD) according to Article 36 §2. These penal provisions can also be applied to any project that fails to report according to the reporting requirements stipulated in Article 7. The act makes clear that overseas agricultural development is not only a matter of facilitating Korean agricultural investments overseas, but also a measure through which the government can control the flow of agricultural commodities under the control of any Korean national or corporation in case of a “national emergency”. There is no clear specification of what the act defines as *the smooth management of the national economy*. This is up to the government to decide.

Strategic Trading

The first part of the strategy seeks to establish agricultural trading firms in key markets. The first firm was set up in 2009 in Chicago, the site of the Chicago Board of Trade (CBOT), under the name AT Grain Company (AT Grain). The Chicago commodities exchange is the single most important exchange for trading corn, soybean, and wheat. AT Grain is a joint venture between the public corporation Korea Agro-Fisheries Trade Corp. (55 percent), Samsung C&T (15 percent), STX Corporation (15 percent), and Hanjin Transportation Co., Ltd. (15 percent) (S. Park, 2011b). All three private companies are among the Korean heavyweights in logistics and trade.

AT Grain plans to invest an initial 45 million USD and up to 240 million USD over a 10-year period. By establishing a firm in Chicago, the South Korean government hopes to improve utilization of futures markets to secure stabilization of grain prices and reduce risk exposure. AT Grain is also actively engaged in acquiring the necessary infrastructure to control the grain commodity chain such as grain elevators and port facilities (Soo Yi-Eun, personal communication, July 17, 2012). The target is to supply up to 30 percent of Korea's grain needs by 2020 through this partnership (H. Shin, 2011). The government is also considering setting up similar trading firms in key markets such as Brazil, Russia and Ukraine. Despite the involvement of three Korean conglomerates, the government retains a majority share in the company. The involvement of AT Corp as the majority shareholder and main investor shows that the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy delegates a central role of a state enterprise in carrying out implementation of the strategy, thus playing a direct role. This is also an extension of AT Corp's role as the main agency in charge of state food supply management, a role it has played since its foundation in 1960.

At the time of my fieldwork in Korea, several interviewees highlighted the limited success that AT Grain had had so far. More specifically, the attempt to secure infrastructure in the U.S. had so far faced considerable delays and difficulties (Eo Dae-Su, Lee Cherl-Ho, personal communication, July 24, August 29). The U.S. grain market is already dominated by large vertically integrated trading companies with long-term business relations with producers. As such, the interviewees questioned the viability of the project despite the heavy government investments.

Overseas Food Production

The second part of the strategy seeks to establish overseas food production, logistics, processing and marketing activities by supporting private domestic firms or overseas agricultural development projects as they are named in the act. The target is to secure

385.000 hectares of overseas farmland by 2018, producing 1.8 million tons of primarily wheat, corn, and soybeans (S. Park, 2011a). This amounts to approximately 10 percent of total grain imports, and the intention is to use these areas as a buffer stock of grains that can be drawn upon in a crisis as stipulated in the law. The government provided a budget of 197 million USD between 2007 and 2011 for loans to Korean companies who were willing to enter into overseas agricultural activities (Ministry for Food Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, 2012). The loans were provided at a low interest of 2-3 percent and were repayable over 10 years with a 5-year grace period.⁵⁵

Organization and Division of Labor

The main agency for implementation of overseas support services is the Overseas Agricultural Development Service (OADS), a division under the Korea Rural Community Corporation KRC operating under a mandate from MAFF. KRC is a state-owned company under the Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The company's main area of activity is rural infrastructure development in Korea, but the company has been involved in overseas development cooperation activities for decades. OADS is the main agency for overseeing overseas agricultural development projects by collecting status reports from companies (Yi Eon-Soo, personal communication, July 23, 2012). OADS is also responsible for information dissemination through the OADS website as well as evaluating progress for the Ministry.

OADS also provides a comprehensive support system for private enterprises that seek to invest in offshore food production. First, OADS is responsible for evaluating loan application and monitoring the performance of companies given loans. The loan must be spent within a year and the company can make subsequent loan applications in the following years (Yi Eun-Soo, personal communication, January 7, 2013). OADS

⁵⁵ In the initial 10-year overseas agricultural development plan, the grace period was 3 years and the repayment period was 7 years. The loan terms were changed in 2012 to allow companies more time to establish their businesses.

also provides general investment environment surveys on different countries available to companies through the OADS website as well as customized surveys for companies granted loans at no additional cost. Survey services include analysis on labor supply, agricultural and rural infrastructure surveys, etc. OADS is also in charge of conducting annual site visits for the overseas projects that have received government loans to assist companies in enhancing agricultural productivity. Thus, while the agricultural operations themselves are in private hands, it is apparent that the government is involved, from pre-screening and site valuation, training and technical assistance of company staff, to evaluation.

These support policies to promote overseas agricultural investments are necessary, according to the OADS director, because most Korean private companies have little experience and expertise in overseas agriculture and little to no experience in large-scale agricultural production. In addition, because overseas agricultural development is considered a high risk and capital-intensive investment, the government has been asked to increase support and is actively recruiting new companies through a series of overseas agricultural workshops and seminars in which officials from target countries are invited to pitch investment opportunities to Korean companies. Overseas agricultural development projects can also receive support from other state agencies. The Rural Development Administration (RDA), the government's agricultural research agency, began opening research centers in developing countries under the name KOPIA (Korea Project on International Agriculture) in 2009. These are also included in the Overseas Agricultural Development and Cooperation Act in article 30 and 31. While the purpose of these centers are primarily labeled as development cooperation projects, they also benefit Korean companies that are seeking to establish themselves by providing services such as seed technology and cultivation expertise. This was, for example, the case in Cambodia. I will further elaborate on the project in Cambodia later in this chapter. At the end of 2012, more than 100 companies in 20

different countries were active overseas according to the OADS database.⁵⁶ 29 of these companies had been granted loans from the government. Loans were granted to both private companies and semi-public companies, the latter often owed by local governments. 42,300 hectares of farmland had been leased or acquired and 171,000 tons of wheat, corn and beans had been produced by the end of 2011 (Ministry for Food Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries, 2012). According to OADS data from early 2012, 74 among 85 declared overseas agricultural investments by Korean companies are concentrated in Asian countries (Korea Overseas Agricultural Development Service 2012). According to the OADA director, Korean companies seem to prefer regional investments closer to home for logistical reasons (Eo Dae-Su, personal communication, July 24, 2012).

The investments up until 2012 were usually quite small with land purchases under 1000 hectares. Only a few major investments were made. In 2009, Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI) bought a 67.6 percent stake in the Russian company Khorol Zerno LLC (renamed Hyundai Khorol Agro), which operated a 10,000 hectare farm growing corn and soybean in the Primorsky Krai region (Paxton 2009). This was followed by an additional purchase of 6,700 hectares from another Russian company in 2011 (Hyundai Heavy Industries, 2011). Another company, MH bioethanol leased a total of 8,000 hectares in Cambodia's Kampong Speu Province (J.-S. Lee, 2011), but this size of investments was unusual (Kim Young-Taek, personal communication, July 11, 2012). Most projects were operated by smaller companies and entrepreneurs with limited experience in large-scale agriculture and without large amounts of capital backing them up. Many of the projects experienced multiple setbacks and the success rate had until 2012 been quite low in terms of production output that made its way back to South Korea, so much so that a few lawmakers began pushing for an end to the government program. According to OADS, more than 65 percent of all declared private

⁵⁶ By the end of 2013, the number had increased to 127.

investors until 2012 produced grains such as maize, wheat, and soybean – Korea's main import grains. Most companies were involved in agricultural production, which by several observers were considered a problem, because these projects usually are more risky due to high capital costs and longer-term investments (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 408). The hope was that these early investment would lead to accumulation of expertise, such that Korean companies in the future would become capable of investing in more profitable areas of the global agro-industrial value chain such as marketing and logistics.

The state's response to the 2007 food crisis bears resemblances to earlier state interventions into food supply management prompted by shifts in the world economy. If the previous decade since the financial crisis could be defined by the state's liberalization and retreat from agricultural supply management policy, the 2007 food crisis prompted the state to attempt to once again gain control of strategically important agricultural commodities. The strategy itself also lends itself to comparisons with earlier state interventions in as much as the state agencies and corporations are mobilized to secure overseas agricultural resources. The enrollment of private companies also follow a statist logic in which select companies are offered financial incentives and technical services to facilitate overseas investments in return for subordination to state control. McMichael describes the actions of states such as South Korea as a new form of security mercantilism that "...overrides the multi-lateral trading system governed by WTO rules, substituting direct access to productive land." (P. McMichael, 2013, p. 48). Perhaps such a move should not be considered a surprise given how successive Korean governments have responded to unfavorable conditions in global agricultural markets in the past. There are however also some differences compared to the national self-sufficiency drive in the 1970s. First of all, this shift in policy is based on controlling productive territories overseas. Even though this has been attempted before in the 1970s and 1980s, the current round of overseas

investments are facilitated both by reduced barriers for re-entry facilitated by multi-lateral and bi-lateral free trade agreements. Secondly, the strategy attempts to use existing know-how among some of South Korea largest companies within logistics, trade, and infrastructure development to ensure success. Whether or not the strategy will succeed is too early to say, yet it shows that the South Korean government is willing to intervene in agricultural supply policy even in an era of trade liberalization. The state's intervention into food supply management bears resemblances to the analysis by Kalinowski (2008), Wong (2004) and Lee (2012) about the Korean state's continued capacity to intervene in strategic economic sectors. As Wong argues: "One should not equate liberalization, globalization, transnational harmonization, or economic policy convergence with the retreat of the state from the tasks of promoting national development." (Wong, 2004, p. 357). In the case of South Korean agricultural supply management, the retreat of the state from direct intervention since 1997 was reversed when world economic conditions were no longer considered favorable for the nation's economy.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to situate the OADS within a historical context of changing state food supply strategies in South Korea. State intervention into agro-food food supply has a long history of being closely linked to broader economic development objectives, which in turn have been informed by shifts within the world economy. This account follows Winders notion of oscillation between state intervention and free markets in agro-food policy. In the case of South Korea the oscillation has occurred between emphasis on national self-sufficiency and trade protectionism on one hand and import dependence and trade liberalization on the other. Government emphasis on food import policies or self-sufficiency policies have occurred in response to shifts in the global economy and national development objectives.

In early years, the South Korean government depended on U.S. food aid following World War II and national self-sufficiency only became a priority when the world market and domestic discontent mandated an overall shift in policy. Through the political and bureaucratic centralization of agricultural institutions and the enrollment of farmers into parastatal organizations, the government launched a concerted drive to increase domestic production of strategically important crops such as rice and barley while installing severe restrictions on agricultural and food imports.

This inclusion of agriculture into the national development project in the 1970s was predicated on the perception that farmers represented the backwardness of Korean society and economy. The rural modernization projects aimed to move farmers and peasants, materially and ideologically, into the modern age in order for them to contribute to national advancement. It led to significant transformation of the agricultural sector. Farmers increasingly engaged in commercial production, and agricultural modernization introduced new machinery, infrastructure, and cultivation techniques. These modernization programs in turn provided a domestic market for the expanding South Korean heavy industries such as machinery, construction, and petrochemicals. The articulation between rural and industrial development however could not be sustained. U.S. pressure for trade liberalization, rising costs of maintaining the dual-price system, and the harvest failures in the late 1970s signaled the beginning of the end to the self-sufficiency drive.

The period from 1980 up until 1997 can be described as a time in which agro-food policy moved slowly from agricultural protectionism and self-sufficiency to agricultural trade liberalization. It was not a smooth process. In the 1980s, the government dragged its feet when it came to agricultural trade liberalization despite pressure from the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand. Self-sufficiency in key sectors such as rice, barley, livestock, and fruits remained a central part of national agro-food policy as it had in the 1970s. But it did not prevent rural discontent. The modernization

programs that had spurred agricultural productivity and rural growth in the 1970s began to falter already at the end of the 1970s and by the mid-1980s rising debts and unbalanced growth spurred farmers to join anti-state and pro-democracy movements. The alliance of workers, student and farmers movements played a key role in pressuring the military regime to engage in democratization during the second half of the 1980s. The political liberalization of the late 1980s made it even more difficult for the central government to impose trade liberalization on the agricultural sector. Farmers could mobilize political support from civil society, but political liberalization also loosened the grip on policy formulation by the central government. The MAFF, the National Assembly and the national agricultural cooperatives, which before liberalization had operated as the extended arms of the politically controlled EPB became more independent and often sided with farmers demands for continued protection of the domestic agricultural sector in opposition to political leaders and central government bodies.

The late 1980s and early 1990s especially became characterized by the political struggles between agricultural producer interests on one hand and the central government's economic liberalization attempts on the other. This was enabled by rising opposition to the authoritarian state and the advent of political liberalization in which farmers, along with trade unions, and students fought for democratization. The Uruguay Round negotiations of the GATT in particular pitted agricultural interests demanding continued domestic market protection against the interests of South Korea's manufacturing industries seeking to expand export markets. What the agricultural sector lacked in economic importance, they had to make up for in terms of political organization and popular support. The effect of this struggle was a bifurcated agro-food system (Philip McMichael & Kim, 1994). Key agricultural products deemed important to domestic producers and the balance of trade such as livestock, rice and barley remained protected through import quotas while other agricultural markets

were gradually opened. The same period also saw another major restructuring of the domestic agricultural sector towards increased commercial and specialized production of fruits, vegetables, and livestock. Livestock production, which managed to expand under the protection of import quota restrictions, contributed significantly to the decline in national food self-sufficiency as domestic feed production was all but abandoned and livestock expansion came to rely almost entirely on feed grain imports.

The liberalization of markets prompted agricultural producers, agricultural cooperatives and government agencies to launch campaigns to encourage consumers to buy Korean agricultural productions both to protect trade balances and the agricultural sector. The campaigns run by the NACF and financially support by MAFF stressed the healthiness and cultural appropriateness of a native diet in opposition to the foreign foods that Koreans hitherto had been taught were superior. These campaigns were a reversal of several decades of nutritional education, which had promoted wheat based diets, but as the rice surplus grew, fueled by continued protection and a general decline in rice consumption, these campaigns stressed the importance of eating rice and other nationally produced products. In general the decade from 1988 to 1997, can be considered a transitional period in Korean agro-food policy when it comes to the question of food import dependence or self-sufficiency. Even as trade liberalization pressures intensified, the government had to take into account the political power of agricultural producers. The 1997 financial crisis however, turned the tide against agricultural protection and farmers' political power. The 1997 financial crisis led to a major setback for the entire country and the government, in pursuit of rapid economic recovery, turned towards export-oriented growth. To gain access to foreign markets, FTA's, multilateral, and bilateral became the panacea, and opening up agricultural markets in return for improved market access for Korea's manufacturing industries in overseas markets was a sacrifice farmers would have to endure for national recovery. The trend of declining terms of trade for the

domestic agricultural sector accelerated leading to further economic marginalization of agricultural producers.

Food self-sufficiency declined to new lows, but as long as the world economy provided cheap agricultural commodities, the government was willing to rely on imports. When those favorable world market conditions reversed, the government once again saw it necessary intervene and take control of food supply to ensure that rising food prices would not jeopardize economic development. It is through this lens of historical shifts in state food supply priorities that the OADS should be understood. Rather than seeing the current food import dependence as caused by external imperial and capitalist forces, food import dependence was also supported by government policies that regarded agricultural trade liberalization as important to the broader economic development of the country. From this perspective, the OADS is yet another shift in food supply strategy prompted by shifts in the world economy that no longer was favorable to the food and feed supply strategy in place.

CHAPTER 5 - THE RISE OF THE HANU INDUSTRY

“The irony in the sint’o puri [Sintoburi] movement that promotes the consumption of domestically produced meat, among other measures, lies in the fact that no Korean farm animals are fed with plants produced in Korean soil, but with imported feedstuffs.” (Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, 2012, p. 2274)

The quote from Cwiertka illuminates a dilemma to which this study attempts to find an explanation. How did beef production become dependent on imported feedstuffs? And how did intra-sectoral transformations of the cattle production system affect intra-class segmentation within the cattle sector and hence to political disagreements on the issue of overseas agricultural development? The previous chapter provided an overview of the transitions in national agro-food policy in the context of broader political and economic shifts South Korea. The major political transitions were from authoritarianism to a more liberal political system. The economic transition was the shift from statist economic development towards a more liberal economic system. Both of these transitions were characterized by political struggles in which farmers in general felt they were on the losing end of economic policy especially on the issue of trade liberalization. Chapter five turns attention towards the history of the cattle sector, how it came to be structured around imported feed and thus contributing significantly to rising food import dependence once again from the perspective of political struggle, resistance and adjustment by cattle producers. These transformations in turn also altered the production systems leading to competing economic interests among cattle farmers and in this chapter this intra-class segmentation will be studied to understand how certain parts of the cattle sector came to advocate for and support the OADS, while others opposed it.

Even though agriculture in South Korea is associated with rice production, livestock production as a share of total agricultural production was 39.9 percent in 2009 up from 25.3 percent in 1990. In fact, livestock production has exceeded the value of

rice production since 2005 (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 161). This makes livestock production an extremely important economic activity in contemporary Korean agriculture and indicates quite a significant transformation of agricultural sector activities. The Korean beef cattle sector is today a central agricultural activity accounting for almost 25 percent of the total value of livestock production in South Korea in 2009, only surpassed by pork (33.2 percent). Of the key livestock sectors (pigs, poultry, cattle), beef cattle production involved the largest number of farm households. In 2009 there were approximately 170,000 households involved in beef production compared to less than 8000 households in pork production even though total production (thousand metric tons) of pork was almost twice as large. Only 1562 producers of chicken were recorded in 2009 (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, pp. 171–177). In terms of feed, the cattle sector accounted for approximately 34 percent of total compound feed production in 2007-08 (S. Choi & Francom, 2008, p. 10) slightly higher than pork, the second highest consumer of compound feed.

The expansion in livestock production is key to understanding South Korea's declining food self-sufficiency in general, and grain self-sufficiency in particular, comes directly from the rise of livestock production. Figure 1 below shows the growth in the import of corn, wheat, and soybean, the three major grain import commodities. Figure 2 shows the rise of these three commodities for feed use, especially in the 1980s and 1990s. These two graphs show clearly that grain and oilseed imports to an overwhelming degree are destined for feed production.

Figure 1 – Imports and Feed Use –Corn Wheat and, Soybean Meal. (United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014)

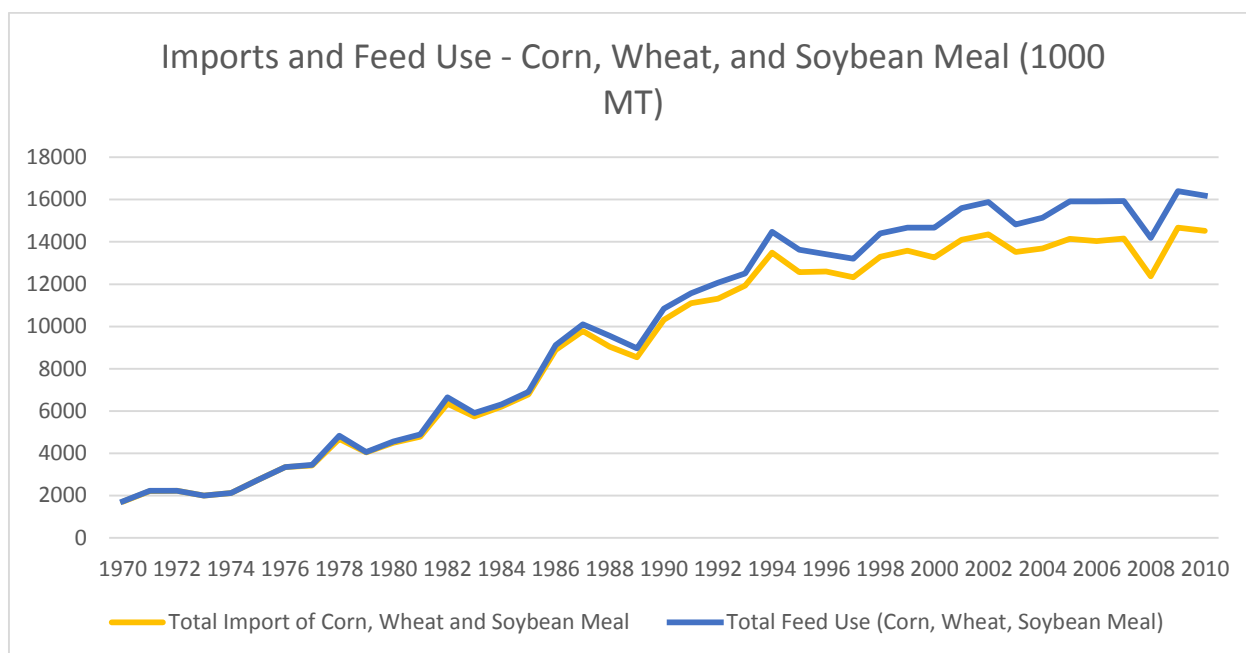
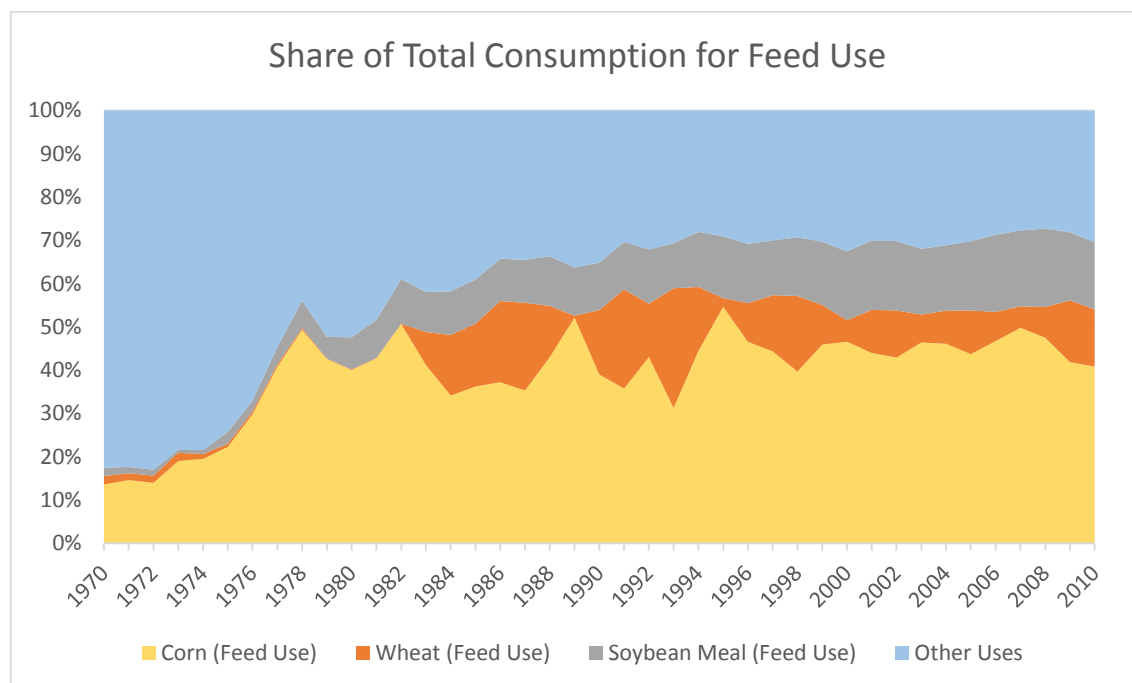


Figure 2 – Share of Total Consumption for Feed Use. (United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014)



Since the second half of 1980s the share of wheat, corn, soybean used for feed use has consistently stayed in the 60-70 percent range of total consumption. The rise of grain imports in South Korea is thus closely connected to feed for the country's livestock production and cattle feed is the largest consumer of compound feed⁵⁷. Thus on all accounts cattle production has grown to become one of the most significant sectors in Korean agriculture in terms of both value, employment, and feed consumption.

This chapter studies the trajectory of the contemporary beef cattle industry from its beginnings in the late 1970s. As late as 1978, a report by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural Economics (ABARE) showed that only 27,100 heads of beef cattle were produced in South Korea. Beef cattle in the ABARE report was defined as beef from imported breeds. The native cattle, whose meat would later become popularized as *Hanu*, was used predominantly as farm draft animals and only secondarily for meat consumption (Johns, 1980, p. 36). In the 34 years between ABARE's report and Cwiertka's observation, two major transitions happened in the growing cattle sector. Native cattle, or *Hanu* became the all-dominant breed for beef and it came to be fed with imported grains and oilseeds. The report by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural Economics (ABARE)⁵⁸ on the status of Korean beef markets and production did not foresee any of these developments (Johns, 1980). While the author did predict a rise in beef consumption, he did not predict the rise of a beef cattle industry based on native cattle breeds, nor the complete dependence on imported feedstuffs. At the time, national food self-sufficiency was still a major state objective and it seemed that any expansion of beef production in Korea would rely on imported cattle breeds and domestic feed sources.

⁵⁷ For a more detailed discussion of the correlation between rising meat production, grain imports, and food import dependence see Appendix A.

⁵⁸ Australia was at the time the largest exporter of beef to South Korea.

To understand the rise of cattle production over the following thirty years as a significant factor in South Korea's rising grain import dependence, we need to study how the sector was shaped by the world economy, and political struggles between the state, cooperatives and farmers as well as the role of science and technology.

Beef in Pre-Modern Korea and Colonial Korea

There is evidence that beef has been consumed on the Korean peninsula for millennia. Descendants of nomadic peoples from the plains of Mongolia and Siberia settled in the Korean peninsula and became agriculturalists thousands of years ago. It is highly likely that meat was part of the early diet given this nomadic past. However, with the introduction of Buddhism as the state religion in the 4th and 5th century AD, the slaughtering of animals was prohibited and the culture of meat eating was, if not completely erased, severely limited. The Mongols reintroduced a culture of meat eating during their occupation in the 13th and 14th century (Pettid, 2008). The consumption of meat once again became morally acceptable with the elimination of the Buddhist Goryeo Dynasty in the late 14th century, which was replaced by a Confucian state (Brown, 2010; Nam, Jo, & Lee, 2010; Ye, 2012). However, even during the Joseon Dynasty⁵⁹ (1392-1910), cows in Korea were primarily raised as draft animals. Eating beef was a rare luxury outside the *yangban* class (landed aristocracy), or the royal family. In other words, beef was a delicacy, but meat in general was not a major component of the commoners' diet through most of Korean history. Cows were slaughtered mainly for large celebrations such as weddings or rituals related to ancestral worship (Pettid, 2008, p. 60).

The first wave of commercial cattle production emerged during the Japanese occupation. Even though beef production became significant, it did not reach the

⁵⁹ The Joseon state was founded in 1392 and lasted until 1897. The state covered the entire Korean peninsula up to the Yalu River. Today, the river is the border between North Korea and China.

importance of rice production, and there is scant information on cattle farming during that era. However, trends can be established. According to Cwiertka, beef exports from Korea were directly linked to the Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05). Korea supplied the Japanese canning industry, which thrived by supplying the Japanese imperial troops fighting in China and Manchuria (Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, 2012, p. 398). By the end of the war with Russia in 1907, as a result of which Japan effectively gained control of Manchuria and the Korean peninsula, Korea was exporting nearly 20,000 cows to the Japanese canning industry, a significant increase from the few hundred cows exported per year before the first Sino-Japanese War (Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, 2012, p. 409).

Following the formal annexation of Korea into the Japanese empire in 1910, augmenting beef production in Korea became a priority for the colonial government. From 1910, Korean cattle stocks rose approximately by 200,000 heads per year reaching, 1.5 million heads by the 1920s (Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, 2012, p. 406). This rise in cattle production in Korea supplied the western eateries in Japan that had become very popular with the growing population, and cheap Korean beef made these western-inspired eateries more accessible to the middle-income classes. The Japanese canning industries were another major driver behind the rise of production in Korea. In the mid-1930's, cattle production increased even further to almost 4.5 million slaughtered heads, but the target markets during this period were Japanese troops preparing for the second Sino-Japanese War in Manchuria (1937-1945) (Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, 2012, p. 417). As the war intensified, the demand for canned beef increased significantly. Between 1938 and 1939, 8,331,305 million heads of Korean cattle were slaughtered, but now the destination for beef had shifted geographically. Meat-processing and canning activities moved from Japan to slaughterhouses and canning facilities in Korea, closer to the frontlines. According to Cwiertka, the rise in beef production corresponds

well with the increase in Japanese divisions stationed in Manchuria from four divisions in 1935 to thirteen divisions in 1941 (Cwiertka, 2012, p. 433).

The expansion of the cattle industry resulted in the formation of formalized regional livestock associations, introduction of selective breeding, and industrial beef processing and packaging facilities. To increase the meat yield, native cattle was crossbred with Simmental, a breed originating in Switzerland that the Japanese introduced between 1909 and 1919 (Na, 1994, p. 4). It is unclear from the material available whether the industrialization of meat processing also affected raising systems of cattle in Korea, such as feed and quality standards. Evidence from the much better documented rice farming sector indicates that existing production systems were on the whole held intact. Rice farming did adapt a range of modern agricultural technologies including high-yielding rice varieties, expansion of irrigation, fertilizer, etc. However, the social relations of production remained quite unchanged. The majority of producers were tenant farmers operating under the control of a small elite of Japanese capitalists and Korean landlords.

Industrial-scale beef processing and packaging became insignificant following the Japanese defeat in World War II. In the final year of the war, a drastic drop in cattle stocks was identified. Writing in 1950, George McCune identified a drop in the heads of cattle from 886,842 in 1944 to 556,200 in 1946 in the territory that was to become the Republic of South Korea (McCune, 1950, p. 123). McCune speculated that this drop in cattle stocks was related to the general breakdown of Japanese authority and the strict end to regulations on consumption they enforced to secure supplies to the imperial armies. Nevertheless, beef was neither accessible nor particularly important to people's daily diet or national food supply concerns at the time. The average Korean was still assumed to consume only 6 pounds of meat per annum, a number that appeared to have remained quite steady since the 1930s, and only a small percentage

of this meat was beef (McCune, 1950, p. 121). Rice, vegetables and barley were the most important food items in the Korean diet by large margins.

The Ascent of Cattle Farming 1976 - 1987

Intensive commercial beef production in South Korea would not occur again in significant form until the 1970's. The 1970s was a period of drastic transformation of the Korean countryside. The Saemaul Undong movement and other government-initiated agricultural modernization programs strived to increase food self-sufficiency in order to improve the balance of trade and regain political legitimacy for the ruling regime among rural voters. The 1970s was also a decade in which beef consumption began to increase rapidly. The rising purchasing power of the expanding urban middle class regarded beef as a symbol of upward economic mobility (Johns, 1980, p. 12). Beef consumption rose from 1.2 kg per capita per annum in 1970 to 2.6 kg per capita in 1980 (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 5). The rise in beef consumption combined with a general increase in population meant that total beef consumption rose from 55,000 tons to 172,000 tons from 1970 to 1979. This also had an impact on beef production. From 1970 to 1979, beef production grew at an average annual rate of 8.8 percent (Francks et al., 1999, p. 136). In spite of the production growth, beef was still considered a luxury item rather than an everyday food item for most Koreans (Johns, 1980, p. 14).

To meet rising meat demand, the government began to encourage commercial livestock farming from the beginning of the 1970s. Through science, new production systems, and capital injections, some domestic livestock and broiler sectors became increasingly specialized, unlike the general trend of small-scale multifunctional farms. In poultry and pig farming, chaebols were at the forefront of industrializing production. Samsung was a pioneer in the building of large-scale livestock operations. In 1973, the Samsung Group established an intensive vertically integrated hog breeding and research operation in Gyeonggi Province (Brown, 2010, p. 30). A similar situation was

the case for poultry production in which large-scale commercial operations also began to address the increasing demand for meat and eggs (Chong-dae Kim, 1994, p. 2), and similar trends were observed in the dairy industry (M. Moore, 1984, p. 596).

In the cattle sector, on the other hand, the bulk of production continued to take place on small-scale multi-purpose farms. In 1975, 92.5 percent of all cattle was raised on small farms with one or two heads per farm while only 0.9 percent was raised in herd sizes above 50 (Johns, 1980, p. 30). Of the total heads of cattle, 5.5 percent were dairy cattle and only 0.65 percent were identified as beef cattle. The remaining cattle were designated as native cattle primarily raised for draft purposes and meat from the native breed was primarily for household or local consumption (Johns, 1980, p. 29). Beef cattle, on the other hand, was purely for commercial purposes. Beef cattle was composed mostly of cross breeds between native cattle and imported breeds (50 percent), Hereford (20 percent), and Aberdeen Angus (19 percent), i.e. imported or mixed breeds only were bred for meat (Johns, 1980, p. 31). Johns observed in 1980 that the meat potential for the native cattle breed was limited. The animal was late maturing and with "...inherently weak hindquarters." (Johns, 1980, p. 36). Non-feedlot native cattle reported an average meat yield of only 145kg per carcass while feedlot animals on average reported a 200kg yield. These inherent shortcomings of the native cattle breed led Johns to predict that any growth in beef production would not be based on native cattle and that pasture-raised beef cattle would be the main domestic beef product (Johns, 1980, p. 38).

Introduction of State-Controlled Beef Supply Management

Before 1976, beef imports for general consumption was prohibited (Johns, 1980, p. 3). The only imports allowed were high grade U.S. grain-fed beef for luxury hotels and restaurants, and smaller amounts of low-quality pasture-fed beef from Australia and New Zealand for meat-processing and canning industries exporting to Japan and

hence of importance to the balance of trade. However, a growing domestic demand for beef and a positive trade balance prompted the government to relax import restrictions in 1976⁶⁰. This was allowed to address rapidly rising beef prices caused by domestic production limitations and higher demand. The government decided to import 700 tons of beef from Australia for general consumption for the first time (Y.-S. Choi, Jeon, Sung, & Shin, 2001, p. 4). The Office of Supply of the Republic of Korea (OSROK), the government agency responsible for all government imports and operating under the direct auspices of the Economic Planning Board, released an international tender for 1000 tons of in-bone beef for general consumption. Exporters were asked to apply either directly to OSROK or through a local South Korean importer as their agent (Johns, 1980, p. 50).

To ensure state control of import quantities, the Korean Livestock Act was amended to provide the legal foundation for the Livestock Development Fund and another amendment was put into effect in 1977 to establish the Livestock Development Corporation (LIDECOR) both operating under the auspices of the MAFF (Steinberg, 1994, p. 163). The objective was to solve the structural constraints that had led to beef shortages in 1976. The prime objective of LIDECOR was to manage the supply and demand of beef through a monopoly on beef imports, feed imports, and promoting domestic production through financial and technical support (Johns, 1980, p. 54). In effect, LIDECOR became the agency in control of every aspect of the livestock sector from feed, to livestock production quotas, and imports. Funding of LIDECOR derived primarily from the profits the agency made from taxing imports of meat and feed grains, fund allocations from the MAFF, and sales tax on livestock products. Thus the amendment that established LIDECOR followed the same logic of centralist agricultural modernization and import substitution used in the rice promotion program initiated a

⁶⁰ The import restrictions on beef were lifted as part of a broader trade liberalization program undertaken in 1977-78, in order to slow down retail price increases and broaden the consumer choices available (Johns, 1980, p. 49).

few years earlier (Burmeister, 1992, p. 158). Through LIDECOR, the Economic Planning Board exercised direct control over both domestic production, import quotas, and price setting.

The MAFF, also operating under the command of EPB, was put in charge of setting target levels for domestic beef production and imports each year. LIDECOR in turn announced tenders for annual quotas of imported beef. International bidders had to register with LIDECOR or appoint a South Korean import agent. In the first year of beef imports for general consumption, Australia and New Zealand were successful in winning most government tenders for beef. Johns argues that this success was due to Australia and New Zealand's cheaper grass-fed beef compared to the U.S. grain-fed "high-quality" beef (Johns, 1980, p. 55). However, the tenders for beef imports slowed after 1978 when South Korea imported a record 40,444 tons of beef, becoming one of the largest beef import markets in the world at the time.⁶¹ The decision to reduce beef imports was due to a balance of payment crisis caused by a growing trade deficit. In 1979, South Korea only imported 27,333 tons of beef and in 1980 only 6,700 tons were imported due to the economic crisis that hit the country (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 4; Johns, 1980, p. 51).

Price Management

LIDECOR was also in charge of regulating the retail price of beef. The agency had the power to buy, sell, and stockpile beef to keep prices stable (Johns, 1980, p. 54). Beef prices were allowed to remain higher than those of pork and chicken. Average beef prices stayed 75 percent higher per kilogram than pork between 1965 to 1979, though the government would impose price ceilings during certain periods to stabilize prices. Consequently, the real price index for beef began to rise rapidly in the 1970s at 7.5

⁶¹ Another 600 tons of high quality beef from the U.S. was imported for the hotel and restaurant trade in 1978 (Johns, 1980, p. 54)

percent annually. The reason for the relative lax price regulation on beef compared to pork and chicken in the late 1970s was, according to Johns, its status as a luxury product and hence not of major nutritional or economic importance. Furthermore high prices encouraged farmers to produce beef cattle (Johns, 1980, p. 21). MAFF, in conjunction with the EPB, set wholesale prices based on unpublished surveys on production costs and the macro-economic objectives of the EPB. Only one recorded retail price was set for beef. This, Johns argues, was because consumers paid little to no attention to specific cuts or quality. Most beef was thinly sliced and either boiled or fried, while bones were used in stews (Johns, 1980, p. 18).

Imported beef was subject to a range of restrictions. First of all, the Korean government required all beef to be carried by Korean national marine vessels and stored in government controlled storage facilities at the port of entry. Once the imported beef entered the country, the frozen meat was released into the wholesale market according to demand in order to stabilize prices. Wholesale retail prices were determined by the MAFF according to a fixed discount relative to the wholesale price of domestic beef (Harris & Dickson, 1990, p. 24). Hotel suppliers would also be allocated consignments. From wholesalers, both imported beef and domestic beef were distributed to NACF-owned or state-registered outlets (Johns, 1980, p. 62). The system in the late 1970s and 1980s thus provide little indication of a free market in beef. Imports were used primarily to supplement domestic production to the extent deemed necessary by the central government authorities.

Domestic Production Promotion

The main objective of the government support for expansion of beef production in the 1970s was self-sufficiency in beef in order to maintain a positive trade balance by limiting the need for imported beef. As mentioned earlier, foreign exchange reserves was a major concern of Korean development policy and import-substitution, and self-

sufficiency was the primary agricultural policy objective. While imports of beef were allowed to a degree, the main focus of LIDECOR was to promote domestic production. LIDECOR's main sources of income for their domestic production program were duties levied on imported beef and profits from the resale of imported beef and feed to domestic wholesalers. Since LIDECOR was in effect setting retail prices domestically for beef and feed, profits were very high. One calculation based on trade data estimated that LIDECOR made a 54 percent profit above the estimated cost of import and storage (Johns, 1980, p. 60). In 1978, LIDECOR had a total budget of 130 million USD. Of this amount, 55 million USD was allocated for import and storage of imported beef. The remaining budget was set aside for the promotion of domestic beef cattle production with programs focused on improvements in three main areas: research and development of higher-yielding beef cattle⁶² through selective and cross-breeding; financial support primarily for larger specialized operations; and expansion of pasture areas to limit the need for feed imports (Johns, 1980, pp. 44–48).

The domestic shortages, strict import restrictions, and price support mechanisms led to an increase in the number of farmers moving into cattle production in the latter half of the 1970s. After the harvest failures with Tongil rice in the late 1970s, beef provided an even more attractive way for farmers to diversify their income. At the same time, more farmers had shifted to mechanized draft alternatives as part of the rural modernization program, and therefore no longer needed draft animals. By 1980, almost one million farm households raised cattle, but the average herd size was only 1.4 per household. Of those households, 94 percent raised only one or two heads of cattle (Na, 1994, p. 2). According to a survey by the Asian and Pacific Economic Co-operation Centre, cattle raising was carried out predominantly as a side-activity on small multi-purpose farms, and a smaller proportion was raised on full-time operations.

⁶² As mentioned earlier, the term *beef cattle* was reserved for imported meat cattle such as Angus, Hereford, as well as cross breeds between native and imported cattle (Na, 1994, p. 4).

The return of investment for each of these four activities depended much on the size. For example, the most economically optimal farm size for rearing farms was 3-5 head of cattle, while the optimal size for fattening farms in terms of return on investment was 100+ heads of cattle.⁶³ However, it was also found that the unit of production for farms with 1-5 heads of cattle was the same as for larger farms (Johns, 1980, p. 33). Small farmers had a cost advantage because on-farm produced feed such as wild grasses, rice straw, and rice bran were readily available, while large-scale farmers had to rely more on imported feed grains. (Yoo, 1993, p. 134). A few heads of cattle, low capital investment, low labor intensity, and high returns thus made cattle rearing a very attractive option to many small farmers and was as such incorporated into the existing multi-functional family farm structure. One or two heads of cattle could provide upwards of 10 percent additional income for a farming family (Johns, 1980, p. 36).

On the other end of the production chain, larger feedlot operations began to slowly proliferate during the 1970s. These farms used predominantly compound⁶⁴ feed from imported grains. Mixed feed production for beef cattle (i.e. Imported and mixed breed) grew from 7000 tons in 1971 to 96,000 tons in 1977, but nevertheless remained a minor part of total imported feed use in spite the growing use of compound feed. Compound feed mostly served the industrialized hog and broiler operations and not the beef cattle sector. Compound feed for beef cattle increased from one percent of total feed production in 1971 to five percent in 1977 (Johns, 1980, p. 37). In order to support the full-time medium-sized producers of beef cattle, who had the lowest return on investment, the NACF set up local livestock-cooperatives in order to obtain the

⁶³ The same study by the Asian Productivity Organization in 1976 concluded that medium-sized operations (~40 head) were the least economically profitable as they did not have either the advantage of economies of scale or the low capital advantages of the small producer (Johns, 1980, p. 36).

⁶⁴ Compound feed is fodder made from various raw materials and additives such as vitamins and minerals blended for the specific animal, growth stage, and intended output. Beef cattle feed, for example, is different from compound feed for dairy cattle. Furthermore, feed for younger cattle has a higher proportion of silage than grains. At later stages, grain proportions are increased in order to obtain the desired weight and meat characteristics (Siemens, Schaefer, & Vathauer, 1999).

economies of the scale that larger feedlot operations benefited from, in terms of bulk purchasing of inputs for rearing and fattening. In addition, as part of the government's attempt to boost farm productivity and national food self-sufficiency, the Future Farmers Loan program was initiated in 1980. It was a loan program targeted for young university-educated farmers who were considered more capable of developing larger commercial and modern agricultural operations. In fact, many farmers were required to use the loans provided by the NACF to buy calves from the government agency. Because of the favorable economics of beef cattle, many young farmers opted for these operations thus further contributing to the expansion of domestic beef cattle production (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 7).

Domestic Feed Production

Trade balance concerns set strict limitations on imported feed in the 1970s and early 1980s. Only the few larger beef cattle operations were using imported feed. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, two separate feeding regimes were thus in operation: 1. Grain-fed beef cattle of mixed breed or imported breeds using imported feed and 2. Native cattle raised primarily on a diet of on-farm produced agricultural by-products such as rice straw and rice bran. The latter production system provided the bulk of beef output. To provide feed for the expanding sector, pastureland development was a primary focus in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The attempts to feed the growing cattle industry by developing pasture and upland reclamation programs were complemented with research initiatives sought to use idle paddy land for winter forage crops (Burmeister, 1992, p. 158). In the 1970s, this led to a large increase in pastureland from 57,850 hectares in 1973 to 312,350 hectares in 1981. The number of cattle raised in pastures increased from 139,000 in 1973 to 1,231,000 during that same period (Johns, 1980, p. 47). This means that half of the total cattle inventory including dairy cows were raised on pasture feed in 1981.

These attempts to develop a domestic cattle industry based on a domestic pasture feeding regime, however, became increasingly difficult to sustain in the 1980s because of the government's market opening for feed grain imports mostly from the U.S., part of the broader liberalization policy implemented by the Chun Do-Hwan administration as required by the structural adjustments demanded by the IMF. According to Burmeister, the pasture development program lost out to imported feed grains for compound feed in the second half of the 1980s as the main feed source. In the end, according to Burmeister, a potentially successful attempt to develop an integrated rice-livestock production system in which forage was grown on idle winter paddy land was never fully realized (Burmeister, 1992, p. 158). In 1992, 88,230 hectares of winter forage area was reported compared to 45,283 hectares in 1980, but this has to be compared to the rapid increase in cattle production and the higher demands put on forage quality. One can also speculate about LIDECOR's arbitrary position as beef imports was a key revenue source for the organization's other programs. A major source of funding to promote domestic beef production came from the profits made from beef and feed imports while pasture development did not generate income. Thus, clear contradictions in the role of LIDECOR in both maintaining a monopoly on beef and feed imports on one hand and promoting domestic beef production based on pasture feeding on the other may have put the agency in an arbitrary position.

The 1970s was a period in which domestic production of beef cattle increased rapidly to meet domestic demand. Given the government's goal of limiting food imports, the domestic cattle industry depended primarily on domestically produced feed, often on-farm agricultural by-products. To maintain feed self-sufficiency, the government also launched programs to expand pasture land rather than depending in feed imports. Unlike hog and broiler operations however, beef cattle production mainly occurred on non-specialized multi-functional family farms who would raise a few number of heads as an agricultural side-activity. Much of the beef came from native

cattle, but imported cattle breeds and cross-breeds provided the bulk of higher quality beef along with limited imports of grain-fed beef from the U.S. Among consumers, there was little awareness of quality differentiation and beef remained a luxury item to most people. The expansion of beef production remained under tight control by state agencies that controlled both domestic production quotas, import quotas, farm-gate prices and retail prices. This situation that lasted well into the 1980s would however would undergo significant changes.

Systemic Breeding

In the early 1970s, thousands of live cattle were imported, mostly Angus, Charolais, Hereford, and Holstein for specialized dairy and meat operations. These stocks of imported cattle were envisioned to provide the basis for the development of the domestic beef and dairy sectors. Imported breeds were also crossbred with native cattle to improve maturity rate and meat yield as the native cattle's size and muscle structure were not optimized for meat production. The government strategy was thus to improve the native cattle stock through crossbreeding rather than relying on continuous import of live cattle. Charolais and Angus were the main breeds introduced for beef cattle, as they were esteemed for their carcass yield and faster growth. In the 1970s, these kinds of optimized breeds were however only a small portion of the total cattle stock. Beef cattle production was still very much based on very small scale and quite unscientific and non-standardized practices of cattle raising throughout most of the 1970s.

As I have mentioned earlier, the Korean native cattle, later to be known as Hanu, was considered inferior as a breed for meat production compared to imported cattle⁶⁵. The size of Hanu itself proved a challenge. In 1974, the average weight of an 18-month-

⁶⁵ The use of crossbred animals declined during the 1980s. Crossbred animal numbers declined to 10,000 in 1990 from 670,000 in 1985. The lack of success for crossbred and foreign cattle was ascribed to the difficulty of adapting the livestock to the feeding regimes and barn conditions (J. B. Kim & Lee, 2000).

old bull was 289,6 kg. In 1980 the weight had increased to 331 kg and 477 kg in 1992 (Na, 1994, p. 3). In 18 years, the native Korean cattle increased its bodyweight by 60 percent. In 1985, the average weight at slaughter was 397 kg (Na, 1994, p. 3) and in 2007, the average body weight of a Hanu ready for slaughter had increased to 643 kg (Yeon Kim, Puangsumalee, Barrett, Haseltine, & Warr, 2009, p. 21). Such significant increases in carcass size and meat yield was due to three main initiatives: selective scientific breeding closely monitored by government agencies; new feeding regimes relying on grain based compound feed; and an increase in raising and fattening periods from 24 months in the early 1980s to 31 months by the early 1990s.

For native cattle, pure-breeding commenced in the late 1970s and accelerated during the 1980s. Native young bulls were raised in designated breeding farms and selected according to meat productivity and quality. The pure-breeding of Korean native cattle occurred in eight government designated areas where crossbreeding was prohibited. The system of breeding was managed centrally from the Korean National Breeding Center under the Rural Development Administration. Research was carried out at both the national and provincial breeding centers, the National Livestock Cooperative Federation, provincial authorities as well as on supervised individual breeding farms. Breeding bulls were selected according to their meat output and other desired quality traits. In the 1980s, focus was primarily on improving yield rather than quality due to the still quite undifferentiated domestic retail market. Selected bulls from breeding farms were sent to the provincial breeding centers for final test and selection. The semen from these bulls were distributed primarily through NLCF to breeding farms for artificial insemination. This process of moving to artificial insemination expanded through the 1980s, going from less than 1 percent of offspring in 1980 to 82.9 percent in 1990 (Na, 1994, p. 7). Within a decade, a highly specialized breed based on the native breed came into being.

Beef Controversies and State – Farmer Struggles

The National Livestock Cooperative Act of 1980 was passed in order to speed up domestic production and to manage imports according to estimates of domestic production shortfalls. The act established the National Livestock Cooperative Federation (NLCF) by merging LIDECOR and the specialized livestock cooperatives previously under NACF. The NLCF top management was, as in the case of NACF, appointed by the President based on recommendations from MAFF. Similarly, leaders of local cooperatives were also drawn from the cadres of the ruling political party. This top-down model was part of President Chun Do-Hwan's attempt to gain political control following his suppression of the unrest and uncertainty after Park Chung-Hee's assassination. For these reasons, NLCF was closely aligned with the ruling party just as Saemaul Undong and NACF was.

The newly established NLCF, however, became involved in controversy almost from the beginning. In 1981-1982, The NCLF imported 56,000 heads of live cattle to boost domestic production. In 1983, another 67,000 live cattle were imported despite having capacity for only 50,000 in the quarantine facilities. The MAFF protested the decision but it was overridden by the President. The surplus cattle was delivered to the Saemaul Undong organization headed by the President's brother Chun Kyong-Hwan (Steinberg, 1994, p. 164). Saemaul sold the excess cattle stocks to farmers generating a profit of up to 10 million USD to the organization.⁶⁶ However, the combination of a drastic increase in imported live cattle, rising beef imports, and growth in domestic stock caused a drastic oversupply. From 1981 to 1986, the cattle inventory (dairy and beef) rose from 1.5 million heads to 3 million heads (Yoo, 1993, p. 138). The oversupply in turn caused prices to collapse. From April 1983 to April 1985, the price for a full size

⁶⁶ Chun Kyong-Hwan was later arrested and charged with receiving bribes, embezzlement and tax evasion for 10.3 million USD. He was found guilty in 1988 and sentenced to seven years in prison and a fine of 5.9 million USD. Eleven other Saemaul officials were also convicted on various counts with six officials sentenced to jail of one to three years. (Jameson, 1988)

head of cattle fell more than 50 percent (Steinberg, 1994, p. 164). The effect was exacerbated by the government's reluctance to uphold the promised price support mechanisms due to both budgetary constraints as well as external trade pressures from the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand (Burmeister, 1992, p. 158). As a result, many farmers chose to liquidate their stocks because the cost of raising cattle no longer made it economically viable.

The result was further debt accumulation among farmers (Yoo, 1993, p. 138). Many farmers defaulted on their loans to the NLCF and others went bankrupt. The liquidation led to a significant reduction in the number of beef producers in the second half of the 1980s. According to Burmeister, the number of households raising beef cattle was reduced from 1.05 million in 1985 to 702,000 households in 1988. The number of cattle went from 2.55 million to 1.56 million during the same period (Burmeister, 1992, p. 158). From 1985 to 1986, beef consumption surged by 37,000 tons reflecting the liquidation of stocks, which resulted in lower retail prices. This was a higher increase in beef consumption over the course of one year than the increase of consumption between 1980 to 1985, but prices rose again once the surplus stock had been consumed. In the following 3 years, beef consumption only grew by 10,000 tons (Harris & Dickson, 1990, p. 24).

Table 1 - consumption, production and import of beef and veal 1976-1987 (1000MT). Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014

	Beef consumption (1000MT)	Domestic Production (1000MT)	Import (1000MT)
1976	103	103	1
1977	111	106	8
1978	141	102	45
1979	172	118	60
1980	138	127	2
1981	127	94	34

1982	148	83	73
1983	160	90	67
1984	149	122	28
1985	168	161	4
1986	205	208	0
1987	210	206	0

The beef controversy also had significance for beef imports. With a domestic oversupply, the government restricted beef imports. From an all-high import of 49,408 tons in 1983, beef imports plummeted to 16,549 tons in 1984 and imports came to a complete halt in 1987. This end to beef import ran contrary to the general policy of agricultural trade liberalization and angered especially the U.S., Australia and New Zealand.

The government however also felt pressure from the domestic side. Farmer protests became frequent occurrences regionally and in the national capital of Seoul in the mid-1980s to object to plunging prices and trade liberalization. One article estimated that 16 nationwide demonstrations were organized by farmers in 1985 alone, and 22 in 1986 (Y. S. Lee et al., 1990, p. 429). According to the same authors, beef and cattle farmers were among the most vocal in these protests as their economic situation had been worsened by the beef crisis in the early 1980s. In 1985, farmers gathered in numerous cities to protest slumping beef prices and beef imports by publicly slaughtering cattle in public squares and demanding an end to beef imports. The beef crisis also propelled NLCF in to a severe legitimacy crisis as many farmers fell deeply in to debt. The economic insecurity of many farm households caused many farmers to question the politically appointed NLCF leadership and started to join anti-state farmers' movements. These movements and the broader pro-democracy movement advocated for political liberalization on one hand and economic protectionism of agriculture on the other. Well aware that their rural support base was eroding and moving towards the opposition, the central government decided to end beef imports.

Beef Import Liberalization and Political Fragmentation 1988 - 1996

In 1988, Korea hosted the Olympic Games in Seoul, which was to be a celebration of South Korea's economic miracle. The idea of hosting the Olympic Games dated back to the Park Chung-Hee years, and Chun Do-Hwan submitted the bid for the Olympics in December 1981. For the beef sector, the Olympic Games were significant in two ways. Firstly, Korea's government officially designated the beef dish *bulgogi* as one of two official Korean dishes during the 1988 Olympics. The other was kimchi, the fermented cabbage that is eaten with virtually every meal. The selection of bulgogi, thin slices of grilled marinated beef, was both a testimony to the broader availability and affordability of beef to the general Korean consumer and most likely also an attempt to cater to the thousands of foreign visitors to whom the fermented and spicy taste of kimchi was perhaps too "exotic."⁶⁷ Secondly, as part of the government's concern about accommodating the demands and tastes of foreign visitors, it was decided to reopen the import of beef from overseas to accommodate "western-type foods for foreign guests" (Burmeister, 1988, p. 95).

In 1988, South Korea reopened beef imports for general consumption (Yoo, 1993, p. 143). The majority of imports came from Australia and only a minor portion from the U.S. following the same pattern as in the late 1970s and 1980s of the U.S. supplying grain-fed beef to high end restaurants and hotels (Harris & Dickson, 1990, p. 24). Australian grass-fed beef remained the dominant beef import and thus quite similar to the bulk of Korean produced beef and beef consumed in Korea continued to be defined by undifferentiated quality. Beef imports were still tightly managed now by the Livestock Promotion and Marketing Organization (LPMO), another quasi-governmental organization established to succeed LIDECOR in regulating the beef market. The quantity of beef imports were managed according to the estimated

⁶⁷ To this day, a popular question for Koreans to ask foreigners is whether they have tasted kimchi and liked it. Most often, this is asked in a slightly nervous anticipatory tone. A positive affirmation that one likes kimchi is usually greeted with excitement and surprise.

shortage of domestic supply as well as the special needs of, for example, high-end hotels and restaurants catering mostly to foreigners. The LPMO would announce tenders for annual import needs of grass-fed and grain-fed beef to the major import partners, Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. Suppliers from these countries could then bid for the quantities announced.

Due to the import ban, domestic beef production had increased dramatically in the period after the 1983-85 beef crisis. Production peaked in 1986 at 206,000 tons up from a low of 83,000 tons in 1982. Farmers were now fearful that a reopening of markets would result in price decreases for domestic beef as they had experienced only a few years before. Table 2 shows the dramatic rise in both consumption and import of beef in the period from 1988 to 1996, the year before the East Asian financial crisis. This period was characterized by rapidly rising urban incomes and a new restaurant culture that increased the demand for beef (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 5). Consumption more than doubled from 1988 to 1996 as Korea's economy was booming. Total per capita consumption of beef increased from 3.3 kg in 1988 to 8.3 kg in 1999 (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014). Beef was no longer only desired.

Table 2 - Consumption, Production and import of beef 1988 - 1996 (1000MT). Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014

	Consumption (1000MT)	Production (1000MT)	Import (1000MT)
1988	196	175	20
1989	198	124	83
1990	244	131	117
1991	308	136	176
1992	313	137	183
1993	317	176	132
1994	372	200	165
1995	451	214	229

1996	459	236	221
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It was also more and more accessible to a broader spectrum of Korean society. The growth in beef consumption is also reflected in the production statistics. Domestically produced beef, of which native cattle now made up the majority of cattle raised for meat, doubled in the same period from 131,000 tons in 1990 to 236,000 tons in 1996 (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 4).

The most drastic increase, however, was experienced in the amount of beef imported. In 1988, only 14,000 metric tons were imported mostly from Australia. In 1996, imports reached 221,000 metric tons. The origin of imports also changed significantly. U.S. grain-fed beef imports rose quite significantly from 14,000 tons in 1988 to 58,000 tons in 1990 and then to 84,000 tons in 1992 (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014). In that short period, the composition of imports also changed. By 1992, U.S. grain-fed beef made up 40 percent of total imports while Australian grass-fed beef dropped to a 50 percent market share for imported beef (Yoo, 1993, p. 144). From 1993, Australia was no longer the largest exporter to Korea. The U.S. took the lead as consumers began to prefer grain-fed meat with higher marbling and because the U.S. could deliver the specific cuts preferred by Korean consumers, whereas Australia only exported whole carcasses (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 14).

This shift in consumption pattern over a short period of only a few years is quite remarkable. No longer was beef an undifferentiated product. Consumers now demanded particular cuts, grain-fed beef came a preferred choice, and the U.S. was able to deliver. The reason for this change in consumer taste is difficult to ascertain. The rising demand for foreign luxury items and appreciation of “western” status symbols caused partly by the rapid expansion of supermarkets and U.S. fast food restaurant chains in the late 1980s and 1990s could be one explanation (Nelson, 2000, pp. 71–84). Another factor could be the transnational network between South Korea

and diasporic communities on the U.S. pacific coast where Korean barbecue restaurants became a central feature of Korean diasporic life (Brown, 2010, p. 37). In case, what can be observed is that the a markedly shift from grass-fed to grain fed beef occurred and most of this grain-fed beef came from the U.S.

Political Liberalization of the Farm Sector and Government Institutions

The resuming of beef imports in 1988 did not sit well with cattle farmers. They once again went to the streets to protest government policies (Abelmann, 1996, p. 219). The political liberalization that came about with the 1988 presidential elections provided agricultural producers more political influence, and their association with the broader democracy movement strengthened their voice. Demands for agricultural protectionism did not go down without a fight. Along with rice producers, beef producers emerged as strong political pressure groups even as agriculture's contribution to the economy was in a continued decline.

The newly democratized livestock cooperatives, a result of the new 1987 national constitution,⁶⁸ proved central for channeling farmers' political discontent. The cooperatives with its penetrating social connections established under authoritarian rule for political and economic control now became a strong advocacy group for farmers. From being a parastatal organization, NLCF along with NACF took an increasingly anti-government stance on trade issues. Even though many former local livestock cooperative officials were re-elected in the first democratic elections for cooperative leadership (99 of 166), the new national board of directors announced new policies and objectives for the federation, including protection against market liberalization, greater self-sufficiency in feed, and maintenance of price levels (Steinberg, 1994, p. 165). These three objectives in particular challenged the central

⁶⁸ The first democratic elections for NLCF leadership took place in March 1990.

government's trade policies and the Economic Planning Board's attempt to reduce inflationary pressures.

In 1991, the newly elected heads of the livestock cooperatives publicly rejected the final draft on agricultural trade proposed by the Director General of GATT. This was in direct opposition to the government's official position and as such, it signaled a new kind of interest politics in South Korea in which the central government's agricultural policies were challenged by farmers' cooperatives (Steinberg, 1994, p. 159). The political power and will to go against central government policies elevated livestock cooperatives to become one of the most politically powerful pressure groups emerging out of the political democratization process (Steinberg, 1994, p. 159). Their strength came from the combination of being able to mobilize internally through the existing structures of the cooperatives as well as their ability to mobilize the broader population against trade liberalization especially because of the U.S. pressure for liberalization, which could rely on popular anti-American sentiments.

Beef producers also had strong allies in the MAFF now less politically subjugated to the will of the central government branches and MAFF went against the Economic Planning Board on the issue of agricultural trade liberalization. No longer subject to the same amount of disciplining by the EPB, other agricultural state agencies such as the Korea Rural Economics Institute sided with beef producers, claiming that beef imports would destroy the domestic beef sectors within a few years (Yoo 1993:133). MAFF and the cooperatives also had strong support in the National Assembly whose power had been significantly strengthened with the establishment of the sixth republic in 1987 and its new constitution that limited the powers of the president and the EPB (Yoo, 1993, p. 133). The coalition between livestock cooperatives, MAFF, other agricultural state agencies and popular support led the government to accommodate some of the demands from the livestock cooperatives. This included continued price support mechanisms, the continuation of segregated domestic/import retail channels,

and a new set of quality grading standards. The latter decision, which we will turn to now however deepened the dependence on imported feed grains.

Protectionism Under Pressure and Structural Adjustment

Since the beginning of beef imports in 1976, beef had been subject to import quotas, and South Korea accepted a 20 percent bound tariff rate⁶⁹ on beef from 1979. The import halt to virtually all beef imports instituted in 1985 prompted The American Meat Institute to file a section 301 against South Korea in 1988, arguing that the import ban based on the BOP exception was in violation of the GATT (D. Ahn, 2003, p. 604; General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), 1989). Australia, New Zealand and the U.S. followed suit with separate complaints. After the BOP Committee consultation and IMF recommendations, it was concluded that South Korea's import ban was inconsistent with the GATT and did not fall under the BOP exception. South Korea objected to the decision numerous times, but when the United States Trade Representative threatened with a Section 301 retaliation list of Korean products subject to U.S. trade restrictions, the South Korean government agreed to follow the panel's recommendations (D. Ahn, 2003, p. 604).

As a result, following lengthy negotiations and numerous delays, South Korea agreed to replace the centralized closed tender system run by LPMO with a combined

⁶⁹ Bound tariffs are specific commitments made by individual WTO member governments. The bound tariff is the maximum MFN tariff level for a given commodity line. When countries join the WTO or when WTO members negotiate tariff levels with each other during trade rounds, they make agreements about bound tariff rates, rather than actually applied rates. Bound tariffs are not necessarily the rate that a WTO member applies in practice to other WTO members' products. Members have the flexibility to increase or decrease their tariffs (on a non-discriminatory basis) as long as they do not raise them above their bound levels. If one WTO member raises applied tariffs above the bound level, other WTO members can take the country to dispute settlement. If the country does not reduced applied tariffs below their bound levels, other countries can request compensation in the form of higher tariffs of their own. In other words, the applied tariff is less than or equal to the bound tariff in practice for any particular product. (The World Bank, 2010)

open tender and quota system in 1990. This system allowed foreign suppliers and domestic buyers to bid directly in a Simultaneous Buy and Sell (SBS) system for a part of the annual beef quota while the other parts of the quota remained with LPMO as open tenders (R. B. Kim & Veeman, 2001, p. 2). This diminished the role of LPMO and hence the state's ability to control the beef market. According to Ahn (2003), the beef case was a significant event in the South Korean economic development, as it signaled a decisive moment of import liberalization in Korea. The strong selective protective measures of agriculture that had been an integral part of economic development for three decades had reached a turning point (D. Ahn, 2003).

South Korea's position on beef in trade negotiations did not change significantly during the UR negotiations. The promises that South Korea had made in the BOP dispute were upheld. In the end, it was agreed upon that beef would be subject to an increase in first tier tariff imports until 2001 and then open the market completely with an import tariff of 41.2 percent, decreasing to 40 percent by 2004. Furthermore, the share of beef sold under the SBS would increase to a total of 70 percent of imported beef by 2000, thus further limiting the role of LPMO (Josling et al., 1994, p. 76). But even as LPMO saw its role reduced, as the SBS system was introduced for parts of the imported beef market, liberalization was not full-fledged. South Korea maintained some ways of regulating the market. The SBS was not yet completely replacing the central tender system and South Korea maintained its dual retail channel system in which imported beef was sold only at designated imported beef stores.

Global Competition and Beef Quality Grades

As U.S. grain-fed beef entered the Korean market, the cooperatives sought to respond by enhancing the competitiveness of Korean beef vis a vis U.S. beef in particular. Perhaps the most significant measure was the launch of a Korean beef quality grading system. This new grading system would cause significant changes in the Korea beef

sector, restructuring production systems and relations of production in the process. Until 1992, there was no official quality grading system for beef in Korea. This meant that overall, the beef market was quite undifferentiated and that there was little knowledge among the general population of what constituted superior quality. U.S. grain-fed beef was introduced for general consumption by NLCF in March of 1990 as a new product segment. Grain-fed beef was considered a higher quality product though the cuts were the same as for grass-fed beef. Grain-fed beef was auctioned off to registered imported beef shops⁷⁰ (these shops were only allowed to sell imported beef) through nine wholesale markets distributed throughout the country. This separation of domestic beef from imported beef at the retail level had been implemented in the 1980s to make it easier for consumers to distinguish between imported and domestic beef, except for NLCF pre-packaged imported beef, which could also be sold in domestic beef shops. The separation was an attempt on the part of NLCF to support domestic beef, which was more expensive but difficult for consumers to tell apart from imported beef⁷¹ (Yoo, 1993, p. 146). Despite this separation, however, U.S. grain-fed beef rose quickly in popularity as a high-end product among consumers, perhaps not surprisingly, since U.S. grain-fed beef imports had for decades been preferred by high-end restaurants and hotels (R. B. Y. Kim, Unterschultz, Veeman, & Jelen, 1996, p. 17).

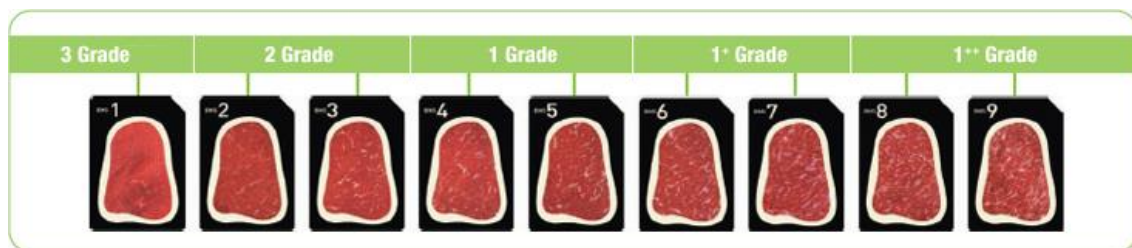
In 1992, NLCF responded to this popularity, and introduced a grading system for domestically produced beef on a trial basis in large cities (Yoo, 1993, p. 150). The system was implemented nationwide in 1995 and was introduced at the retail level in

⁷⁰ The grass fed beef went to the NLCF who would cut and package the cuts for retail using a new grading system based on previous sales experience data collected by NLCF. The beef was graded according to usage in Korean cuisine and was divided into five grades: special, high, medium, ordinary, and beef ribs (Yoo, 2000, p. 145). After packaging, NLCF would distribute directly to sales agents and imported beef shops.

⁷¹ There were several cases of butcher shops and retail outlets selling imported beef labeled as domestic beef in order to increase sales margins in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

1997 (R. Kim & Boyd, 2004, p. 49). The standards was implemented to protect Korean beef. Given its already high price, grading standards were set up to compete in the High Quality Beef (HQB) segment against U.S. grain-fed beef. This labeling also introduced the term “Hanu” as a retail “brand” that Korean consumers could recognize, and it coincided with the broader “Buy Korean” wave of the 1990s encouraged by the government to maintain a positive trade balance (See the following chapter). The quality grading system was by and large a copy of the U.S. beef quality grading system⁷². The Korean quality grading system ranked beef carcasses according to meat yields and meat quality. For the consumer, meat quality became the most important indicator, but also to producers, as higher meat quality was awarded with significantly higher prices (Yoo, 1993, p. 151). The most important aspect of the quality standards was fat marbling (Jo, Cho, Chang, & Nam, 2012, p. 33), just as it was the case with the U.S. equivalent.

Figure 3 - Hanu Meat Grading System (Source: <http://www.ekape.or.kr/view/eng/system/beef.asp>)



Grade 1++ is the highest grade.⁷³

The establishment of the grading system had significant implications for the domestic beef industry. The relatively undifferentiated beef market was replaced with a clear quality standard that rewarded particular meat attributes such as fat marbling

⁷² The grading system most likely also drew on inspiration from Japan's Wagyu. The source of inspiration however is less relevant. The point here is that the grading system was set up for Korean beef to compete with U.S. beef.

⁷³ The grading system depicted is the revised grading system. The initial grading system had fewer scales.

and fat color. The outcome can be seen below. From 1993 to 2000, the percentage of beef falling in to highest grade increased two and a half times⁷⁴. For this change to happen, however, new production systems were needed.

Table 3 - Domestic Beef Production and Percent Change in the Proportion of Beef Quality Grade (1993-2000). Source: Choi, J.-S., Zhou, Z.-Y., & Cox, R. J. (2002). Beef Consumption, Supply and Trade in Korea. *Agribusiness Review*, 10(August 2001), 1–23.

Year	Slaughter (heads)	Production (1000MT)	Quality Grade (percent)		
			Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3
1993	687	129,6	10,7	49,2	34,5
1994	778	147,3	12,7	46,1	37,5
1995	780	154,7	12,8	37,6	45,9
1996	850	173,9	19,4	32,3	45,5
1997	1125	227,8	18,4	30,0	48,8
1998	1282	260,1	15,3	28,2	54,0
1999	1095	239,7	18,9	31,6	48,3
2000	831	212,4	24,8	31,9	42,4

Optimizing Feed Systems

With a quality grading system designed to reward fat marbling and white fat color, Korean domestic producers were faced with stricter production requirements in order to receive the significant price premiums that high-grade beef offered. Obtaining the optimal level of carcass yield, fat content, fat marbling, and fat color required standardized feeding regimes and knowledge of feed optimization especially in the final months of the animal's life where fat marbling enhancement takes place. A major component of optimizing the amount of intra-muscular fat or fat marbling is dependent on the right mix of compound feed and roughage during the stages of growth (B. H. Ahn, Song, & Lyu, 2002). The color of the fat is also another important aspect. White fat is considered superior to yellow fat and had impact on the final grade

⁷⁴ The decline in grade 1 quality in 1998 was due to the large liquidation of cattle inventory caused by the East Asian financial crisis, a subject that will be discussed later in this chapter.

as well (S. S. Moon et al., 2003). The optimization of fat marbling and color is in general dependent on three major factors: age of the animal, breed, and diet (S. B. Smith, Gill, Lunt, & Brooks, 2009, p. 1225). According to research, Hanu is genetically more predisposed for high fat marbling than Holstein, the other dominant cattle breed in South Korea mostly used in the dairy sector, and significant research is conducted to identify the specific causal genes in order to further optimize fat marbling in future cattle generations (Choy et al., 2008; S. B. Smith et al., 2009). Feed optimization is also subject to significant amounts of research. Feed composition is important in order to optimize the level of fat marbling at the right age and carcass weight while balancing the cost for compound feed. For example, most Hanu cattle were sent for slaughter at 24 months in the 1980s, but this was extended to an average of 31 months in the 1990s in order to optimize carcass yield and fat marbling (Jo et al., 2012, p. 36). The extension of feeding also significantly altered the cost structure. The additional 6-7 months of feeding to optimize fat and carcass yield is the period in which grain and oilseed feed is used the most intensively, thus significantly increasing the cost of production for the producer.

A central component of the feed that enables producers to obtain the desired meat characteristics (high levels of high intra-muscular fat marbling) is by using a controlled but corn-rich compound feed. Corn-feeding in the right amounts, especially in the late stages of the feeding regimes, is a well-known and widely used practice in the U.S., Australia, Canada, and Japan, where fat marbling is also prized. Yet, not all feed corn will suffice. Certain varieties of corn provide higher oil content than other types (Andrae, Duckett, Hunt, Pritchard, & Owens, 2001) and the U.S. in particular is a leading producer and exporter of these specialized feed corn varieties. Another important aspect of feed composition is soybean meal to provide protein; something that corn provides less of, but important for the development of muscle tissue.

The beef quality standards were implemented to make Korean native cattle more competitive in the high-end market, but it also made production increasingly expensive as the feed requirements, lengthening of feed regimes, and life span to develop the desired quantities made Hanu producers increasingly dependent on imported grain and oilseeds.

With the launch of grading standards in 1992 by the NLCF Korean Hanu producers became entrenched in what Tony Weis calls the industrial grain-oilseed-livestock complex (Weis, 2010, 2013a, 2013b). While the bifurcation strategy of the early 1980s had protected beef and rice markets from overseas direct competition, the liberalization and introduction of U.S. grain-fed beef for general consumption prompted Korean producers to shift to compound feed to become competitive in the premium market where profits could be made. Thus, the development of the grading system implemented to aid Korean producers in an increasingly competitive market resulted in the institutionalization of a production system that, perhaps unintentionally, made Korean Hanu producers increasingly integrated into the U.S. grain system (Burmeister, 1990a, p. 716). The following two decades would become an ongoing struggle for Hanu producers to shelter the industry from competition of imported beef through tariffs, quotas and quality standards while seeking to shelter the feed supply system from too much price volatility.

The focus on the new quality standards and increased competition, altered the production structure of the South Korean cattle sector. As demands for more specialized production increased, beef cattle farms with less than 10 heads declined at an accelerated pace while the number of farms with more than 10 heads increased significantly from the late 1980s up until the 1997 financial crisis. This decline in the number of small producers can be associated with the structural adjustments to market liberalization and increased competition. Firstly, many small farmers decided to leave calf raising operations for other crop markets or give up farming altogether.

Consequently, the number of farms with less than 30 heads of cattle was cut in half in the decade from 1990 to 2000, ending at 288,500 farms (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 9). Secondly, the production pattern that appeared in the late 1980s became more pronounced in the 1990s. The smaller farms with less than 20 heads became increasingly specialized in calf production while the farms specialized in feeding and fattening operations were taken care of by larger operations. The early 1990s was thus a period of major transformation of the Korean beef cattle industry as well as Korean beef markets. The rapid rise in U.S. beef imports led to changes in consumer preferences, and an even greater transformation in the beef cattle sector that adapted to new market conditions. Trade liberalization but also protective measures such as quality standards accelerated cattle sector class segmentation between small calf operations and larger feeding operations and entrenched the dependence on grain and oilseed imports.

Financial Crisis and Competitiveness Measures 1997 - 2007

The East Asian Financial Crisis was the largest setback for beef producers since the beef crisis in the early to mid-1980s. This time the crisis was caused by broader economic dynamics. As unemployment rose to unprecedented highs, the declining buying power of Korean consumers meant that top-quality Hanu beef was in lesser demand.⁷⁵ Beef, still considered a special item by most, was one of the markets that were in danger of collapsing. At first, farmers held on to the slaughter-ready cattle in the hope that the economy would recover quickly. This led to an accumulation of cattle, and desperate farmers called for government intervention when the economy did not recover. In May 1996, the government announced an emergency support program to buy up cattle,

⁷⁵ Studies show that the most important determinant in Korean consumers' purchase of top-quality of Hanu is not price, but rather changes in income (Kim et. 2009:13). Another aspect of Hanu consumption is that consumers have a tendency to shift from domestically produced beef to domestically produced pork in times of falling incomes. Thus, Hanu producers were hit exceptionally hard by the financial crisis.

encouraging a record number of farmers to sell their cattle for slaughter (Yoo, 2000, p. 191). The government procurement program increased the consumption of domestic beef for two reasons. First of all, the devaluation of the Korean Won led to rising prices on imported beef. Secondly, the release of government procured beef of lower quality (farm liquidation of calves and breeding stock) at low prices spurred consumers to buy Korean beef for both economic and nationalistic reasons (Yoo, 2000, p. 186). The financial crisis however, was putting pressure on the state's finances and the government stopped its purchases in August 1998, partly due to a lack of funds and partly due to external pressure to comply with the GATT principles for domestic support commitments leading even further farmers into financial ruin (Yoo, 2000, p. 192).

The number of beef cattle peaked in 1996 at 2.843 million heads (Korea Rural Economic Research Institute, 2010, p. 163). In 1999 the number was reduced to 1.9 million heads (Yoo, 2000, p. 189). The number of cattle farms went down from 513,000 farms in 1996 to 427,000 in 1998 - a reduction of 92,000 farms in two years or 18 percent of total farms. In June 2001, at the time of market liberalization as part of Korea's ratification of the UR round, that number had further declined to 260,000. That was a reduction of cattle farms by 39.1 percent between 1996 and 2001. The smaller calf operations with herds smaller than 50 heads of cattle were reduced by 40 percent in this period from 422,000 at the end of 1998 to 256,000 in 2001 (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 9).

The fact that many of the farmers leaving the sector were cow-calf operations meant that a large portion of the country's breeding stock were liquidated during the crisis. In 2000, only large farms reported retention of replacement calves (Ban, 2000, p. 11). Also, the mass migration out of cow-calf production was an indicator of a longer-term trend of declining profitability. This trend was only exacerbated by the crisis. Following the financial crisis feeding farms became much more profitable than breeding farms because of higher wholesale prices for domestic beef caused by the

shortages in relation to consumer demand as the economy rebounded. The declining terms of business for small operations were most notably due to declining calf prices and high costs of production with labor and feed as the two major cost factors. Combined, these two inputs accounted for roughly two thirds of total production cost (Yoo, 2000, p. 196). In 2007, a breeder could report a net real income of only USD 12 per head of cattle, while a feeding farm a net income of 465 USD per head of cattle (Yeon Kim et al., 2009, p. 23). Within a few years, one of the most rapidly growing sectors of the Korean agricultural economy had dramatically shrunk and consolidated. 40 percent of small producers (less than 50 heads per cattle) left the sector in less than five years.

Medium-sized farms were also negatively affected. Farms with herd sizes between 50-100 heads declined by 28 percent while the number of farms with 100 or more heads of cattle remained stable at 1100 farms. However, the herd size of large farms increased by 9.8 percent from 1998 to 2001 (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 9). In 1995, just before the crisis, only 8 percent of total cattle inventory were on farms with 50 heads of cattle or more. In 2001, that number had increased to 28.4 percent. This trend continued during the 2000s and in 2007, the year of the food crisis, 38 percent of total cattle were raised on farms with 50 heads or more (Yeon Kim et al., 2009, p. 18). The consolidation meant that the hitherto prevailing structure of many small cow-calf operations and fewer larger fattening operations began to change as larger farms entered into breeding activities as well.

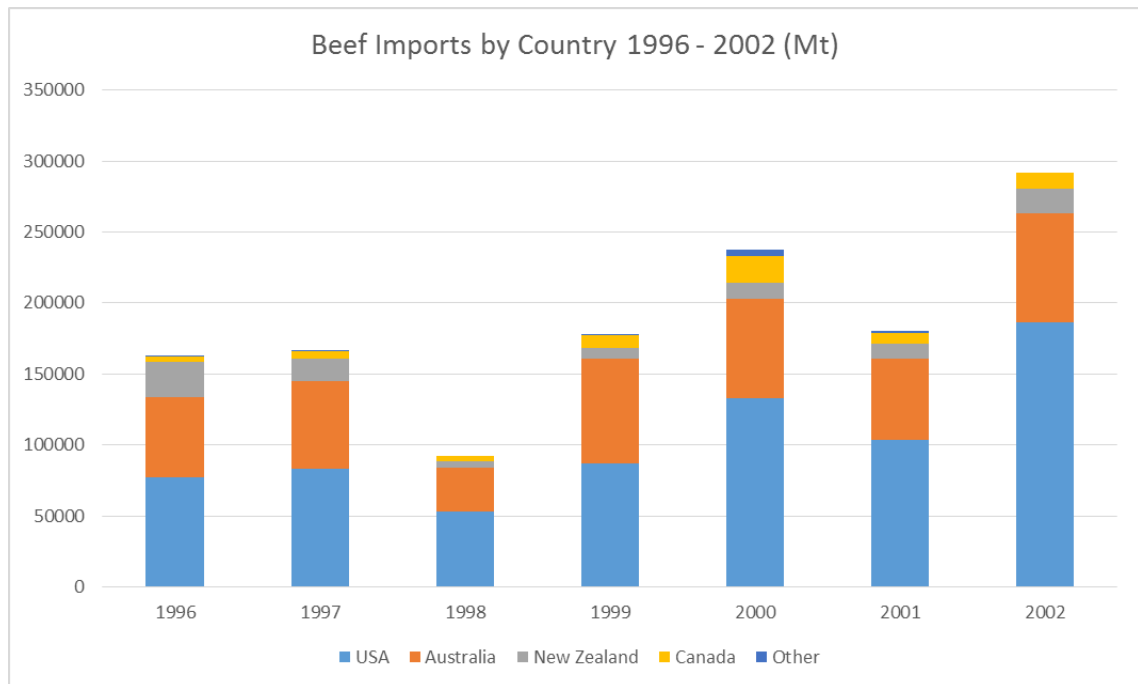
Rebounding Consumption - Rebounding Imports

The economic recovery following the East Asian crisis was faster than expected, but many Korean cattle producers were neither able nor motivated to invest in rebuilding cattle herds during those years. The full liberalization of beef imports in 2001 made economic prospects look bleak. It was not until mid-2001 that calf inventories began

to grow again, indicating that at least some, mostly larger producers had become more optimistic (Ban, 2000, p. 11). As part of the beef market liberalization, the U.S. and other countries demanded changes to the Korean beef marketing system, most notably the reduction in the “markup” set by the Korean government for imported beef to prevent undercutting domestic wholesale prices. This markup was to decrease from 75 percent in 1995 to 0 percent in 2001 (R. B. Kim & Veeman, 2001, p. 3). In addition, the U.S. filed a complaint with the WTO in 1999 regarding South Korea’s dual marketing system in which imported beef was sold only through separate imported beef retail stores. The WTO ruled in favor of the U.S., concluding that separation of retail channels resulted in favorable treatment of domestic beef. The U.S. and Australia in particular welcomed the liberalization. For many years before the financial crisis, South Korea had been the fastest growing market for beef in the world and the U.S. and Australia were among the biggest beef exporters that had already dominated the Korean market for imported beef.

With domestic production still recovering from the financial crisis, rising demand for beef was instead captured by imports. The financial crisis was in Feffer’s words “...the wedge that many exporters and foreign governments were waiting for, even though consumer demand was dropping in Korea and the won declining in value. The IMF-sponsored bail-out plan required the Korean government to remove many of the restrictions that had long characterized the economy.” (Feffer, 2004, p. 29) From 1998 to 2001, beef consumption rose more than 15 percent. Liberalization of beef markets and domestic shortage allowed major exporters such as the U.S. and Australia to enter the market full throttle. From 1998 to 2003, beef imports tripled while the market share for domestic beef plummeted from 55 percent to less than 30 percent (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014).

Figure 4 - Beef Imports by Country 1996 - 2002. Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014.



As can be seen from figure 4, U.S. beef exports, which had been around 80,000 metric tons in the years before the crisis increased to 180,000 tons in 2002. This drastic increase in U.S. beef was what many experts and interest organizations in Korea feared the most because U.S. beef was primarily grain-fed and thus a main competitor to domestic beef. However, Kim et al. have noted that a number of studies show that top quality Hanu beef (Grade 1) had maintained a relative insensitivity to import competition i.e. that even as imports rose, the top-grade Hanu quality was able to maintain both market share and price levels. Lower-grade Hanu experienced a higher level of substitutability with imported beef cuts pressuring prices at the lower end of the domestic beef market (Yeon Kim et al., 2009, p. 13). High Quality Hanu, which is up to four times more expensive than the highest grade of U.S. beef (Choice and Prime), was thus able to maintain its market niche position despite rapidly increasing imports mainly due to the clear differentiation that Korean consumers made between imported and domestic beef. This subject will be dealt with in depth in the following chapter.

Feed and Competitiveness

For both breeding and fattening farms, the major cost of production is feed. In 1999, 46-47% of the total cost of production was attributed to feed on breeding farms. For fattening farms, 29-37 percent of total operating costs were for animal feed while calf costs amounted to 30-37 percent of operating cost (Yoo, 2000, p. 196). Animal feed had become a significant cost concern in the Korean cattle industry. Price fluctuations on feed imports is thus a major concern and attempts to lower production costs and hence end prices for Hanu have become a pivotal aspect of government policy and beef producer concerns. In the early 2000s, producers benefited from low prices in the global grain market, which helped the Hanu industry to recover, at least partially, from the financial crisis and import liberalization.

In 2000, contamination of food items with the GMO corn variety Starlink⁷⁶ prompted the Korean government to require mandatory labeling of GMO corn, an action directly targeted at the U.S. In response, South Korea turned to China as non-GMO corn from China was significantly cheaper than U.S. non-GMO corn (S. C. Choi & Henney, 1999; S. Choi & Phillips, 2003; S. Choi, 2002). Sourcing from China, however, was a short-lived affair. China announced a gradual end to corn exports in 2004 to meet domestic demand and Korean suppliers yet again turned to the U.S. as the dominant supplier of feed corn (Phillips & Choi, 2004, p. 4). From 2004 to 2007, U.S. exports of feed corn increased three-fold and the U.S. market-share for feed corn rose from 26 percent to 90 percent (S. Choi & Smith, 2010).

To support Hanu producers, the South Korean government announced “The Comprehensive Hanu Industry development Plan in July 1996, in preparation for the upcoming market liberalization of beef in 2001. The plan, which was delayed by the

⁷⁶ The discovery of Starlink in food items in the U.S. became a major disaster for U.S. corn exports not only to Korea, but also to Japan, another major market for U.S. corn. (Segarra & Rawson, 2001).

financial crisis, set targets for the number of cattle inventory to maintain, and market share for domestic beef compared to imported beef. Following liberalization, the government aimed at keeping a herd size of 2.3-2.4 million heads of cattle and a market share around 35-40 percent. In addition, a target wholesale price was set at 2 million KRW (~2380 USD) per head of cattle for grade 2 quality while grade 1 beef was to receive a price boost of up to 40 percent (Yoo, 2000, p. 1996). Another aspect of the plan was to increase the share of domestically produced beef that fell into the premium grade 1 category.

A major aspect of both government and industry initiatives in the years following market liberalization was the strengthening of the Hanu brand as synonymous with high quality, food safety and not the least national origin (R. Kim & Boyd, 2004, p. 47). Food safety became especially prominent following the global Mad Cow scares of the late 1990s and early 2000s (Lien, 2004). Establishing Hanu as a premium niche market product focused on three activities in the early 2000s: first, a revision of the grading system to set it further apart from U.S. grading systems; second, better marketing initiatives of Hanu as a distinct brand vis-a-vis imported beef including mandatory country-of-origin labeling; and third, a traceability system that would allow the consumer to trace meat purchases using a bar code system.

Branding Hanu as a high-end product prompted a revision of the grading system. The production of prime grade beef in Korea had stabilized itself around 25 percent of total production in 2000 (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 12). By promoting stricter feeding regimes and longer raising periods to achieve higher fat marbling, the government and NACF sought to strengthen the supply of premium beef cuts. The effects were noticeable. In 2007, 50.9 percent of total Hanu slaughtered carcasses were grade 1 or higher (1+ and 1++) (Ban & Francom, 2009). The numbers have increased steadily since reaching 62 percent in 2011 (Ban & Wixom, 2012). But aiming for the premium market leaves little room for mistakes. Quality and food safety concerns have

also raised the cost of production and locked Hanu producers into a very strict production system, in which meat attributes that derive from imported grains and oilseeds have become central to the maintaining of consumer loyalty. This has made it difficult to reduce the dependency on imported feedstuffs and hence vulnerability to international grain and oilseed price fluctuations.

Hanu Producer Segmentation

As presented earlier, the 1990s was a period in which the hegemonic position of the parastatal cooperative federation NLCF saw its legitimacy among its constituency eroded. Despite free elections to NLCF's political leadership in 1990, the period of the cooperative federation as the government's extended hand ended. An increasing number of beef cattle producers organized themselves in smaller and more specialized cooperatives. By the end of the 1990s, 86 specialized "brand name" beef cooperatives, often associated with particular regions of South Korea, had formed. These cooperatives increasingly began to sell meat through their own special stores or directly to large-scale retailers and intermediaries, thus circumventing the monopoly that NLCF had maintained since the early 1980s. The change in production methods and the rise in specialized fattening farms also led to diverging interests among cattle farmers themselves. In 1999, a group of beef producers formed the National Hanu Association. Until then, beef farmers' political influence had primarily been conducted through the NLCF and provincial cooperatives.

The Hanu Association was more specialized, focused only on the production and promotion of high quality premium beef. Furthermore, they represented primarily the larger scale operations. Many of the members belonged to a younger generation of farmers trained and educated to become specialized producers, unlike the smaller scale producers who dominated the sector up until the financial crisis in 1997. The Hanu Association modeled itself on a similar platform as the pork and poultry producers'

associations, which had been politically active for more than two decades. The purpose of the Hanu Association was simple: to protect the interest of (larger) Hanu farmers by lobbying the Ministry, the central government and the national assembly. At the time of this writing, the association had approximately 25,000 members, of which 80 percent had more than 20 heads of cattle (Kim Yong-Won, personal communication, August 7, 2013).

Internally, the Hanu Association activities focused on educating members on the importance of selective breeding, most notably artificial insemination, to improve the desired characteristics of Hanu, such as the genetic disposition for higher marbling and larger hindquarters. Secondly, the Hanu Association worked with feed producers to educate members on the importance on following strict feeding regimes that encouraged faster growth, larger muscles, and fat marbling. The Hanu Association also involved itself consumer campaigns. The Hanu Marketing Board promotes the consumption of Hanu to consumers through a range of activities including public and in-store campaigns. These campaigns stress the safety, national origin, and quality of Hanu beef (Ban & Francom, 2011, Kim Yong-Won, personal communication, August 7, 2013). The association also uses top celebrities as Hanu ambassadors in media adverts and at special events, something that will be discussed at greater length in the next chapter. Overall, Hanu activities partially funded by the MAFF have focused on strengthening the competitiveness of Hanu vis-a-vis imported beef by focusing on quality, food safety and the “native” origins of Hanu.

The establishment of the Hanu Association, however, led to more pronounced political fragmentation within the beef cattle sector. The founding of the Hanu Association stemmed from emerging diverging economic interests between smaller breeding operations and the larger feeding farms and integrated operations. A representative of the Korean Peasant’s League, an organization representing small-scale farmers, argued that the Hanu Association’s lobbying and activities have focused

mainly on protecting the interests of larger feeding operations while they ignore the demands of smaller farmers. The larger producers have through the Hanu Association been able to advocate for their concerns at the national level by building alliances with the MAFF and feed industries while breeding operations, due to their size and position in the production chain, saw their terms of business and political power eroded. Measures to strengthen the competitiveness of Hanu, he claimed, benefited the larger operations and were not in the interest of most small-scale breeding farms who did not see an improvement in calf prices⁷⁷ (Moon Kyung-Sik, personal communication, August 14, 2013).

The price premium for high grade Hanu, provided by the government as compensation for trade liberalization, benefits as such the fattening operations. While breeding operations now operate nearly at cost of production or at a loss (Moon Kyung-Sik, personal communication, August 14, 2013). Moon Kyung-Sik criticized the Hanu Association for only taking care of their own interests while neglecting the interests of breeders. He argued that raising Hanu was not only about bolstering competitiveness of a select group of, but also about sustaining rural communities and rural culture in general. As such he regarded the Hanu Association as a special interest group protecting the economic interests of larger producers alone.

⁷⁷ Small-scale breeding farms that provide the bulk of calves to the feeding farms have, as mentioned earlier, experienced declining terms of trade since the financial crisis in 1997 with profit margins at virtually nil. This in turn has led to a mass migration out of breeding operations especially around the time of beef market liberalization in 2001. From December 1998 to June 2001, cattle farms with less than fifty heads of cattle declined by 39.3 percent. The bulk of the farmers leaving the business were breeders (J.-S. Choi et al., 2002, p. 9). Breeders in general are more concerned about stabilizing the calf prices through government interventions rather than strengthening the overall competitiveness of premium Hanu beef in the retail market. However, the Hanu Association had a stronger negotiation position with the MAFF because their objectives of strengthening the competitiveness of Hanu was more in line with MAFF priorities (Moon Kyung-Sik, personal communication, August 14, 2013).

BSE scares and the shutdown of U.S. imports

On December 2003, the United States Department of Agriculture announced that a cow in Washington State may have been infected with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) also known as Mad Cow Disease (Jin & Koo, 2004, p. 1). BSE is a progressive neurological disease of cattle that causes degeneration in the brain and spinal cord of cattle. It is linked to the human variant of the disease known as Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease. BSE is not contagious but is believed to spread through meat and bone meal. Since the discovery of the disease in 1986 in the UK, the disease has been a concern and cause of multiple food scares around the world. After the announcement of the suspected BSE case in Washington State, South Korea along with Japan, Canada and Mexico responded promptly and banned imports of U.S. beef in December 2003 (Hanrahan & Becker, 2006). South Korea implemented the halt on U.S. beef imports by suspending all customs inspection clearances of U.S. beef at all airports and seaports (CNN, 2003).

At the time of the import ban, the U.S. was the world's third largest beef/veal exporter with an 18 percent world market share. Total U.S. beef exports amounted to 1.1 million metric tons with a value of 3.9 billion USD. The second largest importer of U.S. beef following Japan, South Korea was importing 264,000 metric tons of beef in 2003 (Hanrahan & Becker, 2006, p. 2). Just as the 1997 financial crisis had provided the wedge needed for U.S. beef to become a dominant player in the Korean beef market, the 2003 import ban provided Korean producers with new opportunities to capture market share. The response from Korean producers came quite rapidly. The domestic cattle inventory began to rise again after reaching its lowest levels in March 2003. The number of artificial inseminations in the first quarter of 2004 rose 30 percent compared to the same period the year before (Phillips & Ban, 2004). But the BSE incident also had a negative impact on beef consumption in Korea, as consumer confidence in the general health and safety of beef fell, which put a damper on Hanu producers' ability

to expand their market share significantly. Australia benefited immensely from the ban and were able to triple its exports of beef to Korea from 64,100 tons in 2003 to 147,000 tons in 2007 (Yeon Kim et al., 2009, p. 16). To enter the high quality beef market, Australia also introduced grain-fed beef based on the Japanese cattle variety Wagyu, which resembles Korean beef in terms of marbling and was thus able to compete with Hanu beef as the visual and taste differences, according to one industry expert, are minimal to the consumer (Kip Richardson, personal communication, August 7, 2013).

While the overall beef market was reduced, Hanu producers did experience an increase in production from a low of 182,000 tons in 2003 to 246,000 tons in 2008, a growth of 35 percent (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014). The Korean government and the Hanu Association also implemented campaigns to promote consumption of Hanu by stressing Hanu as a safer choice than its foreign competitors (R. Kim & Boyd, 2004). Economic incentives were also launched in 2004 to regain consumer confidence by providing cash incentives to farmers for quality improvement. Farmers would receive 270-255 USD in premium for quality top-grade carcasses from castrated Hanu bulls. A beef traceability system was also enforced beginning in 2004 that allows for detailed registration of the animals from insemination to retail. For the consumer, this meant that they could find out where the cow was raised and slaughtered by using the bar code on Hanu retail packages. Finally, the Korean government announced improvements to the BSE monitoring system (Phillips & Ban, 2004). All these initiatives were attempts to strengthen consumer confidence in Hanu beef and hence its competitiveness in the retail market. Although the absence of U.S. beef due to BSE led to an overall decline in beef consumption, hanu producers benefited from the absence of U.S. beef in terms of both total production as well as market share. Between 2003 and 2008, domestic production rose from 182,000 tons to 246,000 tons and increased its market share from 29 percent to 46 percent (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014). But the KORUS-FTA

agreement and the anticipated elimination of tariffs on U.S. beef was a major fear to Korean beef producers. As part of negotiations, the Korean government had agreed to a gradual reduction of import tariffs for U.S. beef from 40 to 0 percent. Korean beef farmers were extremely concerned about their ability to compete with U.S. beef at prices 4-6 times lower than Hanu prices.

The KORUS-FTA and the U.S. Beef Protest

As discussed in chapter 4, South Korea had actively pursued bilateral FTA's with strategically important trading partners since 1998 to strengthen market access for export-oriented industries and in order to perform a rapid recovery from the financial crisis. The first bilateral FTA that South Korea entered was with Chile in 2002 and it entered into effect in April 2004 (Y. Song, 2011). A key issue in these talks was the matter of agricultural trade. As a major agricultural exporter, Chile hoped for new market openings in South Korea. South Korea, however, maintained that certain politically "sensitive" products such as apples and pears should not be subject to tariff reduction. Chile conceded to this demand in return for excluding manufacturing products such as refrigerators and washing machines in which South Korean manufacturers were strong, from the agreement as well (H. Chung, 2003). Chile was allowed greater opening for agricultural exports in sectors that would have minimal impact on Korean producers. The agreement with Chile was very much a training ground for Korea FTA negotiators as well as a probe on how the public would react to FTA's. In the coming years, South Korea concluded negotiations with a number of other countries such as Singapore (2006), USA (2007), India (2010), Peru (2010), and regional blocks such as EFTA (2006), ASEAN (2007), EU (2010). As of 2012, South Korea was involved in negotiations of another eight countries and regional blocks (Yoshimatsu, 2012). Most of these FTA's were concluded without major political opposition. Farmers,

trade unions, and some civil society groups staged protests, but they remained quite small.

The most politically contentious of these FTA's was the KORUS-FTA and from South Korea's point of view, agricultural trade liberalization was the most difficult part of the agreement to negotiate. The FTA was of significant economic importance to both countries. The KORUS-FTA would be the largest bilateral free trade agreement either side had attempted to sign with a single country. The trade between the two countries was already substantial with South Korea being the seventh-largest trading partner to the U.S. and the U.S. being South Korea's third-largest trading partner. Official negotiations between the two states began in 2006 and were initially concluded in the summer of 2007. The agreement was initially opposed by a minority of politicians and economic sectors in both countries. In the U.S., automobile workers' unions and several automobile producers opposed the FTA, fearing that South Korean auto manufacturers would squeeze the already pressured U.S. auto industry (Hart-Landsberg, 2011; Petrik, 2008). South Korea stood to gain most in terms of access to the U.S. markets for heavy industries and electronics markets in which South Korean conglomerates had a strong lead. However, in South Korea, public opposition was much stronger than in the U.S. It was especially the impact on the domestic agricultural sector that was a sensitive political issue. Almost two-thirds of the value of U.S. imports to Korea came from agricultural products (Y. Song, 2011). It was estimated that the agreement could lead to losses of 12 trillion won (\$10.7 billion) within 15 years in the agricultural sector, with 90 percent of losses coming in the areas of livestock and fruit (A. Park, 2013, p. 5). Before the 2003 ban on U.S. beef imports, South Korea had been the largest export market after Japan (Giamalva, 2013). Farmers and left-wing labor movements were vocal in their opposition to a free trade agreement with the U.S., and they were able to get some popular support behind them by arguing that the KORUS-FTA would destroy Korean agriculture, rural communities, and people's health. Anti-US

sentiments were also flaring once again, especially on the political left who saw it as another attempt by the U.S. and U.S. corporations to gain influence. This popular discontent made it difficult for the Korea government to ratify the agreement in the national assembly. The agreement had not even been presented to the national assembly's standing committee out of fear that it would be defeated 6 months after the agreement had been signed.

But U.S. opposition was also strong. While South Korea maintained a strong stance of excluding rice liberalization from negotiations, the U.S. pushed strongly to eliminate tariffs for U.S. beef and revert the import ban, which had been in effect since the end of 2003. Most notably, Democratic Senator Marc Baucus from Montana whose home state is a major beef producer made clear that any ratification of the KORUS-FTA in the senate would be blocked by him if the ban on U.S. beef was not lifted (Petrik, 2008, p. 41). President Roh Moo-hyun, who had hoped to ratify the agreement before the end of his term in early 2008, had to give in and leave the ratification to his successor President Lee Myung-bak. Lee Myung-bak, who had won a landslide victory on his "747 Campaign,"⁷⁸ was eager to ratify the KORUS-FTA to boost the national economy and improve diplomatic relations with the U.S., which had been strained during the administrations of the two previous Korean presidents' rapprochement with North Korea. The sticking point of the KORUS-FTA remained the resumption of beef imports. Roh Moo-hyun had already allowed for imports of boneless U.S. beef from cattle less than 30 months old in September 2006. The Korean government, however, maintained a continued ban on products containing specified risk materials (SRM) such as brains, eyes, spinal cords, as well as mechanically boned meat. Over the next year, numerous discoveries of SRM's in U.S. shipments caused a series of closures and re-openings of beef imports. By October 2007, another shipment was found containing

⁷⁸ 7 percent growth rates; per capita income of 40,000 USD; make South Korea the 7th largest economy in the world.

SRMs and imports were once again suspended. Meanwhile, the U.S. pushed for re-allowing in-bone exports of beef from cattle less than 30 months old, but negotiations halted in October 12 (C.-H. Lee, 2013, p. 68). On April 11, 2008 beef negotiations were resumed under the new administration. A few days later, President Lee Myung-bak flew to the U.S. to meet President George W. Bush at Camp David. Eager to improve relations and re-launch KORUS-FTA negotiations, President Lee agreed to a full liberalization of beef imports and a reduction of beef import tariffs from 40 percent to 0 percent over 15 years (Cooper et al., 2008). When the news broke to the Korean public, public outrage over the president's decision came quickly. Discontent was fueled when one of the main broadcasters, MBC, aired a documentary called "U.S. beef: Is it really safe from mad cow disease?" on April 29, which fueled fears that BSE-infected beef could end up on the dinner plate. (Yungwook Kim & Lim, 2012) In reaction to the documentary, online activity exploded in Internet forums especially among teens⁷⁹ (J. Han, 2009).

On May 2, an online club of mostly high school students staged a protest in Cheonggye Square of Seoul, and protests continued for around 100 days (K. Shin, 2012, p. 304). The spreading of the protests was attributed in several articles to online media, which challenged the traditional control of media communication by the government and public or private TV broadcasters and newspapers. (S.-O. Lee et al., 2010, p. 362). The early protests did differ significantly from the common political constellation of public protests against trade liberalization dominated by non-state aligned labor unions, university students, and farmers. These were the most active segments of civil society in public protests in the past two decades. The first protests were dominated by high school students and young women in their 20's and 30's, and a peaceful, festive atmosphere. Also, unlike earlier mass demonstrations, mobilization and organization

⁷⁹ Han (2009) provides statistics that shows the drastic rise in Internet activity on the major website Daum during the beef protests compared to before the protests. The number of visitors more than doubled following the MBC documentary.

of protests occurred mainly through Internet forums⁸⁰ (J. Han, 2009). From the small protests in early May, things escalated and on June 10, 2008 more than 1 million people were said to have joined demonstrations in Seoul (J. Kang, 2012). Not only did the number of people increase, but instances of violent outbreaks and clashes with police became more frequent as the protests spread and attention diverted from the issue of U.S. beef safety (*The Associated Press*, 2008). The beef protests had quite unexpectedly become a major political crisis for the recently elected president (Petrik, 2008, p. 46). His approval ratings dropped from nearly 80 percent at his election in December 2007 to only 17.1 percent in June 2008, the lowest popularity rating of any president after 200 days in office (J. Han, 2009, p. 63).

While first defending his decision, he later made public apologies on May 22 and again on June 19. But his apologies did not sway public opinion. Even the resignation of 15 cabinet ministers, the prime minister, and 9 senior aides to the president were not enough to assuage discontent (*The Economist*, 2008). Many thought the apologies were insincere and did not go far enough, especially in terms of corrective actions (Yungwook Kim & Lim, 2012). The protests forced the government to plead with the U.S. to renegotiate full liberalization of beef imports. While initially opposing the idea, the U.S. administration also saw that the beef issue could make or break the KORUS-FTA. During the summer of 2008, modifications to the import policy was made, such as an agreement to only allow U.S. beef imports from cattle that were less than 30 months of age as a transition measure to increase consumer confidence in U.S. beef (Ban & Phillips, 2008, p. 10). By not allowing beef from animals older than 30 months, the government and industry was trying to address the scares over BSE, which was regarded as the major factor attributed to what mobilized broader than usual segments of Korean society (Doucette, 2010; Hart-Landsberg, 2011; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010; K. Shin, 2012). Secondly, the government introduced mandatory country of

origin labeling of beef in all restaurants and beef retail outlets (Yeon Kim et al., 2009, p. 39). Opponents to the KORUS-FTA and reopening of U.S. beef imports did not manage to halt either, but they managed to create the biggest political crisis for any democratically elected president and to many it showed the continued strong antitrade liberalization sentiments among Korean agricultural producers.

Yet as much as the 2008 beef protests were an example of cattle farmers standing united in their opposition against the KORU-FTA and reopening of U.S. beef imports, it was perhaps a final moment of unity. As the protests died out during the fall of 2008, rising feed prices caused first by the global food crisis and followed by corn harvest failures in the 2012 U.S. corn harvest led to diverging economic policy request from the Hanu Association and the smaller breeding operations. The Hanu Association lobbied the government for three major policy interventions: 1) Government subsidies to lower the retail price of Hanu beef and support for consumption promotion, 2) A feed price stabilization fund to be used in times of high feed prices, and 3) overseas agricultural development. To push the government towards action, the Hanu Association staged nationwide protests and hunger strikes in the summer of 2012 (Kim Yong Won, Personal Communication, August 7, 2013).

The Hanu Association's demands received criticism from a representative of the Korean Peasant's League. According to him, the demands of the Association represented only the interests of the larger feeder operations who were interested only in competitiveness and market share (Moon Kyung Sik, Personal Communication, August 14, 2013). The feed price stabilization fund and overseas agricultural development did little to assist smaller breeding operations he argued. For them price stabilization of calf prices would do much more for smaller farmers like himself. Instead of focusing on market competitiveness and market share, smaller farmers were campaigning for more comprehensive rural support systems that would preserve the viability of small-scale agriculture in general rather than accommodating only the

demands of the small but powerful group of large-scale Hanu producers (Moon Kyung Sik, Personal Communication, August 14, 2013).

The question of overseas agricultural development as a means to protect the domestic agricultural sector has thus created political rifts within the cattle sector with smaller farmers such as KPL members opposing it while the Hanu Association is in favor. These disagreement over policy stem in large part from diverging intra-sectoral economic interests between different segments within the production process (Winders, 2009a, p. 15). The segmentation itself is mainly the result of the consolidation and specialization caused by trade liberalization and not the least the political decisions made in the early 1990s to make Hanu a highly specialized and oil-seed and grain intensive production system. As such, the decision create a high end product in order to compete with U.S. beef was instrumental in increasing feed import dependence, but it also created intra-sectoral conflicts between cattle producer segments when it comes to the issue of overseas agricultural development.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the historical trajectory of the Korean beef cattle sector and how feed import dependence became entrenched. This was not merely an evolutionary process, nor the direct outcome of trade liberalization alone. The chapter highlights the unpredictable ways in which the predictable expansion of beef cattle production in South Korea has occurred. It is a trajectory with boom and bust cycles and political struggles to both protect domestic producers, by developing production standards and encouraging specialization. Few observers in the late 1970s had predicted that the Korean beef cattle sector would become such an important sector to the agricultural economy, that native cattle or Hanu would become such a high-end and dominating part of beef production in South Korea, or that the beef cattle sector would be almost completely dependent on imported feed grains.

The historical trajectory of beef production shows that the industry was not only shaped by the economic logic of trade liberalization and competitiveness, but also by national politics. The trajectory of post-war Korean industrial/commercial beef production coincides with the period of economic and political transformation in which the old authoritarian and statist regime was giving way to more democratic forces and liberal markets. Old practices of selective trade protectionism gradually gave way to market liberalization. The transition did not occur without opposition from farmers. When beef production's first bust happened in the tense political climate of the mid 1980s, it encouraged alliances between discontented farmers and the democracy movement who saw the economic struggles of farmers as a consequence of corrupt government practices. These alliances with other social movements strengthened their political power and most probably contributed to the adoption of militant forms of protest that beef farmers as well other farmer groups became famous and notorious for. With the political democratization of the country in the late 1980s, beef farmers were able to strengthen their political power by converting the former state-controlled cooperatives, now accountable to its members rather than the government, into powerful political pressure groups. At the same time, the relatively homogeneous composition of Korean beef farmers (small-scale non-specialized operations) ensured relative consensus on economic and political demands, most notably price stabilization programs and import quotas that would ensure producers an acceptable profit. Outside pressure finally made the government agree to a stop to import quotas as part of the 1994 Uruguay Round negotiations with a phasing out of the quota system in 2001.

In response to market opening, NACF and the government introduced the new quality system which transformed the production structure, as more specialized knowledge and resources became necessary to meet the new quality standards, which favored larger and more specialized fattening operations. This was a transformation

encouraged actively by MAFF and the cooperatives, but it was a decision that significantly changed the structure of the sector. Whereas cattle farmers in the 1980s were a largely homogenous group of predominantly small-scale production on multi-functional farms, macro-economic changes and changes to the production system led to a fragmentation of producers. The division of labor between small-scale breeding operations and larger scale feeder operations gradually became more prominent. This separation of breeding and fattening operations and the difference in scale between breeders and feeders also led to diverging interests between the two groups. While breeders have continued to lobby and advocate for price stabilization programs, larger feeder operations have advocated for policies that enhance the competitiveness in the retail market. This intra-sectoral differentiation follows Winders' argument of how class segments form according to their position in the production process.

The larger beef cattle farmers have organized themselves in the Hanu producer association, and this interest group has in less than a decade become among the most visible and powerful political pressure groups in Korean agriculture. The Hanu Association only represent approximately 25,000 of the 170,000+ beef producers in South Korea, but possess the weight to influence policy beyond their small numbers. Along with the Korean feed industry, they are among the agricultural sector groups that support the government's overseas agricultural development strategy. Both have clear interests in finding new ways to stabilize and lower the cost of feed grain supply. For Hanu producers, variation in feed alternatives is limited, as fat marbling remains the most important visual quality trait that consumers recognize apart from the name. This is not to say that the overseas agricultural development strategy is the outcome solely of lobbying by the feed industry and Hanu members, but that both groups have had strong interests in supporting the policy because of their position in the production structure of the Korean beef cattle sector. What is remarkably absent in the debates

over the “problem” of import dependence within the sector, is the virtue of a production system that is heavily dependent on grain imports.

The decision to enhance the competitiveness of domestically produced beef by developing a quality standard in the early 1990s in anticipation of a more competitive and differentiated market was perhaps the most significant policy decision for the question of feed grain import dependence. First of all, beef from native cattle, or *Hanu* as it has come to be known, moved from an undifferentiated product to a premium product that could compete in the higher value market segments against U.S. grain fed beef. The quality standard was an attempt to prepare Korean beef producers to a new market reality. Secondly, the quality grading system rewarded fat marbling and meat yield. This prompted product development to focus on breeding larger animals with a higher predisposition for intra-muscular fat development. The quality standard thus replicated the quality criteria of U.S. grain fed beef to compete for the high-end market. The culmination of these policies was the shift to a system relying on imported corn and soybean and hence strengthened the need for imported grain-based feed. Initiatives to develop a domestic feed production base had been almost abandoned by the 1990s and thus the need for feed grain that could produce the meat quality requirements had to be brought in from overseas. The success of Korean produced beef became dependent on the very same liberalization policies that farmers and their organizations so vehemently protested and it highlights the effects of bifurcation policies that strategically protected certain markets while allowing for feed imports to rise and thus contributing to rising food import dependence. The feed import dependence in turn showed the sensitive of the system to international commodity markets as feed prices rose drastically since 2008. The reliance on imported feed for Hanu’s highly specialized production system especially made larger fattening operations vulnerable to feed price increases. This led the Hanu Association to push for and support the government’s decision for overseas agricultural development

whereas the smaller breeding operators in general regarded this policy initiative protecting the interests of larger farmers only. This segmentation in turn explains why the political alliance amongst farmers against the reopening of U.S. beef imports did not reproduce itself in opposing the OADS. Whereas cattle farmers in general can unite on the issue of market protection for Hanu beef, they have diverging interests when it comes to the issue of feed supply. Yet even with this political fragmentation, it remains to be discussed why organizations such as KPL, despite their opposition could not mount an effective political alliance against the OADS based in economic arguments. For this, I turn to agro-food policy became linked to matters of national sovereignty and identity.

PART II

The Making of a Food Security Crisis

CHAPTER 6 - THE RISE OF GASTRONATIONALISM

If officials and the people want to receive respect from foreign countries, they should become like the people of enlightened, autonomous, independent countries-[they should] throw away their rice and kimchi and eat beef and bread.

- Quote from the Independence Club's Newspaper in 1898 cited in (Sin Yongha in Pang & Shin, 2005, p. 79)

In the previous chapter I traced the trajectory that led to rising food import dependence as the outcome of state economic development priorities as well as the transformation of the agricultural sector towards livestock production. This trajectory also outlined why the state and certain segments of the agricultural support the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy while other segments of the agricultural sector opposed it.

The following two chapters will focus on how the government, state agencies agricultural producers have attempted to protect domestic agriculture from trade liberalization by linking agricultural production and food consumption to national identity. These chapters will trace how questions of food and agriculture have been linked to nationalist historiographies of foreign aggression and oppression to the detriment of national sovereignty and national identity. It is through the articulation of agro-food policy as important to national sovereignty and identity that economic actors seek gain broader political support to defend or oppose economic policy prescriptions. Thus, what is the objective here is to study how the idea that policies detrimental domestic agriculture has come to be regarded as an attack on the nation itself emerged (Desoucey, 2010, p. 433). The chapter furthermore argues that the term food security as a driver for the OADS should be understood not as a matter of food shortages per se, but rather as a means to appeal to people's sense of protecting national sovereignty and identity from outside domination.

The quote from the Independence Club's newspaper at the beginning of this chapter is an interesting example of the symbolic (and material) significance of food at the beginning of modern Korean history as well as the association of beef with a western diet at the end of the 19th century. The Independence Club⁸¹ was a movement established by young government officials and intellectuals seeking to secure national sovereignty by transforming Korea into a modern nation state that would be recognized and respected by the strong powers of the day. The late 19th century was marked by the end of Chinese suzerainty and the first Sino-Japanese War, when Korea was attempting to establish itself as a modern sovereign nation state amidst threats from a number of colonial powers (Chu, 2005; Em, 2013). In this project of becoming a strong nation in the eyes of foreign powers, Independence Club members envisioned a modern Korean state, and this vision required not only a transformation of the state but also of practices such as etiquette, clothing and food (Chu, 2005, p. 79). Rice and kimchi, foods central to the everyday Korean diet, were by some Independence Club members considered "weak" compared to the western diet of beef and bread. While the Independence Club's influence was short lived, it was forcibly shut down by Emperor Gojong in 1898 only two years after its establishment, the quote is an illustration of how food was envisioned by early reformers as central to building a modern nation.

⁸¹ The Independence Club was initially formed by high-level officials with support of the Joseon royal family and the government in 1896. Its inspiration came primarily from social Darwinism, and they pushed for reforms to modernize Korean society in order to withstand the pressures of imperial powers such as Russia and Japan, as well as distance itself from the Qing Dynasty that they considered weak (Reference in Pang 2005). The Independence Club considered imitation of the "strong" powers such as the U.S., United Kingdom, and Japan necessary in order to become a sovereign state in the western sense. To do so they wanted to reject the status as a suzerain state under the Chinese Qing Dynasty and establish a Westphalian sovereign state. While the Independence Club was outlawed in 1898, it was central in the early shaping of a liberal Korean nationalism in which the people, not the king, was at the center of a Korean polity. Most of its members had been educated in the U.S. or Japan, bringing back a different view of the world and Korea's situation in it. Among its member were also Rhee SyngMan, who would become the first President of the Republic of Korea in 1948.

A century later, South Korea seemed to have achieved the goal of becoming a strong independent nation in the eyes of the former imperial powers and the rest of the world. Few would argue that South Korea today, with its military and economic power, is perceived as a weak nation in the international world order. While Korean governments did borrow from Japanese and western ideas and practices for their development, Korean society and economy also followed its own distinct trajectory. Development took its own distinct course, and so did Korean agriculture and diets. Even as rice and kimchi remain important to Korean agriculture and to the Korean diet so-called western foods like bread and beef were also incorporated into Korean meals and often so as part of the state-making project of the second half of the 20th century. But if a “western” diet was considered the best for a modern nation, how did domestic agriculture and domestic food items then become so important in the political struggles over agricultural policy beginning in the 1980s?

This chapter seeks to trace how political struggles over the direction of agro-food policy became a struggle between competing ideas of what constituted a national identity and which parts of society represented the authentic Korean subject. Secondly the chapter studies the trajectory of how Korean native cattle, Hanu, and beef became enrolled in this struggle. Beef has come to play a central part in Korean food culture, sharing an almost equal footing as kimchi and rice in national food identity. Beef, once associated with modernity and considered part of a project to define a modern national identity in the image of the “west”, has become a symbol of national tradition and heritage. How did this shift come about and when? This chapter argues that the shift in perception is a relatively recent phenomenon and that the position of the Korean cow and beef as central to national identity is one of the effects of the struggles over the role of Korean food and agriculture in a globalizing world.

The state’s attempt to shape people’s food consumption habits has been studied closely by Park Kyoung-Hee (2013). Park argues that state strategies to regulate

food consumption for much of Korea's colonial and post-colonial history have appealed to patriotism (K.-H. Park, 2013, p. 345). American scholar, Laura Nelson, takes on a broader perspective but argues similarly that the phenomenon of consumer nationalism in South Korea is a striking but understudied part of economic development strategies. Nelson argues that consumer nationalism in South Korea goes beyond a crude definition of buying products made in South Korea. As consumers encountered an increasingly complex market in the 1980s as more imported products found their way to store shelves as a consequence of economic liberalization and rising purchasing power, Korean consumers set themselves the task of making consumer choices that were best for the nation (Nelson, 2000, p. 25). What was best for the nation was not necessarily limited to buying Korean only. Park argues that South Koreans up until the 1980s had been educated to believe that a diet based on meat, dairy and wheat was healthier and in the interest of national economic and civilizational advancement (K.-H. Park, 2013) – the position espoused by the Independence Club in the late 19th century. Nelson makes a similar argument:

"At various moments and for different people, this decision [to buy Korean] might, for example, rest on a sense or on a concern of national unity or on quandaries on whether by buying foreign-made products one might be actually helping South Korea to participate in the cosmopolitan world." (Nelson, 2000, p. 25).

Nelson's quote echoes the argument made by Helleiner and Pickel that economic nationalism is not a question of protectionism versus free trade but rather what a particular economic doctrine does for the nation as a whole. For Nelson, consumer deliberations over whether to buy domestic or foreign made products is subject to what particular consumer choices does for the nation. But eating "western" was however not only predicated on the idea of modernization and participating in the cosmopolitan world. As I have argued in chapter 4, up until the early 1970's, the state

had a significant economic interests in promoting the consumption of wheat, dairy and processed meat. These items came primarily to Korea through the PL480 food aid program, and the sale of these items to consumers was a major source of government revenue.

In the 1980s, economic liberalization and rising incomes led to a boom in consumer goods that most Koreans had never experienced before. New food products also entered the market that previously had not been available due to strict import restrictions. In the beef sector import restrictions were relaxed in 1976 and up until 1985 when imports were temporarily shut down, beef imports soared along with domestic production, giving a broader segment of Korean consumers access to beef. When beef imports resumed in 1988, beef consumption boomed again. However, by the late 1980s and early 1990s, the backlash against imported goods began to spread. Farmers and some social movements began to lament excessive consumption of foreign goods as detrimental to domestic economic sectors and national identity. The government, concerned with trade balances also chimed in with its *Gwasobi* (anti-excess consumption) campaigns. Industry and state campaigns in the early 1990s emphasized the importance of buying domestic goods and frugality in order to improve the balance of trade (Nelson, 2000, p. 127).

In the agricultural sector, trade liberalization had already been subject to much controversy, but in the 1990s campaigns to buy Korean were launched by a range of government agencies and social movements. It was not, however, only about trade balances. To many consumers, the question of buying Korean or not was becoming a matter of national identity. Whereas western modernity once had been the dominant indicator of national advancement, segments of Korean society began to question the premise of development and advancement based in the ideals of western modernity symbolized through consumption of imported products. This backlash against excessive consumption was thus not only related to concerns over trade deficits, but

also a moral backlash against the growing gap between rich and poor and loss of “traditional” values of restraint and frugality (Nelson, 2000, pp. 106–126). In this shift, the economic plight of Korean farmers and their growing symbolic role as bearers of an authentic Korean culture under threat from trade liberalization and modernity became a central focus and it is these shifts in perception this chapter explores.

However, to study how agriculture and food became political matters related to the protection of national sovereignty and identity, we first need to discuss the political struggles between competing nationalist ideologies dominating politics from the 1970s, namely Minjok and Minjung philosophy. The first part of this chapter will outline how Minjung nationalism emerged in response to the authoritarian state’s modernization policies that were rooted in a Minjok philosophy that could trace its origins back to the Independence Club.

This leads us up to the second movement through which agro-food policy became enmeshed in questions of national identity through Sintoburi (“Body and Earth are one”) (K. O. Kim, 2010, p. 17). Sintoburi in its philosophical form regards the body and land as inseparable. This notion is not new to Korean philosophy, but it became the rallying point of campaigns launched by NACF and MAFF in the early 1990s in response to trade liberalization as a way to protect domestic agricultural products and producers from competing imports. In the Sintoburi campaign, the “Body and Earth are One” was modified into “Our agricultural products fit our body.” Sintoburi thus articulated a clear link between the ethnic nation (Minjok) the peasant (Minjung), the land, and food. The two nationalist ideologies of Minjung and Minjok, both rooted in nationalist historiography became intertwined in the 1990s and provided the conceptual basis on to which the agricultural sector and certain food products became regarded as cultural goods important to national identity. The combination of the people as Minjung suppressed by political elites and foreign powers on one hand, and how the inseparability of the people and the land came to be constructed as

manifested in agricultural products are central to understanding the political struggles over agricultural protectionism and free trade. This will highlight how the farmer, cattle, and beef became powerful national symbols, which in turn provided political leverage to protect domestic agriculture and beef production against foreign competition in an era of trade liberalization.

In the second part of this chapter, the construction of Hanu and Hanu beef is studied through an analysis of two movies *Le Grand Chef* (식객) from 2007 and *Old Partner* (워낭 소리) from 2008. This analysis seeks to illustrate how the cow and beef, the latter associated with a western diet by the Independence Club, became embedded in these larger nationalist narratives of Minjok and Minjung nationalism. The Korean cow plays a central role in both movies which were significant commercial successes in Korean cinemas. *Old Partner* was at the time the highest grossing independent movie in Korean history and *Le Grand Chef* was the fourth most popular movie in Korean cinemas, and the third most popular Korean production in 2007 despite its late November release. The movies belong to two different spectrums of South Korea's movie industry with one a low budget independent documentary while the other produced and distributed by CJ Entertainment, Korea's largest entertainment group and part of the CJ group, a major Korean conglomerate with key businesses in food and feed industries. The movies can be said to follow Tessa Morris-Suzuki's claim that popular conceptions of the past are swayed by mass-marketed narratives of history (Morris-Suzuki, 2005, p. 16). The movies can thus be interpreted as both representing particular narratives of the past, but also how these media representations link these particular narratives of the past to contemporary struggles and hence also influence contemporary politics.

To end, the chapter discusses the rise of Hanu as a gastro-national political object came into full exposure during the 2008 beef protests. An understanding of the cultural and political meanings ascribed to agriculture and Hanu beef allow us to better

understand the debates around the political decision to pursue overseas agriculture not necessarily evolved around competing economic doctrines alone, also around logics of (gastro)nationalism in the following chapter.

Minjung Nationalism and Formation of Peasant Identity

Only Minjung is completely nationalistic and only Minjung is completely democratic. This is my conclusion upon reflecting on modern Korean history, which has gone through trial and error in search for subjectivity [of historical development].

- Student activist Kim Minseok in N. Lee, 2007, p. 23)

If one philosophy and movement can be said to have shaped the social identity of farmers in contemporary society, Minjung is impossible to disregard. This philosophy and movement that sprang from protestant anti-government movements during the oppressive Yusin regime of the 1970s was central in the broader democracy movement as the anti-authoritarian alternative to national historiography and self-identification. Minjung (the dispossessed) stood in opposition to Minjok (the ethnic nation), which became the dominant nationalist ideology in post-colonial South Korea (G.-W. Shin, 2006a), not in terms of nationalism vs. anti-nationalism, but rather who were the “true” subjects of the nation. Minjok nationalism, according to Henry Em, was a response to Japanese colonial historiography, which emphasized the shared ethnic and cultural origins of Japan and Korea. But while Japan had ascended into modernity, they argued, South Korea had stagnated under the Joseon dynasty, thus legitimizing the Japanese occupation of Korea on the ground of bringing Korea into modern civilization (Em, 2013, p. 94). Minjok historiography challenged this notion of civilizational stagnation and decline as well as asserting an ethnic particularity distinct from the Japanese. Minjok historians set up to chronicle the historical distinctiveness of the Korean people

and resistance to foreign aggression. The Korean people, they asserted, were direct descendants of Dangun the mythical founder of the proto-Korean state in 2333 BC. Minjok nationalist historiography was however not only seeking to dispel Japanese colonial historiography. It was also an attempt to rewrite Korean history from one focused on dynastic rulers to one defined by the people. In this sense, Em argues, Minjok historiography reflects a republican ideal, in which the people, not the ruler is the subject of historical attention, but also to justify claims to national sovereignty within a world system of sovereign states (Em, 2013). A particular pressing issue among Koreans opposing colonial rule.

The idea of the ethnic nation became state ideology in South Korea following the end of Japanese colonial rule. The idea of an ethnic nation in stagnation was however something that Minjok philosophy carried with it in the sense that the reason for Korea's colonization was the inability of the state to shed its ancient and antiquated ways. Thus Minjok philosophy very much came to be associated with the idea of modernization. To build a strong ethnic nation, the people of (South) Korea would have to industrialize and adapt a modern mindset. The agricultural sector was in general not associated with the ideals of a modern industrial nation. Rather, the agricultural sector was regarded as backward and farmers as lazy and complacent. When President Park Chung Hee launched his rural modernization program in the 1970s, modernization was not only about modernizing infrastructure and agricultural practices. It was also about modernizing the mindset of the rural population. The rural development program Saemaul Undong in particular was "...intended to cure the malaise of idleness and complacency which sprouts in the shade of stability" as President Park succinctly put it (M. Moore, 1984, p. 580). As such, Saemaul built on the assumption that rural underdevelopment was caused by the resistance to change among a peasantry stagnated in their traditions (Hsiao, 1981, p. 94). As Vincent S. Brandt noted at the time, the central administration viewed the cause of rural stagnation as stemming from the

“...backward, pleasure-loving attitudes of the Korean Peasantry” (Brandt, 1979, p. 153). The representation of the rural population as traditional and complacent justified the intervention that would instill an entrepreneurial spirit and desire for modernity into the rural population. Saemaul was thus a program designed to bring in the backward rural population into the national modernization project through volunteerism and not more authoritarian methods (W. W. Boyer & Ahn, 1991; S.-M. Han, 2004; M. Moore, 1984).

These notions of a nation united through ethnicity, the rural population as backward and complacent, and the authoritarian state was what Minjung philosophy challenged. The term Minjung⁸² was first used during the Joseon Dynasty to designate all those who were outside the Yangban aristocratic class (A. S. Park, 1985). In contemporary politics, the term was introduced in 1975 by Korean theologian Ahn Byung Mu who encountered liberation theology during his studies in Germany. Ahn was deeply concerned and critical of the Park regime’s human rights violations under the Yusin regime (Küster, 2010, p. 62). Minjung was inspired in part by Catholic Liberation Theology (Gutiérrez, 1973), but refers specifically to a Korean context in which Minjung or “the common people” were the true subjects of national historiography. One author and Minjung Theologian describes the Minjung as “...those people who have suffered from exploitation, poverty socio-political oppression, and cultural repression throughout the ages.” (A. S. Park, 1985, p. 10). While Minjung philosophy was rooted in theological and academic circles, its rise in the 1970s and 1980s as the main philosophical and social movement against the military regime.

According to Namhee Lee (2007), Minjung became the central focus for intellectuals opposed to the state and those intellectuals working for the Yusin regime

⁸² Minjung, in Ahn’s writings, became the Korean equivalent to the Greek terms *Ochlos*, a term used in the Gospel of Mark. Mark used *Ochlos* to differentiate Jesus’ followers from the general people of Israel, which the gospels usually refer to as *Laos* or when referring to non-Israelites as *Ethnos*. In the gospel of Mark, *Ochlos* indicate that Jesus’ followers were of the lower social classes. *Ochlos* was not only contrasted to the ruling class, but also condemned by broader society as sinners (B. M. Ahn, 2013, p. 51).

as government bureaucrats. To the regime intellectuals, the people's energy were to be mobilized for the state's modernization project, while for the critical intellectuals it was a matter of mobilizing against the state by recovering the subjectivity of the Minjung (Lee 2007:5). Minjung philosophy became the critical intellectuals' platform for political and spiritual awakening of the people against regime oppression. In short, Minjung philosophy was to give new meanings to the path of modernization, the colonial mentality of the people, and recovering/creating the historical subjectivity of the masses (N. Lee, 2007, p. 5). Both Minjung and state modernization thus competed over which political ideology represented the nation and its people (N. Lee, 2007, p. 39). Thus, while Minjung and state intellectuals disagreed on the interpretation of history, both worked within a discourse of nationalism.

The broader societal implications of Minjung philosophy and movements will not be the focus here. Instead, the focus will be on the role of Minjung philosophy in shaping a contemporary peasant identity and their positioning within national identity as perceived by themselves and by the broader population. As Minjung philosophy began to gain popularity among intellectuals and industrial workers in the mid-1970s, Korean peasants and farmers were subject to state-induced modernization through Park Chung-hee's Saemaul Undong (New Community Movement) program. Minjung philosophy in some ways did not differ from this notion of peasants as politically complacent and backward, but they placed responsibility of backwardness not on the rural population themselves but on the historical oppression of the peasantry by political elites. For Minjung intellectuals, restoring historical subjectivity meant specifically to restore and reinterpret the role of peasant movements in modern history. This in turn meant situating the peasant as a key agent of historical resistance to oppression by ruling elites domestic or foreign. Whereas much has been written about Minjung philosophy and labor movements in South Korea (Doucette, 2013; N. Lee, 2007), much less has been written about Minjung philosophy and the formation of a

contemporary peasant identity in the years of political upheaval in the 1980s. Yet, Minjung philosophy's objective to develop a revolutionary peasant identity and the revolutionary peasant as the true nationalist through historical revisionism is deeply rooted in many farmers' organizations today.

This identity is evident in the description of the Korean Peasants League (KPL), a left-leaning peasant movement founded in the early 1990s. In their description of themselves, they draw lineages to the peasant movements of the late 19th century and resistance to Japanese colonialism:

"In the late Chosun dynasty, exploitation of Koreans got worse after the Gab-o peasant uprising in 1894 and with the plan to increase rice production and the land survey project under Japanese colonial rule. Peasants started to organize tenant farmers' associations and farmers' unions to put up mass struggles by tenant farmers and to launch a peasant movement against the Japanese rule. Korean peasants have always risen to the occasion to protect our nation from foreign invasion. Succeeding the spirit of such traditions, peasants began to form autonomous organizations such as the Catholic and Christian Farmers Associations in the 1970s and 1980s."

(Korean Peasants League, 2006)

The quote above from KPL's illustrates well how contemporary peasant activists, through Minjung philosophy, came to regard themselves as the historical defenders of the nation against foreign powers in times where the elite either did nothing to protect the nation's sovereignty or colluded with foreign oppressors. The quote also draws a direct line from the Donghak Peasant Revolution,⁸³ over resistance to Japanese

⁸³ For the role of the Donghak Peasant Revolution in Minjung historical revisionism, see (Abelmann, 1996, pp. 27–35; N. Lee, 2007, pp. 55–59).

colonization to today's struggles against free trade agreements as struggles against foreign powers, placing the peasant as the true historical defender of the nation and, as Abelman argues, made the descendants of the Donghak revolution the legitimate national subject (Abelman, 1995). In this quote KPL claims that Free trade agreements supported by the state in collusion with foreign powers, most notably the U.S., is thus not only an attack on the peasantry but on the nation as a whole.

Minjung in the Countryside

The shift from Saemaul Undong and the idle peasant as the dominant philosophy in rural areas to Minjung and the revolutionary peasant did not happen by rewriting history alone. Structural adjustment policies and the decline of Saemaul Undong into the personal corrupt fiefdom of President Chun Doo-hwan's brother Chun Kyung-hwan during the 1980s provided the material base for rural discontent in which Minjung philosophy could sprout. Saemaul Undong and the state-imposed rural modernization projects' failure to sustain economic progress due both to budget deficits, external pressure, and internal turmoil provided fertile ground for spreading Minjung activism from the urban centers to rural areas in the 1980s. But how did Minjung activism, which originated in urban intellectual circles, spread to rural areas? To find answers, we need to look at how intellectuals positioned themselves in the Minjung movement.

According to Lee (2007), a significant event in the rise of Minjung activism was the 1980 Gwangju Uprising⁸⁴ that began on May 18. The assassination of Park Chung-hee by the Chief of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency opened the floodgates of accumulated discontent during the Yusin regime and hope for a better future by worker and student movements alike. During this period of political turmoil, Chun Doo-hwan managed to seize control over the KCIA in the spring of 2014. Shortly thereafter on May 17, 1980, he declared martial law throughout the country, closing universities,

⁸⁴ For a detailed account of the Gwangju Uprising, see Katsiaficas (2012).

factories and other hotbeds of political activism. In Gwangju, students began protesting against the martial law on May 18 and over the following ten days, other citizens of Gwangju angered by the military's heavy-handed treatment of protesters joined the protests. On May 27, 20,000 troops occupied the city with approval from the American commander of the United States-Korea Combined Forces Command. The death toll is unclear, ranging between a few hundred to thousands depending on the source, while tens of thousands were rounded up in subsequent months and either imprisoned or sent to purification camps (N. Lee, 2007, p. 46). To this day, many regard the Gwangju Massacre as one of the most brutal crack-downs on pro-democracy in modern Korean history.

In relation to peasant movements, the Gwangju Uprising changed the Minjung movement in three central ways: 1. It strengthened the urge of students and intellectuals to diffuse into the Minjung, not as intellectuals but as workers and farmers; 2. It became the starting point for strong anti-American sentiments as internal repression was linked to U.S. Imperialism; 3. It moved Minjung activists more decisively towards a revolutionary path and militant action. In the years following the uprising, Gwangju became a significant historical event for the Minjung movement in the struggle against the political elite and their foreign allies. Gwangju became a collective "...primordial experience and original sin" (N. Lee, 2007, p. 48) that radicalized the entire movement. Workers bore the blunt of casualties in the protests that were started by university students and to intellectuals Gwangju became of a symbol of the intellectual elite's treacherous relation to the masses, reigniting memories of the role of ambivalence among intellectuals in the Donghak Peasant Revolution and under Japanese colonization. Self-abnegation was to many the only way for the intellectuals to right the wrongs of the recent and distant past. As an intellectual, one could side with either the repressive state or the revolutionary masses with no middle-ground allowed (N. Lee, 2007, p. 18).

Non-state and anti-state farmers' organizations were not new to rural Korea. Protestant, Catholic, Marxist, and other spiritual politically-based organizations had been established during Japanese colonization (A. Park, 2014) and during the 1960s and 1970s. The Catholic Farmers' Union (CFU), one of the key organizations in farmer mobilization during the 1970s and 1980s, was established in 1972 as a self-conscious movement and it joined forces with researchers at Konkuk University, a German-funded Christian Academy heavily influenced by liberation theology. The program was intended to train farmers, mostly men, in agricultural techniques as well as to produce a core of farmer activists (Abelmann, 1996, p. 214). During the 1970s, CFU-based local organizations were set up in order to protest the practices of the para-statal agricultural cooperatives, but they met little initial success as the state cooperatives and the Saemaul Undong movement remained in control through the 1970s. The Christian Academy was shut down in March 1979 when seven of its instructors were accused of pro-communist views as part of the Park Chung-hee regime's broader purging of rising discontent throughout the country.

After Park was assassinated in 1979, General Chun Doo-hwan seized power through violent suppression of political discontent. The violent reign and the worsening conditions for farmers under Chun Doo-hwan's trade liberalization reforms provided fertile ground for farmer organizations such as CFU. Meanwhile in the urban centers, students were increasingly inspired by the alternative historiographies of Minjung intellectuals that stood in sharp contrast to the historiographies students had been taught in high school. The revisionist Minjung historiographies were taught informally on university campuses and they helped increase participation in the student movement (Abelmann, 1996, pp. 149–157). As students became increasingly familiar with Minjung accounts of the historical subjectivity of farmers and peasants in movements such as the Donghak Revolution and in anti-colonial resistance, interest in farmer movements' revolutionary potential increased.

Just as some Minjung intellectuals and students regarded joining the ranks of industrial workers and foregoing their university diplomas part of becoming one with the Minjung, intellectuals and students also increasingly regarded the opportunity to join farmers as a method of self-abnegation and foregoing their social and urban privileges. Student involvement in rural programs swelled in the latter half of the 1980s, building new alliances between the rural and urban struggles for democracy and better life-conditions⁸⁵. Joining rural communities and becoming a farmer also became increasingly regarded as a way to fundamentally surpass industrial paradigms of modernization (Ku, 2009, p. 6). Furthermore, according to Abelmann, Minjung philosophy itself called on an alternative national community based on concepts of re-establishing an indigenous village socialism (Abelmann, 1993, p. 142), which of course was in clear opposition to the state's vision of a nation characterized by industrial modernization. As such, farmers also became the symbol and defenders of South Korea's "original" rural culture and tradition, a position that would be strengthened in the social movements of the 1990s (Abelmann, 1996, pp. 228–230). In both senses, farmers and rural life came to represent a nationalist alternative to the state and industrial modernization programs.

Minjung philosophy provided farmers with agency and an identity as a political force, not only in the present, but as a historical heritage. It positioned trade liberalization as another invasion of imperial powers, providing farmers with a visible opponent, namely the Korean government-U.S. alliance, to vent frustrations over declining living conditions. Farmers and peasants became part of the national struggle against the U.S. backed military regime and for democracy. The farmers' protests surrounding the live cattle import scandal of the mid-1980s (discussed in the previous

⁸⁵ According to Abelmann, this was a significant shift in student activities in rural areas prior to the 1980s when they were regarded primarily as summer vacation community service. In the 1980s, these programs, first initiated in the 1960s, came under criticism from Minjung activists for supporting the government's attempt to control farmers' political identity and cultural practice.

chapter) was key in establishing farmer's movements as a national political force. In 1987, activist farmers' organizations merged into the National Farmers' Committee for Democracy, as part of the broader alliance of student movements, labor unions, and farmers in the People's Movement for Democracy. The national association began to mobilize a united front against the state and to take over power of the para-statal cooperatives that were in the process of democratic reforms. Until then protests had been primarily at the local level. Beef farmers were protesting the government's corrupt live cattle import program, which was intended to supplement farmers' main source of income, rice. Also, farmers were protesting the rise of frozen and chilled beef imports on the rise since 1980, which further drove down domestic cattle prices. Farmers performed slaughters of live animals in public squares to demonstrate their discontent and economic desperation (Abelmann, 1996, p. 217). These protests gained nationwide attention because of their drastic and violent nature that has come to define farmers' movement protests since. It was farmers ability to claim that they represented and defended national sovereignty and identity that elevated agricultural producers into a powerful political group by the end of the 1980s even as their economic importance to the national economy declined (Steinberg, 1994).

Farmers Protests, Minjung Tactics

The 1985 public slaughter of cattle was an act that shocked government officials and the public alike. In some ways, it can be said to be the farm movement's equivalent of the self-immolation of 22-year-old garment worker Chun Tae-Il in the early 1970s to protest poor labor conditions, an act that spurred the workers' pro-democracy movements and formation of independent labor unions (P. Moore, 2007). These sacrifices of life became associated with the pro-democracy, farmer, and labor struggles of the 1980s especially, but it is a practice that is still in use. Korean farmers have several times resorted to public slaughter of cattle as well as personal suicide to

protest government policies. The most notable suicide was probably that of farmer activist Lee Kyung-Hae, a former cattle farmer himself, at the WTO protests in Cancun in 2003. Lee Kyung-Hae's suicide caught the attention of foreign media⁸⁶.

Lee Kyung-Hae's suicide became a rallying point for the many peasant and farmers' organizations that gathered in Cancun. In the days following his suicide, one could hear thousands of protesters in Cancun chant "We are all Lee Kyung-Hae" and "WTO kills farmers", the slogan on the sign that Lee had carried around his neck. What Lee's suicide meant in the Korean domestic context eluded most international observers. *The Guardian's* coverage of the event presented the story of Lee as a young entrepreneurial farmer who saw his life project destroyed by trade liberalization. In this account, Lee's suicide was an individual choice caused by his own personal destitution and despair. But Lee was more than a farmer who went bankrupt. He was a movement organizer who co-founded one of the largest contemporary farmer organizations in 1987. He was well versed in Minjung tactics and public protests, and he was a provincial assembly member in the North Jeolla Province. Thus, Lee Kyung-Hae's suicide had tremendous symbolic value to anti-trade liberalization movements in South Korea. In the *Guardian* article, a local official of Lee Kyung-Hae's home province explained to the journalist: "Perhaps European and even urban South Koreans won't be able to understand why Lee killed himself, but that is because they don't understand the reality of Korean farmers" (Watts, 2003).

⁸⁶ While creating headlines around the globe, the Korean press was less enthusiastic (Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008, p. 64). First of all, Koreans were more familiar with this type of tactic. According to some estimates, 107 protesters died by suicide in South Korea between 1970-2004 (Hyojoung Kim, 2008, p. 545). Secondly, according to some national observers, this type of protest was not looked upon with the same admiration after political democratization allowed access to democratic institutions, at least in theory. Lee Kyung-Hae's suicide can be interpreted in several ways then. First of all, it can be understood as the ultimate expression of the dire economic conditions of Korean farmers post the 1994 GATT agreement, the narrative of several Korean farmers' organizations, or it can be understood as the remnant of a practice of protest belonging to a different era in Korean politics. Suicides, in any case, continue to be used by workers and farmers alike to protest social and economic injustice.

According to Doucette (2010), the practice of suicide and self-immolation should be regarded as a practice of releasing of *han*, which in a somewhat reductionist way can be explained as the release of bitterness and resentment built up inside a people or person by systemic continuous, sometimes intergenerational, oppression. In Korean social movements, suicide became a martyric action, one that was performed by an individual for the collective release of *han*. It was a messianic act (Doucette, 2010, p. 215). Kim argues, that suicides such as Lee-Kyung-hae's should be regarded as an act of protesting against unjust policies, but also to mobilize the broader population in their struggle (Hyojoung Kim, 2008). Doucette refers to the style of Minjung protests associated with suicides and militant style protests as a repertoire of tactics developed during the authoritarian era, which is still employed in today's struggles of beef farmers among others. Referring to Raymond William's term *Structure of Feeling*, suicide is oriented towards building popular support for demands of equality and recognition of the struggles of the oppressed⁸⁷ (Doucette 2010, p. 219). The art of protests performed by beef farmers such as the public cattle slaughter and suicides are hence performative acts that calls upon the initiated viewer's memories of struggles past from the Donghak Revolution to the anti-free trade protests and the acts of self-sacrifice of the peasants in defense of the nation.

The emergence of Minjung as the dominant anti-state and pro-democracy ideology in the 1970s and 1980s thus provided a way for farmers to situate their grievances against state policy and trade liberalization within broader historical struggles against elite oppression and foreign aggression. In Minjung ideology,

⁸⁷ Perhaps it is necessary here to insert a cautionary note about suicide and threats of suicide only as an attempt to mobilize hearts and minds. Studies indicate that the agricultural sector has the highest standard suicide mortality rate of any occupational profession in South Korea, especially following periods of macro-economic recession (J.-H. Yoon, Junger, Kim, Kim, & Koh, 2012). Thus, not all suicides in the agricultural sector can be regarded as acts of protests. Material conditions, especially high debt loads that farmers incur during periods of recession, should be taken seriously as a marker of the desperation that some farmers feel.

peasants were the true subjects of the nation and bearers of a historical legacy of resistance, rather than the complacent and backward identity that the state-led modernization projects assigned to them. This positioning of the peasant within Minjung ideology in turn provided the basis for political alliances between farmers' movements and other social movements. The question of agricultural trade liberalization and the role of agriculture in the Minjung national imaginary was not merely a question of defending the economic interests of agricultural producers, but about a distinct class and economic activity central to national sovereignty and identity.

Sintoburi

Who are you? Who am I?

All of us born on this land, we are Sintoburi....

Apgujeong, streets of Gangnam, where is this?

Where has Sun-Yi gone and only Miss Lee remains?

The mannequins in the display windows dance with foreign goods.

Rice, Barley, Peas, and Beans!

Our bodies need our things – why seek out someone else's?

Gochujang, doenjang, kimchi, kkaktugi

Don't forget, don't forget – you and I are Koreans.

Sintoburi, Sintoburi...

"Sintoburi" - Ho Pae-II

The above verse is from a song by Korean singer Ho Pae-II released in 1993. The song formed part of the Sintoburi campaign that the government and NACF launched in the early 1990s to encourage Korean consumers to eat Korean-produced agricultural products as a countermeasure to the central government's upcoming acceptance of the GATT Uruguay Round's requirements for agricultural trade liberalization. It was in short what Patricia Goff calls a reinforcement of conceptual borders around Korean produced agricultural goods at a time when material borders were becoming more

porous. Sintoburi promoted the cultural and nutritional value of Korean-produced agricultural products through a range of marketing initiatives and cultural products such as the song above (Burmeister, 1999, p. 24). The lyrics of the song connects the Korean people to the land through food contrasting it with imported food products representing U.S. led westernization of Korean life exemplified by the lifestyle of the affluent Seoul neighborhoods of Apgujeong and Gangnam. It was a song that situated the U.S. and its associated consumption patterns as the central problem facing Korean national identity and the song refers to agricultural products considered central to Korean food culture at the time people were encouraged to purchase to defend national identity. The song does not refer to beef as part of a Korean diet, which perhaps indicates the minor role that beef still played in the nationalist food imaginary. Nevertheless, Sintoburi campaigns provided the breeding grounds for the nascent *Hanu* brand.

Sintoburi is a Buddhist term that literally means “body, earth, not, two” (Bak, 2004, p. 35). It refers to a belief in the inseparability of a person’s karma and the karma of the person’s surroundings (K. O. Kim, 2010, p. 17). In the Sintoburi campaign, NACF translated this into the slogan “Our Agricultural Products Fits our Bodies”⁸⁸ (S. Ho, 2010, p. 7) referring both to the relation between body, land and health, but also to taste. Korean-produced agricultural products were, according to the campaign, not only healthier for Korean bodies, but their taste was also the “authentic” taste of Korea. Most scholars that the Sintoburi campaign was a protectionist initiative launched by MAFF and NACF in anticipation of Korea’s acceptance of the Uruguay round of the GATT in 1994, and it attempted to do so by playing on national emotional attachments (Burmeister, 1999; S. Ho, 2010; Reinschmidt, 2007).

⁸⁸ The term “our” (우리) is an often-used word that refers to “us, the Korean people”. It is used in a wide range of contexts to differentiate between foreign and Korean products as well as to the idea of sharing.

Whereas Minjung ideology was dominant in the 1980s, Sintoburi became an important ideological base for the formation of a Korean gastronationalism in the 1990s. Whereas Minjung philosophy and activism was to a large extent class-oriented, anti-state and anti-western, Sintoburi was a philosophy or idea embraced by a broader range of the population from state institutions, cooperatives, producers, and consumers during the 1990s. It was to a certain extent more aligned with Minjok nationalism, but there are also areas of overlap and continuation of Minjung philosophy that carried over into the, at least partly state-supported, Sintoburi movement.

As the struggle for democracy seemed to bear fruit in the late 1980s with the first democratic elections held in 1987, the discursive climate began to change in the Minjung movement. The violent activism and Minjung culture of dissent waned in the 1990s (Abelmann, 1995, 1996). The broader public discourse seemed to turn away from the very class-oriented activism of the 1980s, even as farmer activism became increasingly vocal and organized in their struggles especially around the Uruguay Round of negotiations of the GATT in the early 1990s. This also meant that the central role of the revolutionary peasant in pro-democracy struggles waned.

According to Abelmann, a shift from “the revolutionary peasant of the Minjung past” to the “Minjung holding flowers” occurred in the Minjung discourse and art aesthetics in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Abelmann uses art to exemplify the shift in which the revolutionary peasant of the Donghak Revolution is replaced with the peaceful farmer in touch with the land.⁸⁹ In the broader public and in parts of the farmer movements, the idea of the connection between the earth and the farmer came to exemplify the new ideal role of peasants and farmers in the national imaginary of a

⁸⁹ However, this change of perception in Minjung art did not reflect the struggles of farmers in the 1990s, which grew increasingly desperate, often violent, continuing the practice of dissent against government policies promoting economic liberalization of the food and agriculture sector.

post-industrial society. This shift was reflected in a number of social and environmental movements throughout the late 1980s and 1990s.

The “ecological” turn is perhaps best reflected in the Hansalim movement, the largest producer-consumer agricultural cooperative today with more than 440,000 household members and 2000 agricultural producers (Hansalim). Hansalim grew out of the 1980s struggles for democracy, but democracy did not bring about the type of eco-village socialism that some of Minjung activists envisioned would succeed the authoritarian state. The 1989 Hansalim manifesto written by a group of progressive intellectuals within the Hansalim Group started in 1986 exemplifies this turn from pro-democracy struggles to an eco-socialist alternative aiming at “...overcoming modern industrialism with the life ideology of Donghak (Eastern Learning)” (Ku, 2009, p. 9). Hansalim’s impact on national agricultural policy has been limited, and as such not treated in depth here, but the transformation of the role of the peasant and agriculture is exemplified by Hansalim. This transition was however not limited to the left wing of South Korean society. The connection between farmers, land, food, health, and nation became a central part of the MAFF and agricultural cooperatives’ strategy to support farmers against intensified competition from trade liberalization through the Sintoburi campaigns.

Sintoburi drew on similar perceptions of the central role of Korean food and agricultural producers in an authentic and traditional national culture. The range of initiatives under Sintoburi were instrumental in shaping dietary patterns of Koreans as well installing in Korean food, properties of health, identity, and terroir through what DeSoucey calls authenticity politics (De Soucey 2010). Sintoburi was a strategy by the state and agricultural producers to keep out the “outside,” which was the influx of imported agricultural products deemed detrimental to the Korean agricultural economy in this case. This strengthening of the conceptual borders around Korean food culture happened at a time in which the South Korean government was itself

bringing about further globalization in order to strengthen the competitiveness of domestic export-oriented industries.

Citing an unpublished paper by Burmeister, Feffer (2004:46) highlights how the term *uri nongsanmul aeyong*, or “buy our agricultural products” by using a particular verb (*aeyong*) conveys a sense of love and patriotism. The Sintoburi campaign played on tradition in other aspects by invoking a history of resistance tied to the land. In a comic book distributed to elementary schools, a story from the Three Kingdoms Period (57 AD-668 AD) told the story of how Korean soldiers re-energized themselves in the battle against foreign aggressors by drinking a mixture of water and Korean earth. In the context of Korea’s implementation of the Uruguay Round agreement, and the anticipated boom in agricultural imports, the reference to eating Korean food to withstand the aggressions of foreign (most notably American) powers is evident. It was a complete reversal of the Independence Club’s proposal a century earlier to eat a western diet to become a powerful nation. In Sintoburi, what would make Korea able to withstand trade liberalization imposed by foreign powers was now the traditional diet based on products grown in Korean soil by Korean farmers.

The Sintoburi campaign is an example of how national identity as a conceptual frame can be used in an era of globalization and permeable borders, connecting food to broader public reflection on postmodern life in South Korea that had at least some part of its roots in the post-democracy Minjung movement yet discarded Minjung’s emphasis on class struggle. Yet reflections of the late Minjung movements ecological can be seen in the Sintoburi movement, especially ideas of healthy food as a response to the rising influx of multinational fast food chains. What Ku Do-Wan (2009) calls the marginal ecological alternative movement, former members of the radical socialist movements, in Korea is perhaps most representative of these sentiments. Health and food safety concerns in the industrial food system became prominent among mainstream consumers through the 1990s and 2000s. What Sintoburi did was to

incorporate these ecological and health concerns into a campaign to defend the domestic agriculture. Eating Korean was not only about individual health and well-being, but about the nation's well-being as a whole (K. O. Kim, 2010). According to Kim, K. (2010), this combination of patriotism, health, food safety, and reconnecting with the past was key to the Sintoburi campaign's success in getting consumers to continue to buy Korean agricultural products even at a time when competing imported products had become more readily available.

Minjung ideology and the Sintoburi campaigns enabled a shift in popular perception of Korean agriculture and farmers as being backwards and stuck in tradition as proposed by the modernist ideology promoted by the state in the 1970s. Minjung ideology situated agriculture as central to national identity in opposition to the state's view, and the peasant as the authentic and revolutionary subject of the Korean nation. With democratization, the peasant as the revolutionary subject however was supplemented by a more romanticist Minjung representation of the peasant as connected to the land and carriers of an authentic Korean village culture. The romanticist vision of the peasant also took hold in the Sintoburi campaigns. But whereas anti-state Minjung movements saw the peasant as the marginalized and dispossessed in an anti-state struggle, Sintoburi situated agriculture and farmers in more direct opposition to foreign foods entering the country due to trade liberalization. There is a general agreement among most scholars that the Sintoburi campaign was a protectionist initiative designed to protect domestic agriculture launched by MAFF and NACF in anticipation of Korea's acceptance of the Uruguay round of the GATT in 1994, but it did so by playing on national emotional attachments (Burmeister, 1999; S. Ho, 2010; Reinschmidt, 2007). The central government also supported the campaigns as part of maintaining a positive trade balance. What the Sintoburi campaign did was to position consumption of foreign agricultural products as excessive, and anti-patriotic. Korean produced agricultural products on the other hand were promoted as sustaining

national culture and heritage. The linkage between food, body and the land in Sintoburi drew strongly on sentiments of ethnic nationalism.

Hanu and Sintoburi

How did beef, an unlikely candidate to the status as a traditional food given its short history in the diet of the majority of South Koreans, become situated as an “authentic” food within the broader context of the Minjung and Sintoburi movements? This is important because for the most part, beef had been associated with westernization and economic success. Secondly, the rising consumption of meat as part of material and symbolic modernization, beef in this case, had begun to show its effects on health among the population (C.-H. Lee, 1995, p. 43), something that the Sintoburi movement otherwise sought to claim that a “traditional” Korean diet would prevent. Thus what Sintoburi helped do, was in effect to pave the way for the later nationalization of beef and making it part of a “traditional” Korean diet despite its historical exclusivity. Two examples of this nativization can be illustrated by the rise of barbecue restaurants and the resurrection of royal court cuisine of the Joseon Dynasty as a national cuisine.

In referring to Hobsbawn and Ranger’s (1983) concept of *invented tradition*, Moon analyzes how royal court cuisine was reconstructed, established, recognized, and commercially exploited in the 1980s and 1990s (O. Moon, 2010a, p. 50). Royal court cuisine was designated “Important Intangible Cultural Property No. 38” of South Korea back in 1970 (O. Moon, 2010a, p. 36). Among the items included in the Joseon Dynasty’s cuisine was thick sliced pieces of marinated grilled beef called *neobiani*, which became the signature dish of the Joseon gentrified classes (Brown, 2010, p. 14; Katarzyna Joanna Cwierka, 2012; K. Lee & Cho, 2010; Pettid, 2008). In the post-war years, *neobiani* transformed into the popular bulgogi, marinated thin strips of grilled beef,⁹⁰.

⁹⁰ Bulgogi historically signified thin strips of meat in general but in the 1950s it became associated with thin strips of grilled beef only (K. Lee & Cho, 2010, p. 508).

Eating Bulgogi was for many a taste of the economic success that parts of the country enjoyed during the late 1970s and 1980s and Bulgogi was designated as a representative Korean food for the 1988 Olympics together with Kimchi (Hahm, 2005, p. 92). The “reinvention” of royal court cuisine, according to Moon thus helped place beef dishes within a national cuisine rather than being associated with western style high end restaurants and hotels in the late 1980s and popularized in the 1990s and 2000s when affluent Korean consumers began to enjoy their newfound wealth at high-end royal court cuisine restaurants sprouting up throughout the country (O. Moon, 2010a). This notion of beef being indigenous to a traditional diet was indeed a reversal of previous notions of beef being part of a western diet.

The rapidly expanding meat-eating culture up through the 1980s was particularly associated with barbecue restaurants that became increasingly popular among the new class of conglomerate white collar workers who would gather after work for cheap grilled or stewed intestines and *soju*⁹¹ (K. O. Kim, 2010, p. 16). As prosperity allowed, the intestines were replaced with more expensive cuts of meat such as *samgyeopsal* (sliced pork belly) and later beef bulgogi. The reinvention of barbecue beef in restaurants incorporated both the aspirations of the new white collar workers for meat, the male office worker culture of working hard and drinking hard, as well as association with the culinary traditions and rituals of Joseon nobility (K. O. Kim, 2010). Helen Louise-Brown describes the Korean barbecue restaurant as a phenomenon *conceived in the past and raised in modernity* (Brown, 2010). This description also applies to the idea of Korean beef as a modern product that at once represents both the economic aspirations of modernity as well as a national cultural heritage rooted in tradition.

⁹¹ Soju is a cheap distilled and colorless liquor consumed in conspicuous amounts, especially in conjunction with barbecue.

The rise of the barbecue restaurant as a center of urban professional workers' social lives and beef's association with affluence and landed gentry were central in establishing beef as an object of desire for consumers across the country (O. Moon, 2010a). This was most significant in the emergence of large-scale restaurants in the affluent Gangnam neighborhood of Seoul where iconic restaurants such as Hanuri and Samwon Garden which allowed clients to eat premium quality beef in settings that emulated traditional village environments and waterfalls. The layout of these restaurants, according to Brown, with private dining rooms and halls, allowed accommodation of business people entertaining each other, foreign visitors, and large family banquets for holidays and celebrations (Brown, 2010, p. 31). These restaurants signified both the economic progress (one had to be affluent to eat there) and reverence for tradition (Decorations emulating on traditional village culture) that are central to Korean national pride today.

Moon ascribes the rising consumer popularity of royal court cuisine to a general social trend in the 1990s in which economic prosperity and cultural vitality were reflected in a rising interest in rediscovering "forgotten" cultural traditions. The royal court cuisine symbolized not only the upper and middle class' aspiration for cultural practices and rituals that could signal exclusiveness and distinction, but also a rediscovery of national pride in a heritage that was "lost" due to Japanese colonization and westernization (O. Moon, 2010a, p. 53). As such, the rediscovery of royal court cuisine and the expansion of high-end barbecue restaurants reflected an increased self-confidence in Korean culture as at least equal to Western, Japanese, and Chinese culture (Koo, 1998, p. 10). The restoration of "ancient" food traditions was closely associated with rising consumption and the rapid expansion of restaurant culture in the late 1980s and 1990s, during which Korean restaurants were in strong competition with Western style foods and fast food retail expansion (Feffer, 2004). The "rediscovery" of national food traditions thus went hand in hand with Korean consumers becoming

increasingly exposed to especially western and Japanese consumer culture, a result of economic liberalization that lifted many of the restrictions on foreign investment and goods.

To summarize, the rise of an urban commercial class increasingly seeking out barbecue restaurants for their after-work social gatherings and business entertainment combined with the reinvention of royal court cuisine, in which beef played a central role, helped popularize beef as a marker of economic prosperity and social mobility, but also within the tradition of noble life of the past. In the 1990s, beef consumption was no longer associated primarily with a western lifestyle. It had become an integrated part of the national diet, if not in practice (many still could not afford it), then at least in the imagination. 90 years after the Independence Club newspaper advised its readers to eat beef and bread instead of rice and kimchi in order to become a strong and advanced nation, beef was no longer associated with westernization. This change happened over a relatively short period of perhaps two decades. By the mid-1990s, certain beef dishes, most notably bulgogi, appeared as important as kimchi and rice to many Koreans. Elite meat dishes such as bulgogi and kalbi had become accessible to a broader part of the population.

But the notion of Korean beef as superior to imported beef was still not yet established in the mid-1990s. According to a study published in 1996 funded by the Canadian Market Development Council, hotel and restaurant buyers of beef still considered grain-fed beef from the U.S. of higher quality. U.S. grain-fed beef was, in the perception of respondents, still the best quality in terms of tenderness and flavor, which were the two most important determinants of quality for buyers⁹² (R. B. Y. Kim et al., 1996, p. 16). According to the report, the U.S. Meat Export Federation had actively targeted the high-end hotel and restaurant market for beef since 1988, cultivating

⁹² According to the survey, 76 percent percentage of respondents in the hotel and restaurant sector perceived these two attributes to be most important in determining purchase decisions (R. B. Y. Kim et al., 1996, p. 24).

relationships with buyers and educating the high-end market about U.S. meat specifications and quality standards. The result was that U.S. grain-fed beef dominated the market for premium quality beef in the high-end hotel and restaurant market (R. B. Y. Kim et al., 1996, p. 28).

When the Ministry of Agriculture and NACF initiated the national beef quality standard on 1992, it replicated U.S. beef standards as it rewarded tenderness and marbling. It coincided with the Sintoburi movement and had the same objective: to strengthen the competitive position of Korean-produced agricultural products by appealing to people's sense of patriotism, the superior quality of Korean agricultural products, and the healthiness of a "traditional" Korean diet (Burmeister, 2000, p. 450; Feffer, 2004, p. 46). These attempts to establish Korean food as superior did not limit itself to media campaigns. Scientific research also sought to distinguish the Korean cow from other imported cows by conducting research on its genetic history (Yeo et al., 2002). In 2009 a group of Korean researchers at the Rural Development Administration completed a 500 million KRW project to map the entire genome of Hanu to scientifically prove Hanu's unique genetic composition and superior quality (Hyun-cheol Kim, 2009a). In this aspect, it is also interesting to note how research articles date the native cow's genetic lineage back to around 2000 B.C. (Jo et al., 2012; J. B. Kim & Lee, 2000), arguing that Hanu has maintained stable traits through continuous pure breeding⁹³. Interestingly enough the dating of the cow's ancestral origin coincides with the mythical founding of the proto-Korean state of Gojoseon in 2333 B.C. thus mirroring the idea of an unbroken bloodline of the Korean cow similar to the notion of the historical ethnic homogeneity of the Korean people. This representation of the Korean cow as being intimately linked culturally and genetically to a continuous unbroken history of a Korean civilization draws heavily on a nationalist historiography

⁹³ This claim does not seem to be supported by DNA research. One study from 2002 shows clear indications of cross-breeding traits in native cattle, which they argue can be dated back to cross breeding efforts in the 1960s and 1970s (Yeo et al., 2002).

promoted by historians from the early 20th century as a historical narrative of resistance to Japanese occupation and Japanese colonial historiography (Em, 2013, p. 1694).

Burmeister also points out that NACF highlighted the positive impact that buying Korean would have on the preservation of ancestral villages (Burmeister, 2000, p. 450). The migration to urban areas had created a new social phenomenon of mass return of people and families to the ancestral villages during national holidays such as Chuseok (harvest festival) and Seollal (Lunar New Year) in order to honor their ancestors. The preservation of ancestral villages was thus another way for an increasingly urbanized and modern population to maintain bonds to the rural and agricultural past. Trade liberalization was not only a threat to the agricultural economy, but also to cultural heritage. According to Feffer, South Korea in effect created a compensatory agrarian myth similar to other countries, where modernization has whittled away at the countryside in which the urban Koreans became honorary villagers that received care packages of traditional goods not available in urban markets (Feffer, 2004, p. 48). This is of course not a new phenomenon globally nor in South Korea. As many authors have pointed out, many colonial era intellectuals defined modernization with Japanese oppression as what threatened a traditional rural life style (A. Park, 2014). The NACF, which was discussed in chapter four, had become increasingly accountable to its member base as it's political leadership was elected rather than appointed, made these ideas of foreign aggression undermining Koreanness central to their "cultural" campaign against trade liberalization.

The government was not standing idly by either. The democratization of Korean politics meant that even as South Korea gradually opened up its borders to foreign agricultural products as part of its macro-economic strategy to boost exports of manufactured goods, they were under popular pressure to strengthen the protection of the agricultural sector. The South Korean government increased funding,

reorganizing agricultural production to become more competitive, but they also financially supported the Sintoburi campaigns, funded scientific research that highlighted the nutritional benefits of a Korean traditional diet (C.-H. Lee, 1995), reorganizing the school lunch program towards using domestically produced products, and restructuring rural support programs.

The new emphasis on the positive health qualities of domestically produced foods and a renaissance of national culinary culture observed since the late 1990s can be understood not only as an attempt to construct the cultural identity of the nation in the face of increasing multi-nationalization of foodways, but also as a reflection of a postmodern lifestyle in the enjoyment of local culture that was once abandoned in pursuit of a western-inspired definition of modernity. Sintoburi in particular made it possible to popularize a new fashion out of the traditional local dietary system in the era of globalization (O. Moon, 2010b, p. 7).

While the battle over the future role of Korean agriculture in an age of free trade agreement negotiations primarily centered on rice in the 1990s, beef also began to enter the debates as a political object. As the Uruguay Round Agreement was coming close to implementation in the late 1990s, most Koreans had become accustomed to eating beef. Beef had solidly entered the diet of most Koreans, if not on an everyday basis, then at least in quantities that allowed it to be recognized as central in the traditional food imaginary along with rice and kimchi.

When the Hanu Association was established in 1999, it built its public campaigns on the Sintoburi platform promoting the indigeneity, superior quality, and healthiness of Hanu⁹⁴ (M.-S. Ho & Hong, 2012; H. Lee, 2013a; D. Shin, 2011; Yongnam University, 2013). The Hanu Marketing Board was established by the Hanu Association, and financially supported by NACF and MAFF. The purpose of the Hanu Marketing Board

⁹⁴ Some of the more bizarre “scientific” claims to the superiority of Hanu compared to foreign beef include claims that Hanwoo has a healthier fat composition, lower cholesterol and superior hangover properties (Yongnam University, 2013).

is to establish a clear identity for the Hanu Association's beef products and strengthening brand recognition of Korean Hanu in the eyes of consumers (R. Kim & Boyd, 2004). Tasting events were held regularly across the country to convince consumers that domestic beef was better than imported beef⁹⁵. Since the late 2000s, the Hanu marketing board has also used celebrity ambassadors to promote Hanu in TV commercials and magazine ads. In 2011 This turned into a big media sensation as famous Korean Popstar Lee Hyori announced that she had become a vegetarian only weeks after leaving the position as celebrity spokesperson for the Hanu Marketing Board. The Hanu Marketing Board Lamented her decision arguing that her decision "...hurt the overall image of Korean beef" at a time when Korean producers were suffering already (Soompi.com, 2011). The Hanu Marketing Board urged Lee Hyori to reconsider her decision to turn vegetarian. In this sense Lee Hyori personal decision to become vegetarian was presented by the Hanu Marketing Board as being irresponsible and disloyal to the plight of Korean producers.

There are clear indications that the many campaigns in the past two decades leading up to the beef crisis had its effect on consumer sentiments. In a survey conducted in 2007 immediately before the beef protests, 1000 Korean consumers were asked about purchasing preferences in terms of quality attributes and country of origin (C. Chung, Boyer, & Han, 2009). The study showed, consistent with other studies conducted around the time, that country of origin was the single most important factor for consumer purchasing decision, followed by non-GMO feeds and marbling. The country of origin followed by health and safety, and marbling were thus the most important determining factors for the preference and willingness to pay premium

⁹⁵ During my interviews with experts in South Korea, I encountered clear disagreements about whether or not Hanu tastes better or even different from for example imported grain-fed beef. While there was agreement that the taste difference was indistinguishable when used for barbecue. However one Korean Food expert insisted that consumers could taste the difference in soups and stews (Kip Richardson, Personal Communication, personal communication, August 7, 2013; Jia Choi, personal communication, August 7, 2013).

prices for Korean-produced beef. Citing another study from 2007 conducted by the Korean Beef Council, 34.9 percent of respondents cited country of origin as the single most important factor for beef preference despite its higher price. This was followed by food safety (31.8 percent), freshness (31.8 percent), and quality (11.8) (C. Chung et al., 2009, p. 695). Chung et al. argue that this preference for Korean beef among consumers was based in an ethnocentrism encouraged by the Korean beef industry and the government through marketing campaigns that relied heavily on ethnocentric arguments.

Farmers, Hanu, and Popular Media

Representation of the Korean cow and Korean beef as symbols of an agrarian past and anti-foreign sentiment, and thus inscribing the Korean Cow and Korean beef within broader nationalist historiographies is perhaps best illustrated by analyzing two popular movies that were released in 2007 and 2008 at the moment when the KORUS free trade agreement was hotly debated in Korea. It also coincided with negotiations between the U.S. and Korea on resuming U.S. beef imports following the 2003 ban on U.S. beef caused by the discovery of mad cow disease in Washington state. The two movies that will be analyzed here are *Sikgaek* (*Le Grand Chef*) from 2007 and *Wonangsori* (*Old Partner*) from 2008. The movies approach the Korean cow from two politically different angles, and they come from opposing ends of the Korean movie industry. *Sikgaek* was produced and released by CJ Entertainment, the largest Korean distribution and production company and part of CJ Group, a major conglomerate formerly part of Samsung but spun off in 1993.⁹⁶ The movie was a major hit, attracting 2.9 million viewers in its first months⁹⁷. *Wonangsori*, on the other hand, was an independent documentary film released in early 2009 a few months after the 2008 beef

⁹⁶ Both Samsung and CJ are controlled by descendants of Lee Byeong-Chul, founder of Samsung, but they operate independently of each other.

⁹⁷ <http://www.koreanfilm.or.kr/jsp/news/news.jsp?mode=VIEW&seq=869>

protests ended. It became the highest grossing independent film with more than two million viewers in 46 days and ranked first at the box office. Thus, what is interesting about these movies is both their popularity, but also more importantly how the Korean cow and beef become inscribed in broader nationalist historiographies in the movies.

The Korean cow plays a central role in both films, although the focus is quite different in terms of both politics and perspective. *Sikgaek* is based one of the most popular Korean comic books (manhwa) first published as a comic strip series in the conservative Korean newspaper *Dong-A Ilbo* in the early 2000s. *Sikgaek* tells the story of two young chefs, descendants of the two apprentices of the last chef of the royal court under the colonial period. To prevent being forced to cook for the Japanese Governor-General, the royal chef cuts off his hand in loyalty to the king who is not eating as he mourns the fate of his people. The royal chef does, however, secretly pass on his knowledge to one of the apprentices. The competition set between the two contemporary chefs is thus a competition about the rightful heir to the last royal chef. The story is hence one of the restoration of the royal court cuisine lost under Japanese rule and in the royal palace of the Joseon, beef was the most widely used ingredient and the most revered, we are told. Thus the restoration of royal court cuisine, no longer only an elite cuisine, but as a symbol of the Korean nation and relinking to the past a national cuisine lost during colonialism, is closely associated with beef in the movie. *Wonangsori*, on the other hand, documents the life of an old farmer and his relationship to his 40-year-old bull. The theme of a lost past is also central, but here the past refers to the loss of rural life to modernization represented by the old farmer and his bull still used as a draft animal and an object of love for the farmer. In this sense, *Sikgaek* presents a more conservative nationalist narrative while *Wonangsori* represents a somewhat post-democracy romanticist Minjung narrative of the peasant. Despite these different political positions and perspectives, both films also share commonalities in how the cow is represented especially in terms of giving the cow

characteristics that refers to some (perceived) national characteristics of the Korean people, Korean identity, and history. They both draw in broader narratives of tradition, modernity, loyalty, sacrifice, and resistance to foreign powers. Through such narratives, the consumption of Korean beef as a social practice becomes associated with national affiliation by linking historical struggles to the challenges of the present (Morris-Suzuki, 2005).

Sikgaek (Le Grand Chef)

Sikgaek, as mentioned earlier, is based on one of the most beloved⁹⁸ Korean comic books. It first ran as a comic strip in the conservative newspaper *Dong-A Ilbo* from 2001. The comic book series was adapted into a movie, a sequel, and later into a Korean drama show. This analysis focuses only on the first *Sikgaek* movie released in 2007 because it is in the movie that the Korean cow and Korean beef plays a central role. The movie follows protagonist Sung-Chan, a talented, young, but disgraced former apprentice at the country's finest royal court cuisine restaurant called Unamjeong.⁹⁹ The restaurant is run by Man-Sik, a former apprentice of the last Korean royal chef. Man-Sik is also the father of Sung-Chan's arch-enemy, Bong-Joo, an ambitious and ruthless chef. Five years before the main story takes place, Sung-Chan and Bong-Joo are summoned by Man-Sik to a cooking competition. The winner will inherit the renowned restaurant and carry on the tradition of royal cuisine. After Sung-Chan's preparation of raw blowfish poisons the invited jurors, he leaves the restaurant in disgrace to live with his Alzheimer's struck grandfather on a small farm in the countryside. It is later revealed that Bong-Joo had secretly added the poison to Sung-

⁹⁸ A survey by the Korean Manhwa Contents Agency in 2012 ranked *Sikgaek* the second most beloved comic book in history. http://www.arirang.co.kr/News/News_View.asp?nseq=128551

⁹⁹ Unamjeong is a fictitious restaurant, but the set for the movie was converted into a real restaurant named Unamjeong serving "traditional Korean food" in 2009. The restaurant is located in a park setting within High 1 resort, one of South Korea's newest and most exclusive four seasons resort destination built above the old coal mining town of Sabuk as an economic revitalization project, for one of the most impoverished areas of South Korea.

Chang's dish in order to win the competition. As a consequence, Bong-Joo inherits the restaurant from his grandfather and becomes the most renowned royal cuisine chef in Korea.

The main story begins when Fujiwama, the son of a Japanese bureaucrat (Presumably the governor-general of Korea), returns to Korea with the royal chef's knife, which has been in his family's possession since the last royal chef cut off his hand. By bringing back the knife to Korea, he intends to right the wrongs of his ancestors. Fujiwama wishes to pass the knife on to Korea's best chef so that the tradition of royal cuisine can be carried on. In order to identify a worthy candidate, a nationwide chef's competition is announced. Bong-Joo enrolls in the competition right away, but Sung-Chan is dismissive at first despite encouragements from old friends. He is satisfied with his life as a green grocer in his rural hometown. But when Bong-Joo summons him back to Unamjeong, offering the position as head chef if he stays out of the competition, Sung-Chan decides to enter to spite Bong-Joo.

Through a series of cooking contests, each focusing on a separate meat ingredient (fowl, fish, and beef), Sung-Chan and Bong-Joo interchangeably win alternating rounds of the competition leaving all other contestants behind. At the end of the competition, the two competitors are at a tie and have to enter a final competition. Fujiwama gives them the task to cook the secret beef soup that one of the royal chef's apprentices cooked for the king to stop the hunger strike he started to mourn the fate of his people and the loss of his kingdom. To everyone's surprise, the king wept as he ate the entire soup. Nobody knows what kind of beef soup was served for the king except the one apprentice of the royal chef who was his true disciple. Bong-Joo refuses to take part in the contest. He reveals that the royal chef had two disciples, his grandfather and Sung-Chan's grandfather, but that Sung-Chan's grandfather had poisoned the royal chef. Bong-Joo argues that he will not sully the name of the royal chef by competing any longer against the descendant of his murderer. The viewer is

given the impression that Bong-Joo does not know the soup, but when he discovers an old recipe hidden in the restaurant, he decides to enter the competition, certain that he has found the secret beef soup recipe. Meanwhile Sung-Chan's grandfather who suffers from Alzheimer dies while preparing *yukgaejang*, a spicy and simple beef soup that he has been wanting for a long time. Meanwhile, a journalist, and the romantic interest of Sung-Chan discovers that Sung-Chan's grandfather did not kill the royal chef, but that he left the palace because he felt responsible for the chef's death. With no competition, Man-Sik claims the position as the royal chef's heir and takes over the royal cuisine restaurant Unamjeong.

At the final competition, Bong-Joo prepares an elaborate soup based on the recipe he found hidden in the restaurant's cellar. Sung-Chan on the other hand, prepares yukgaejang to honor his deceased grandfather, much to the dismay of the Korean jurors who do not regard the spicy soup worthy of a king. The son of the Japanese bureaucrat, also part of the jury panel, however dismisses Bong-Joo's elaborate soup revealing that it is a fusion of Japanese and Korean cuisine. Something the royal chef would never serve the king. He proclaims that the soup served to the king was yukgaejang and that he now understands why the soup made the king cry. Fujiwama reveals that yukgaejang to the king represented the spirit of the Korean people:

The long-serving cow is Korea's grassroots democracy.

The hot pepper oil is Korea's hot and lively spirit.

The taro shoots represent a nation that does not submit to foreign power.

The bracken is the vigorous life that spreads like wild grasses.

Sikgaek (2007: 48:20)

Fujiwama then announces that Sung-Chan is the rightful heir to the last royal chef. Finally, it is revealed that Sung-Chan's grandfather was the royal chef's true disciple thus making Sung-Chan the rightful owner of the knife not only by his craft, but also by family lineage.

Korean beef plays a central role in the movie as the most revered ingredient in royal court cuisine. But as the quote above indicates, the symbolic role of the cow as representative of certain virtues of the Korean people is also significant, and it occurs in quite explicit forms in the movie. The theme of loyalty and sacrifice for a greater cause is a thoroughgoing theme throughout. For example, as introduction to the third round of the main contest, in which beef is the key ingredient, it is made clear that beef is the most highly regarded ingredient in royal cuisine, not only because of its taste, but because "Cows serve a lifetime, then offer their meat, much like the history of our people." (*Sikgaek* 2007:42:40). Just as in the quote from Fujiwama above, the cow comes to represent the Korean people's loyalty and self-sacrifice for the nation against foreign powers. This representation follows the logic of Minjok nationalism, in which the Korean people is regarded undifferentiated as equal and sovereign subjects of the nation and national history (Em, 2013, p. 4).

The cow however does not only represent Minjok but also a more Minjung-inspired rural peasant lifestyle through Sung-Chan's grandfather's traditional home in the countryside where a single cow is Sung-Chan's object of affection. It alludes to the idea of rural peasant life as authentic. Sung-Chan regularly feeds the cow standing in the little shed at his grandfather's house. Unlike the cattle raised by Bong-Joo in his impersonal, highly efficient, and modern cattle raising facility (which by no means can be considered large scale and industrial), Sung-Chan feeds the cow only rice straw and other forage crops during the movie instead of compound feeds, which are necessary to obtain the fat marbling that is considered premium quality. Sung-Chan's relationship with the cow goes deeper, however. His emotional attachment to the cow stems from

his experience of rescuing the young calf from drowning in a major flood, we are told through flashback images. When Sung-Chan is searching for the perfect cow for the meat carving competition, he returns from the cattle market unsatisfied with the cows available. As Sung-Chan and his friend returns to the farm, his friend eyes the cow and proclaims that Sung-Chan's cow is the most perfect specimen for the competition. Another friend explains that this is no ordinary cow, but Sung-Chan's baby sister and he raised it just like family.

At evening, Sung-Chan's senile grandfather stares out at the rain and says that such heavy rain is a sign that it is time to say goodbye. In a flashback, we are told that Sung-Chan's cow has been his companion since his departure from Unamjeong, but heeding his grandfather's words of wisdom, he takes the cow to the abattoir the next morning. At the abattoir, the cow sheds tears while Sung-Chan removes the bronze bell from the cow's neck. Sung-Chan watches the cow walk through the narrow aisle where it will meet its end. As it nears the final gate, it turns its head around to look back at a tearful Sung-Chan. The gate closes, and the bolt gun is put to the cow's forehead shifting the camera to a close-up of the cow's eye wide open and watery with tears, as the viewer hears the sharp sound of the bolt gun. The scene can be linked back to the comment made earlier in the movie about the long-serving cow that offers its life in the end for a greater cause, much like the history of the Korean people. It does not resist,¹⁰⁰ knowing its sacrifice of life is necessary. The cow is depicted as conscious of its fate, but also with the agency to freely enter certain death. Thus, there seems to be clear links to the fate of Sung-Chan's cow and the narrative of the loyal and self-sacrificing people, which is a central part of the storyline, but the cow also has some elements of Minjung peasant identity.

¹⁰⁰ In comparison, Bong-Joo's cow violently resists slaughter and has to be dragged by several men into the abattoir.

This symbolic link of the Korean cow's loyalty to anti-colonial struggle and the explicit reference to a people that does not submit to the pressures of foreign powers imbues the cow with an anthropomorphist social memory of resistance and martyrdom that is deeply embedded in the Korean memory on both the left and right of the political spectrum. Similarly, the movie also navigates class issues in ways that both recognizes class differences while also reconciling classes in a common nationalist project. The restoration of the lineage of royal chef, on one hand, is primarily a bourgeois nationalist project, but the "true" heir to the royal chef lineage is living in "peasant" settings in a small rural village. The winner is not the head chef of the finest royal cuisine restaurant, but a chef with "peasant" roots, and it was through the royal chef's "peasant cooking" that he was able to convey the feelings of the common people to the king to the extent that it brought tears to his eyes. Similarly, it is Sung-Chan's link to common rural life that in the end makes him discover the "secret" behind the soup. Sung-Chan's intimate connection to rural village life is what in the end restores the royal court cuisine and the national pride it inspires. There are thus commonalities to Minjung philosophy and the notion of peasants as the true patriots described earlier.

Wonangsori (Old Partner)

Where *Sikgaek* is a high budget production from Korea's biggest film company with a grand narrative of historical resurrection, *Wonangsori* is the exact opposite. Filmed over two years from 2005-2007, *Wonangsori* follows the lives of a 79-year-old farmer Choi Won-Gyun, his wife Lee Sam-Sun, and their 40-year-old bull, which they have had since its birth. It is a documentary of everyday life of a farming couple whose way of life is almost extinct in South Korea. At the beginning of the film, a veterinarian visits the farm to inspect the ox because it has fallen down. He declares that it has less than a year left to live. The film follows the final year(s) of the bull's life and documents the relationship between Won-Gyun, Sam-Sun, and the bull, as well as the long goodbye during which

the meaning and importance of the bull in the lives of Won-Gyun and Sam-Sun is revealed.

With the death of the ox, an era is nearing its end. The couple still farms using the bull as a draft animal, using no chemical inputs, much to the irritation of Sam-Sun who has to do most of the work due to Won-Gyun's weak left leg, a childhood disease that makes it difficult for him to walk. The documentary could also be considered a love triangle drama in which the bull becomes an object of love, friendship, and jealousy. Sam-Sun often proclaims that Won-Gyun cares more about the bull than about her. Both, however, regards the bull as an ally. They both recognized the bull as having provided the hard labor on the farm that enabled them to raise nine children. Sam-Sun sometimes talks to the bull about how both of them have had unlucky lives ending up with Won-Gyun and therefore doomed to toil hard every day. To Won-Gyun, the bull is "...more of a friend than any human being." (*Wonangsori* 2008:9:57). But the bull also has significant utility to Won-Gyun, whose crippled leg prevents him from walking very far. The bull is Won-Gyun's access to mobility that his own body does not allow for. In fact, as Won-Gyun realizes that the bull has only a short time left to live in, he proclaims that he wants to die with the ox when it dies (*Wonangsori* 25:28). His life is emotionally and materially so closely intertwined with the life of the ox.

Wonangsori takes its point of departure in everyday life of a farming couple who can be considered old-fashioned, but as we are made aware through the movie, Won-Gyun's wish to continue farming using manual labor and no chemical input is not only a matter of a missed opportunity to modernize. He is keenly aware that mechanized farming equipment, compound feed, and chemical farm inputs exist. He just refuses to use them. Thus, his reliance on a non-mechanized and non-industrial type of farming life is not only a matter of being stuck in the past, but actively resisting industrial modernity. It draws a connection between the couple's life and "back to the land" and "Peace and Life" movements that became popular among left-wing activists in

particular in the late 1980s and 1990s (Ku, 2009). As they are both getting old, farming this way is becoming increasingly difficult and during the last rice harvest season, Won-Gyun's poor health forces him to give in and accept the help of a neighboring farmer and his mechanical harvester. He does not accept without complaints, however. While Sam-Sun proclaims she would like a mechanical harvester, Won-Gyun says that mechanical harvesters lose too much grain and is thus wasteful, alluding to the virtue of frugality (*Wonangsori* 59:31).

Won-Gyun also insists on cutting wild forage for the bull everyday instead of feeding it compound feed: "Cows that eat cattle feed get too fat to bear calves" (*Wonangsori* 21:55). This indicates that Won-Gyun is aware that cattle feed is not intended for draft animals, but rather for fattening beef cattle, but also that he believes that compound feed is not appropriate for his most prized possession. He insists on feeding the cow only forage crops even though it is time-consuming and a major physical strain on Won-Gyun. The movie follows Won-Gyun as he goes to the cattle market some months after the veterinarian has told him his bull has only a year left, to find a new cow. He walks around at the local cattle market trying to find a work ox but nobody sells work oxen anymore so instead he comes home with the pregnant cow that he intends to train. The task of cutting forage becomes even more strenuous when they eventually decide to buy a cow to replace the old ox. Won-Gyun returns with a pregnant cow that Sam-Sun thinks eat too much and thus require even more of Won-Gyun and the old bull. The intention is to train the new cow as a draft animal, but that goal is never achieved during the movie. Won-Gyun has difficulty training it not only because of his age and handicap, but also because it was not bred or raised to become a draft animal. His failed attempt at finding a new work ox at the market clearly brings into perspective the changing role of the cow in Korean agriculture. In the 40 years after Won-Gyun's last work oxen purchase, the need of a draft animal is all but gone and all the cows at the market have been bred for meat production.

This contrast between the couple's farm life and the modern world and the agricultural production systems in use by their neighbors is an ongoing theme in the film. Sam-Sun, Won-Gyun and the bull are featured in numerous contrasting scenes in which a nearby farmer sprays pesticides in the background, a mechanical rice planter is featured to contrast the couple's hand-planting, or when trucks and cars pass Won-Gyun in his ox-cart going into town along the busy paved country road. Won-Gyun is sometimes ridiculed by other farmers or cattle traders for his insistence on doing things his own way, but the couple is also respected by many of their neighbors. They know that for Won-Gyun, the ox is more than just a draft animal. It is his closest and most loyal companion. A companion that he shows deep affection for throughout the film. And despite Sam-Sun's complaints, she also feels affection for the bull that has served them so loyally for four decades. In the end, despite encouragements to sell the ox, the couple decides to keep it until it dies. Following its death, they bury it in the fields in appreciation and perform a shamanistic burial ritual. The death of the ox is an end of a life for Won-Gyun and Sam-Sun, but also the end of an era in Korean history.

While much of the film evolves around these emotional attachments, the film also highlights the economic importance of the bull as a central component of rural life in the history of Korean development. The bull's work is recognized explicitly by the couple's children as they visit. They know, as thousands of other Koreans growing up on small farms, that the raising of cows for either draft or meat purposes enabled many rural families to send their children to school and get an education. The raising of a couple of heads of cattle in the 1980's for example provided the extra income that would pay for the children's tuition (Moon Kyung-Sik, personal communication, August 14, 2013). The Korean cow here becomes symbolic of the social and economic mobility of generations of children who grew up in the countryside and migrated to the cities, providing the labor force that enabled post-war development and economic growth. In the closing credits, the director dedicates the movie "...to all the oxen and fathers of

this land who toiled to feed and clothe their children" (*Wonangsori*, 2008, 77:31). The importance and pride of feeding their children is also reflected in Sam-Sun's words as she sends off the last year's rice harvest to their children: "We do this [farming] for our kids. It is the best feeling ever to water a dry field and see your kids eat. We can eat the leftovers" (*Wonangsori*, 2008, 60:00).

The movie is, however, not only concerned about the past. In one particular scene, Won-Gyun and Sam-Sun are headed to town in their oxcart. As they enter town, a group of farmers stand in front of the market protesting the ongoing KORUS-FTA. The farmers are standing in front of the market gate, as Won-Gyun and Sam-Sun come to Bonghwa in the ox-cart. The cart enters the image fixed on the demonstrators yelling slogans such as "No to importing mad cows from the USA", "Stop the FTA negotiations, Stop, Stop", and "...let's protect our native breed". As the cart is at the center of the image in front of the protesters, the cart stops and the camera switches to close-ups of the couple looking at the protests, then the protesters, and finally the bull. Through this scene, the past and present struggles of farmers become linked through the cow. Later in the film, the viewer hears on the radio that the government has decided to resume beef imports from the U.S. and that cattle prices are falling because breeders are trying to offload calf inventories in anticipation of cattle price drops. As the announcement ends, a car arrives at the farm in the dark to take away the calf. Although Won-Gyun thinks the price offered is too low, he decides to sell the calf because of the extra work that is required to feed it. In this sense, the selling of the calf despite the low price reflects the decision that many small breeders made around 2006-2007 as they were expecting resumption of U.S. beef imports. Through these short clips, the viewer is invited to connect the story of Won-Gyun's insistence of his way of life, and the contemporary struggles of Korean cattle farmers to protect their production from U.S. imports.

The two movies approach the native Korean cow in two very different ways. Where one presents the cow as central to the restoration of a national and royal food culture and remedying colonial suppression, the other movie presents the cow in relation to post-war development and its contribution as a work animal. The two movies focus on two different eras. They also draw on two different national historiographies. *Sikgaek* is focused on the restoration of royal cuisine as the apex of a thriving pre-colonial culinary culture; *Wonangsori* is focused on the symbolic and material role of the cow in the everyday life of the peasant class. Thus, *Sikgaek* and *Wonangsori* exemplify a greater debate in Korean historiography between Minjok and Minjung. Where Minjok refers to the people as a united (ethnic) nation, Minjung has a much more class-oriented approach as argued earlier. In *Sikgaek*, the king and the people are united in their struggle against foreign powers. It is a unified nation that follows ethnic nationalist historiography, emerging in the early 20th century, primarily as response to Japanese colonialist historiography (Em, 2013). Em argues that Minjok nationalist historiography was first in narrating a history of Korea as a history of the ethnic nation as the subject of Korean history and object of historical research in opposition to dynastic historiography (Em, 2013, p. 79). It was a historiography that included all ethnic Koreans regardless of status, gender and class. *Wonangsori*, on the other hand, draws more on Minjung-inspired philosophy, in which peasant life and the peasant becomes the subject of history and not only in opposition to foreign influence but also resistance to modernization.

In both cases, however, the relation to the cow both as an animal symbolic of Korean virtues and as a culinary tradition seems to reinforce notions of an almost sacred bond between the people of Korea and the cow. As I have argued in this chapter, the idea of beef as part of popular culinary practice is a recent phenomenon. The *reinvention* of royal court cuisine and the desire of emerging middle classes to celebrate their social mobility established historical lineages between the modern

consumption of beef, pre-modern culinary practices and most importantly liking beef and the Korean cow to national history. In the case of *Sikgaek*, consumption of beef becomes a practice that restores Korean culture and national pride from the destructive years of Japanese colonialism. This is of course quite a different perspective than what the Independence Club wrote in 1898, in which the consumption of beef was a symbol of modernity and westernization. In both movies, the cow becomes the embodiment of the people's historical struggle and sacrifice for the nation, even though they come to this point from two very different points of departure. Where the cow is enrolled in saving national heritage in *Sikgaek*, the cow in *Wonangsori* is enrolled in a project of protecting the aspects of rural life lost to modernization.

But nationalism provides what Choi Hyn-Mooo calls the *absolute condition* for both movies (H.-M. Choi, 1995, p. 172). Choi uses the term absolute condition in her discussion of Minjung literature. Drawing on Choi, it is possible to talk about both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic historiographies as sharing nationalism as their absolute condition. Both the royalist-elitist historical perspective reflected in *Sikgaek* as well as the Minjung perspectives in both *Sikgaek* and *Wonangsori* can be enrolled in any struggle against those outside of the Korean national sphere, both materially as well as conceptually. In this respect, the cow becomes a national symbol of the resistance to the influence of foreign powers. While this is most explicitly expressed in *Sikgaek*, the brief but powerful images of beef farmers demonstrating against the KORUS-FTA in *Wonangsori* using slogans such as "*save our native cattle*" conveys emotions of the continued struggle against foreign powers seeking to determine the course of Korean society. This mobilization of past struggles against foreign powers¹⁰¹ is perhaps one of the most recurring and powerful ways in which both government and social movements in Korea have been able to activate broad political mobilization, and

¹⁰¹ See for example Abelman (1993) and Em (2013).

in this context the Korean cow has become a powerful symbol within a relatively short time span.

Nationalism and the 2008 beef protests

Discontent with the KORUS free trade agreement negotiations and the U.S. pressure for Korea to reopen for beef imports after the Mad Cow incident in 2003, was not only a political struggle over economic policy or food safety (Christine Ahn, 2008; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010). National pride was also a central aspect of the mobilization. Many saw the concession as symbolic of South Korea's continued subordinate position to U.S. interests and the political elites' eager attempts to appease foreign powers and their economic interests. The U.S. beef debacle had become a matter of national sovereignty and anti-U.S. sentiments more than anything else, and President Lee was the politician who had caved in to the foreign power. In one protest, it was reported that people continuously chanted "Lee Myung-bak is Lee Wan-Yong", the pro-western royal minister who forced the Korean emperor to resign in 1907 and signed the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty in 1910 that enabled the Japanese colonization of Korea (Choe, 2008).

Within this debate on national sovereignty were fears over what the KORUS-FTA agreement would mean for Korean food and agriculture both in terms of economic and cultural sovereignty. The fears of BSE among consumers and the fact that people saw the president's actions as all too willingly giving in to a foreign power enabled Korean cattle farmers to link their own economic interests against beef trade liberalization to address these broader issues of national sovereignty. In the fight against a foreign power and a political elite ceding sovereignty, the Korean cow and Korean beef became symbolic of the virtues of the Korean people's struggle for sovereignty in the face of foreign intervention. Concerns over U.S. corporate globalization, GMO's, BSE i.e. economic, health and environmental impacts were mixed

with fears over a flooding of the market with U.S. agricultural products that would not only threaten the livelihoods of South Korea's already heavily indebted farmers, but also South Korea's food culture and traditions, which in the past couple of decades had become a key focus for national identity formation (S. Ho, 2010). Whereas the future of Korean rice in an age of trade liberalization had been the main focus of political struggles in the 1980s and 1990s, beef joined rice on the center stage in the new millennium as one of those national food items that were under threat from free trade agreements. The two movies, *Wonangsori* and *Sikgaek*, despite their different political and moral vantage points, both represented and reinforced a nationalist history of resistance and resilience in the face of foreign aggression, with the cow as representative of national identity. One journalist wrote after the massive June 10 demonstration that President Lee Myung-Bak "overlooked Korean's nationalistic pride...people felt their pride hurt." (Choe, 2008, p. 12). This nationalist subtext of the beef protests was also observed by some scholars. Mi Park, for example, argues that the anti-globalization movements in South Korea managed to gain popular support for their stance against the KORUS-FTA, mainly because they were able to represent the KORUS-FTA as a "...a simplistic dualism of the imperialist core versus dependent peripheries" (M. Park, 2009, p. 460). In her insightful article, Mi Park argues that the anti-FTA discourse surrounding the KORUS-FTA negotiations was centered on the loss of national sovereignty as the source of all adverse outcomes for South Korea (M. Park, 2009, p. 458). However, as Park and others have argued, this focus on loss of national sovereignty to the U.S. also meant that its anti-capitalist critique, or focus on a more fundamental debate about economic policy, was subdued to build broader popular support (Hart-Landsberg, 2011, p. 343; M. Park, 2009). Martin Hart-Landsberg makes a similar argument in his analysis of popular resistance to the KORUS-FTA. He argues that the anti-FTA movement was successful in building popular resistance to the KORUS-FTA by presenting the agreement as a U.S. effort to colonize South Korea

economically and culturally, while ignoring the strong support for the FTA from Korean corporations. Park and Hart-Landsberg's analyses of the 2008 beef protests and the KORUS-FTA thus differ quite significantly to the interpretation of those who saw the popular opposition to the KORUS-FTA and 2008 beef protests as resistance to neo-liberal and corporate domination of South Korea's food system (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). Both Park and Hart-Landsberg instead argue that the *nation* became the master frame of anti-free trade movements' rhetoric and the loss of economic sovereignty and cultural sovereignty the overarching concern (M. Park, 2009, p. 459). This analysis of the 2008 beef protests as being grounded not in the economic policy of the KORUS-FTA per se, but rather on what it would do to national sovereignty and identity, were now invented for the occasion. As I have tried to show in this chapter, the ability to frame questions of agro-food policy in terms of nation rather than economics by linking agriculture and certain agricultural products to questions of national identity was a key strategy for both farmers' organizations and state agencies during the political struggles over trade liberalization in the past three decades.

Conclusion

The emergence of agriculture and food as central political issues in the politics of trade liberalization over the past couple of decades, was not only a struggle about economic effects of particular policies, but also on the position of agriculture and beef in national cultural tradition and heritage. This chapter proposes that these ideas of Korean agriculture in general and Korean beef in particular came into being beginning in the late 1980s. The key shift in viewing agriculture and the farmers not as backward and stagnant, but as central to Korea national identity, culture and heritage first took hold in the anti-state Minjung movement. The Minjung movement positioned the peasant as the authentic subject of the Korean nation, both because agriculture was

central to national identity, but also because the peasant's historical legacy was one of active resistance to corrupt elites and foreign aggressors. This was a marked shift from the authoritarian state's view of the peasant as complacent and stuck in tradition.

The Sintoburi campaign launched by agricultural organizations and the MAFF in the early 1990s to protect domestic agriculture from trade liberalization was able to bridge the rivaling Minjok and Minjung nationalist identities of the time by focusing on the idea that Korean agricultural products linked Korean consumers both to an authentic Korean village culture as well as to the land. It was as such both a claim to cultural authenticity as well as a territorial authenticity, in which it was argued that food produced in Korean soil was healthier for the Korean (ethnic) body. It did not encourage consumers to purchase domestically produced agricultural products solely to support farmers economically in the face of trade liberalization, but by linking food consumption practices tightly to notions of national identity and resistance. The campaigns appealed to a range of nationalist identities by emphasizing the interconnectedness of the history of the Korean people and the land, ideas that found support in both Minjung and Minjok nationalist historiography, ideology, and spirituality, but also in the strong anti-foreign sentiments they shared.

For beef in particular this shift was predicated on the rise of beef consumption in the 1980s to celebrate modernity and rising affluence. The emergence of a large urban middle class caused beef to become part of the popular diet. Whereas beef for many decades was associated with wealth and westernization, this new middle class explored new consumption practices that could reflect this new affluence. Beef was one such prized status object. The rising middle class paved the way for a restaurant culture in which the beef barbecue restaurant became a cultural icon. Here, consumers could indulge in status consumption in settings of a pre-modern aristocratic country setting popularized by the reinvention and spread of royal court cuisine.

Yet it was not until the late 1990s that Korean beef producers explicitly began to link their products to national heritage, most notably by the formation of the Hanu Association. Drawing on Sintoburi, producers and government agencies began to promote Korean beef coming from Korean native cattle raised on Korean soil as the right and healthy choice for Korean people (C. Chung et al., 2009, p. 696). This was very much a reaction to the rising beef imports from overseas. The Korean cow and beef came to be associated with the revolutionary Minjung peasant and a traditional rural life style eroded by misguided development and a relentless pursuit of modernity. Despite these two different ideological points of departure, the Korean cow and beef came to represent an authentic national identity drawing linkages to a shared past, that was under threat by the forces of globalization and trade liberalization.

The two movies *Sikgaek* and *Wonangsori* reflect how different strands of nationalism approach the cow and beef differently. *Sikgaek* is decidedly more *Minjok* in its narrative (Royal cuisine and national culinary restoration), while *Wonangsori* has a decidedly Minjung theme (peasant life and the relation between peasant and the cow), yet they find common ground in themes such as unbroken cultural lineages and the people's resistance against outside aggression. In both the Sintoburi campaigns and the movies' interpretations of the past are mobilized in order to achieve alternative social and political orders in which indigeneity in the form of the cow and peasant life become the baseline of resisting foreign influences.

Thus, up through the 1990s and early 2000s the idea of the Korean cow as inherently linked to the history of the ethnic nation was promoted in marketing campaigns, commercial movies, independent documentaries, and research. The making of the Korean cow and Hanu beef into national icons became embedded in the broader societal debates about national identity. Rising affluence and market openings brought new consumption opportunities and dilemmas. These dilemmas evolved around reconciling the desire for status consumption with making consumption

choices in the best interest of the nation whether economically or culturally. Korean beef managed to position itself within this dilemma as a product that symbolized both status but also allowed to celebrate tradition and a sense of national pride. The Korean cow and the consumption of beef became situated within a broader history of the Korean people and nation as resilient but subject to continued outside aggression. These sentiments of the Korean cow and Korean beef as symbolic of Korean national identity and struggle against outside forces were key sentiments during the 2008 beef protest. The political struggles over the KORUS-FTA and the reopening of U.S. beef imports were thus not only a struggle over competing economic policies as argued by some scholars (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013), but perhaps more fundamentally about how certain economic policies would affect aspects of importance to national identity and sovereignty.

The KORUS-FTA and the U.S. beef protests was based in people's concern over how free trade would impact national identity and sovereignty or as Helleiner argues; their resistance to FTA economic policy was situated within a national ontology. In this political struggle over free trade, South Korean farmers and the Korean cow came to represent national virtues under threat from U.S. imperialism. It drew on both left- and right-wing representations of the farmers as the true subjects of the nation that fights against foreign aggression, as well as Hanu beef as the culturally appropriate and safe choice vis-à-vis U.S. industrial and corporate beef infected with BSE. To protest U.S. beef was to protect the nation, its farmers, and national food culture more than it was a rejection capitalism and corporate agriculture per se.

CHAPTER 7 – THE OVERSEAS AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: WHAT WERE THE PROBLEMS REPRESENTED TO BE?

The last three chapters have focused on the political struggles over political and economic liberalization since the 1970s. In chapter four, I traced the transition from statist agriculture to political liberalization as well as from agricultural protectionism to trade liberalization. I argued that these transitions involved heavily contested political struggles in which the state had sought to accommodate as well as resist international pressure to liberalize agricultural markets. This was to remain in control of food resources considered strategically important to national development, but also to maintain political legitimacy against an economically insignificant but politically powerful agricultural sector. In chapter five, I traced the deepening dependence on imported feeds in the cattle sector as an outcome of sectoral adjustments to position Hanu beef as a high-end premium product able to compete especially with imported U.S grain fed beef in the 1990s. In chapter 6, I analyzed how agro-food policy became, in the course of political and economic liberalization, became linked to notions of national culture and heritage as well how Minjung ideology positioned the peasant and agriculture as the center of an authentic national historiography. During the 1990s these ideas were reinforced by farmers' movements in collaboration with state agencies, to strengthen the conceptual borders around Korean food and later Korean beef not only as better quality, but also by linking the production and consumption of Korean-produced beef to notions of cultural heritage, peasant life, as well as anti-colonial and anti-imperial struggles.

These problem representations of South Korean agricultural heritage and sovereignty under siege by foreign aggressors played a central role in both the beef protests and the debate over the causes of the food crisis. This chapter analyzes how these trajectories came to be used to build broad political support for the 2008 Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. The chapter focuses on what came to be

represented¹⁰² as the problem in the political debates, and touches upon problem representations that were relegated to the back in the public debates. Whereas chapter 4 located the OADS within the context of broader state responses to shifts in the world economy, this chapter will focus on how farmers and the state articulated their critique of the global food system in a manner that portrayed South Korea as a nation subordinated to foreign and foreign corporate control, and that this foreign control was a national threat that required a patriotic response.

Korean Farmers in Cambodia

One of the first companies that received government funding to engage in overseas agriculture following the launch of the OADS was Chungnam¹⁰³ Overseas Agriculture Corporation. As a joint venture between the government of Chungnam Province and 26 local cattle farmers, the company was formed following the visit of then governor of Chungnam Province, Lee Wan Gu, to Cambodia in the summer of 2008. During this visit, he signed an MOU with the governor of Siem Reap Province, Sou Phirin. Under the MOU, Siem Reap would lease 5000 hectares of land to an agricultural company from Chungnam Province. The provincial government of Chungnam would in return provide the finance and technology. With this MOU, the governor returned to Korea to recruit farmer investors for his 'food sovereignty' venture in Cambodia (M. C. Ho, 2012b). A group of local farmers jumped at the opportunity because as one farmer expressed in an interview to a local newspaper:

"Every cattle farmer had the same concern--there was no future for cattle farms without stable feed supply. The Government's overseas agricultural development project became our new hope." (M. C. Ho, 2012a).

¹⁰² See chapter 3 for the discussion on Bacchi's WPR approach.

¹⁰³ Chungnam is the Korean short name for South Chuncheong Province.

Chapter 7 – The Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy: What Were the Problems Represented to be?

Twenty-six farmers from Chungnam province each invested between 50 and 200 million KRW (45,000-190,000 USD) in the project amounting to a total investment of 1,880,000,000 KRW (1.7 million USD). For some farmers the investment meant leaving cattle farming in Korea all together. One farmer, Mr. Jang, sold his 160 cows, collected all his savings, and decided to go volunteer for the company in Cambodia (Ho, 2012). Chungnam province in return promised to invest a total of 10 billion KRW (9.5 million USD) for milling and drying facilities, grain silos, and machinery in Cambodia. The project also received a low interest loan of 800 million KRW (760,000 USD) from the central government's new fund for Overseas Agricultural Development that was established in 2009 in the amount of 800 million KRW (760,000USD).

To lead the company, a young entrepreneurial farmer was selected as the CEO: Mr. Lee. Lee is a farmer in his early forties, and owner of a large cattle farm in Chungnam Province. He was also the former chairperson of the provincial livestock cooperative representing most cattle farmers in the province, which has a significant production of South Korea's beef and dairy cattle operations. Mr. Lee belonged to the new generation of young college educated, specialized farmers, and one of the farmers that had received support to upgrade his operations through government funded modernization programs - programs that include access to low interest loans and technical services, were designed to help young farmers build larger and economically more effective farm operations in order to strengthen the cost competitiveness of Korean agriculture.

But Mr. Lee was not just a young entrepreneurial farmer. As leader of the provincial livestock cooperative, he had participated in anti-government and anti-free trade demonstrations numerous times, most notably during the nationwide protests against the reopening for U.S. beef imports in the spring and summer of 2008 (Lee Woo-Chang, personal communication, September 26, 2012). The demonstrations against President Lee Myung-Bak's promise to George W. Bush to lift the U.S. beef

import ban launched the largest civic demonstrations that the country had seen in 20 years. Mr. Lee was not just a large-scale farmer. He was also a farmer activist determined to protect Korean agriculture from foreign competition. When asked why he had decided to embark on the Cambodia venture, he said that the rise of feed prices had convinced him that establishing an overseas resource base for animal feed was necessary to prevent more of his fellow farmers from committing suicide at a time of fierce competition from overseas, rising costs of operation, and high debt (Lee Woo Jang, personal communication, September 26, 2012). The twenty-six farmers had come together, not because they wanted to become rich from overseas farming, but because they feared that the cattle industry in Korea would collapse unless a supply of stable priced feed grains was secured. The overseas agricultural development, to these farmers, was a way for them to address the fear that rising feed prices would drive farmers into bankruptcy and undermine their competitiveness against imported beef. Feed costs were already amounting to fifty percent of total production costs before the corn prices rose reaching seventy percent in 2012 (Kim Yong Won, Hanwoo Association, personal communication, August 7, 2013). Thus, only a few months after having protested the reopening of U.S. Beef imports, Lee Woo Jang and his colleagues had formed a new company seeking to establish an overseas farm for feed overseas supported by both the provincial and central government.

Challenges in Cambodia

In early 2009, four of the twenty-six farmers left for Cambodia to set up their new farm and business venture. One farmer proclaimed to a local newspaper in Korea: "I participated in the overseas agricultural development project with the same kind of determination as that of national freedom fighters." (M. C. Ho, 2012a). By national freedom fighter, he was referring to the Korean nationals that fought against Japanese occupation and colonization, and thus linking his own involvement in Cambodia to a

national history of continuous struggle for sovereignty against foreign domination and his own actions as a patriotic endeavor. The Cambodian adventure however, quickly turned into a nightmare. First, the promised five thousand hectares in Siem Reap Province were relocated to another province because the vice-governor of Siem Reap Province was appointed Governor of Banteay Mancheay Province and he convinced the Chungnam provincial government to relocate the project to his new domain (M. C. Ho, 2012c). The company followed suit and began to prepare the land allocated to them in Banteay Mancheay Province in 2009. Problems arose as they realized the land was within a greenbelt zone in which it was required for trees to be planted for every six meters. Furthermore, all of a sudden, the provincial government also requested an 800 USD upfront lease fee per hectare, and an additional 3 USD lease fee per year, and a share of the profits, which would eliminate the financial viability of the project (M. C. Ho, 2012c). The Banteay Mancheay Province venture received its final blow when the Cambodian Central Government blocked the project referring to a sub-decree (no. 131) to the 2001 Land Law passed the year before in 2008 that forbade municipal and provincial authorities from granting economic land concessions¹⁰⁴ (Üllenberg, 2009, p. 18).

The project was further jeopardized when the Governor of Chungnam Province resigned in December 2009, due to an unrelated domestic political scandal. The political support for the farmers waned and Chungnam Province began to retract their pledged support and conditioned financial support to the company on their ability to deliver crops. Then in early 2010, the newly elected governor of Chungnam, Ahn Hee Jung, announced that he preferred the project to be relocated to the Primorsky Krai

¹⁰⁴ Economic Land Concessions are defined in the 2001 Land Law sub-decree 146 as "a mechanism to grant private state land through a specific economic land concession contract to a concessionaire to use for agricultural and industrial-agricultural exploitation." Until 2008, municipal and provincial authorities were allowed to grant economic land concessions up to 1000 hectares. With the sub-decree this limit was repealed. All economic land concessions are now required to be approved by the central government (Government of Cambodia, 2001; Üllenberg, 2009).

region in Eastern Russia. The farmers having already sunk a lot of money into the project resisted this proposal arguing that Governor Ahn did not want to support the project because it was started by his predecessor and political opponent. The failed ventures in Siem Reap and Banteay Mancheay provinces had already cost the company between 250,000 - 350,000 USD according to the CEO (M. C. Ho, 2012a).

The farmers who were the main shareholders in the company, decided to continue prospecting for land in Cambodia. They had already invested a lot of money, time and energy in Cambodia and were not ready to relocate to a completely different part of the world. They found land in Kampong Speu Province in an area known as Koh Sla bordering Kampot Province and situated on the southern edge of national Highway 4 where a number of other Korean companies and farmers were already operating¹⁰⁵. They signed a contract for 474 hectares of land and began preparing the land spending 300,000 - 400,000 USD to construct a road between the farm and the national highway. They also built a milling and drying facility adjacent to the farm at their own expense (M. C. Ho, 2012b). But things turned sour yet again. It appeared that the agent they had used to buy the land had falsified the documents, and one day thirty armed soldiers appeared and evicted the company. All they had left was a 15-hectare trial farm, a two-hectare seed breeding farm, and a drying facility. In the first year of operation of 2010, the company managed to grow only 69 tons of corn that were

¹⁰⁵ Another small Korean-owned farm growing mangoes was lying adjacent to KomerCN's fields and at least three other Korean companies were situated nearby engaged in flower growing and pig production. An agent in a nearby town, who had brokered a couple of these Korean land purchases, explained that the Koreans preferred to be around other Koreans, which explained the high concentration of Korean land owners in the area. Since most of the land in the area was private land, and hence not under state control, a market for land was well established with land prices increasing sharply in recent years he said. He explained that only a few years back land could be bought at 350 USD per hectare but at this time prices could go as high as 5000 USD per hectare. The agent explained that in his work as agent for other Korean investors the buyer would indicate how many hectares the investor was interested in purchasing. He would then identify potential areas, then go from house to house, and try to convince landholders so sell their plots of land. A long and difficult process required significant knowledge of the local area he claimed. It was within this market that KomerCN in 2010 had to find and purchase land instead of the land concessions promised to them by the governors of Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey. As already mentioned this did not turn out as the company had wished for.

shipped back to Korea (Lim & Limb, 2011). This was well below the 3000 tons that the initial plan had called for in the first year (M. C. Ho, 2012b).

Faced with heavy investments sunk in to one location, but without land, the company decided to pursue a new strategy. A few kilometers from the drying facility, a social land concession¹⁰⁶ had recently been allocated to demobilized soldiers and their families. The village, established around 2007, and known as Hun Sen Development Village, was a personal prestige project for Prime Minister Hun Sen. Entering the village; one could easily see that this was no ordinary village. The houses were all made of concrete and painted in bright orange. The two wide main roads entering the village had been built and financed with South Korean aid money. The village also had new public buildings including a large municipal office and an elementary and secondary school painted in the same orange color.

The village sits at the border to Phnum Bokor National Park in the Koh Sla. This area was one of the last Khmer Rouge strongholds in Cambodia and did not come under government control until the peace treaty of 1998. While official control was now under the central government local Khmer Rouge strongmen kept a tight grip on land control with the consent of the central government. Over the following ten years huge tracts of land were exploited for its timber resources. The dense forest, which had protected the Khmer Rouge were cut down for timber under the supervision of former Khmer Rouge Commander Lun Chan. Once the timber had been cut down, he granted economic land concessions to domestic and foreign investors (Sahmakum Teang Tnaut, 2007).

Koh Sla was, until recently, thinly populated both due to the heavy vegetation but also due to the fact that Koh Sla had been a war zone until 1998. As the forest disappeared, it was not only large investors that entered the area. People seeking land

¹⁰⁶ Social Land Concessions are defined in the 2001 Land Law sub-decree 19 as "...a legal mechanism to transfer private state land for social purposes to the poor who lack land for residential and/or family farming purposes." (Government of Cambodia, 2001)

from other areas of Cambodia also began pouring in, joining the few thousand former Khmer Rouge fighters and their families who had settled there and had been granted 5 hectares each by municipal authorities (J.-S. Lee, 2011, p. 28). The population in Koh Sla increased from 16,832 in 1998 to 46,006 in 2008 (National Institute of Statistics, 2009). In Koh Sla, at least six large-scale economic land concessions had been granted to companies by 2012 occupying 49,902 hectares. The adjacent areas were occupied by smaller landowners (foreign and domestic) and families of which more than 80 percent depended on farming as their primary economic activity (National Institute of Statistics, 2008).

The Hun Sen Development Village sits surrounded by a number of these larger economic land concessions as well as hundreds of plots owned by small holders and absentee landowners. The village was the center of several disputes. There had been forced evictions of people living on the land before the social land concession was granted. They now lived on the outskirts of the settlement to make space for the disabled and retired soldiers and their families (Cheang & Strangio, 2009). The evictions were performed by one of Prime Minister Hun Sen's elite squadrons known as Brigade 31, headquartered along Highway 4. The brigade has garnered a reputation for violent evictions, seizure of cattle, blackmail, and corruption in other cases in the region (Cheang, 2008). The disabled and retired soldiers and their families began moving to the area in 2008 as the government had finished the first houses and public buildings partly financed with Korea aid money¹⁰⁷. Each family was granted a house and 1 hectare of land behind their house. Since the settlement is located on sloping terrain in the

¹⁰⁷ Financial support for road building and construction were channeled through the Cambodian government. As such, South Korea had no direct influence on the location of these projects. However, it was clear that substantial amounts of aid finance had been received by the community. The settlement had also become the site for an ambitious solar power project financed by South Korea using South Korean technology. The solar power plant produces and stores energy in a central location of the village that until had no power. Villagers can purchase charged car batteries to power their homes for a small sum. Once the battery is drained, they can exchange for a powered battery. All villagers have access to this program.

foothills of Bokor Mountain, rice growing is not a possibility. Therefore, most settlers went directly into cash crops such as corn, soybean, mango, and bananas (Village cooperative representative, personal communication, December 5, 2012).

It was to this settlement, as well as a few other villages in the area, that the Korean farmers turned in 2010 when their prospects of obtaining their own land was thwarted. Company representatives met with village leaders offering to collaborate with the residents in farming corn and soybean on a contract basis. 135 out of 400 farm families were recruited (Village cooperative representative, personal communication, December 5, 2012). KomerCN would provide seeds, training, fertilizer, and pesticides at no cost up front. In return, farmers were obliged to sell back their entire harvest to KomerCN according to market prices in Cambodia at the time of harvest. In the event that the farmer sold the harvest, parts of it to third party buyers or tried to hide parts of the harvest, they were contractually obligated to pay a fine amounting to ten times of the cost of inputs (KomerCN, 2011).

The partnership between the company and the village received high-level attention from both Cambodian and South Korean government officials. KomerCN arranged numerous visits for delegations including Korean press, government officials and agricultural researchers during the months of surveys and preparation (Village cooperative representative, personal communication, December 5, 2012). The delegations brought gifts and donations to the families including clothing, school supplies, etc. Local farmers received training from Korean agricultural experts and at a big ceremony in the spring of 2011 in which both Korean and Cambodian officials participated, farmers were provided with 10-15 kg of soybean and corn seed per hectare (Village cooperative representative, personal communication, December 5, 2012).

The appointed leader of the village cooperative expressed general satisfaction with the contract terms, and told that there was a shortage of grain buyers in the area,

which made the KomerCN a welcome presence. KomerCN had kept their promises of buying the entire harvest at 500 riels per kg or approximately 120 USD per ton (Village cooperative representative, personal communication, December 5, 2012). The farmers had been satisfied with the deal, but the company had announced after that year's harvest that they would not be able to return in 2012 due to financial difficulties. Since they bought the 2011 harvest, they had not returned he said. He asked me whether I could let them know that they were hoping for the company to return (Village cooperative representative, personal communication, December 5, 2012).

A few kilometers from Koh Sla Development Village accessible from National Highway 4 by the road constructed partly by Korean aid funds and KomerCN sits the company's drying facility completed during the summer of 2011, seed breeding facility, and, a bit further away, their 15-hectare farm. At the time of my visit, the drying facility was busy in the process of making compound feed. Roughage from the fields and grains purchased were mixed together and packed in large bulk bags. The manager, a Korean, reluctantly agreed to a short interview. He explained that he had rented the facility from KomerCN, and that his company was separate from Komer CN. However, according to Mr. Lee the CEO of KomerCN, the company was the same, something that was confirmed by the workers at the nearby field. The operation of the drying facility had apparently been leased to another company set up for the purpose, while KomerCN was going through bankruptcy and restructuring.

At the farm, workers were harvesting roughage. Eighteen workers were employed and they lived on the field for a week at the time. They would bring their own food and other necessities while the company provided a covered area where workers would live, sleep, and eat. There was one faucet and no toilets. After a week of work, people would return to their home villages for a couple of days before returning for another week of work. The harvest provided work for 4 months after which they would begin to plant soybean and corn for the next harvest cycle (KomerCN workers,

personal communication, December 15, 2012). Workers were recruited in nearby villages by a supervisor who received commission from KomerCN. Despite the basic living and work conditions, workers claimed that the work at this farm was better than at the Ly Yong Phat sugar plantation, the largest employer in the region and one of the largest sugar plantations in Cambodia and owned by a wealthy Cambodian senator and a Taiwanese corporation. The plantation sits north of National Highway 4 in Omlaing Commune about two hours' drive away.¹⁰⁸ At KomerCN, they were paid 15,000 riels per day or approximate 3.7 USD per day of work, a rate a bit higher than at some of the other farms nearby (KomerCN workers, personal communication, December 15, 2012). At Ly Yong Phat, they were paid by hectare of sugar harvested and the work was much harder they claimed. Nevertheless, the workers all claimed that they would prefer to grow rice for themselves, but that the drought this year had made it impossible to grow rice in the village they lived.

In the summer of 2012, Mr. Lee reported to a Korean newspaper that the efforts in 2011 had resulted in approximately 1000 tons of corn from Cambodia, a result of the contract farming scheme in Koh Sla (S. W. Lee, 2012b). However, this was not enough to keep the company afloat. Already in April of 2012, the same newspaper could report that the company was near bankruptcy (M. C. Ho, 2012b). The seed money invested by the farmers, for some their life savings, was all but gone. Only a fraction of the 9-10 million USD that the Chungnam Province had pledged had actually been granted, and the farmers now turned against the provincial government who they felt had not kept their financial promises. One farmer in an interview with a local newspaper said:

"I thought about ending my life many times during the past two years. We trusted the Chungnam Governor. Who will take care of the wounds of the

¹⁰⁸ Ly Young Phat's sugar plantations have been the subject of much media attention in Cambodia for allegedly evicting villagers and using child labor in their fields (Titthara & White, 2013; Titthara, 2012).

farmers who risked everything they had to pioneer overseas food resources?" (M. C. Ho, 2012a).

The farmers now wanted Chungnam Province to keep their promises of providing land and financial support for the project. They appealed to both the provincial government as well as the central government to support their project. CEO Lee Woo Jang argued:

"The fundamental cause of the failure of the project was that we did not have any land. Had the Chungnam Government provided the promised land, the project would have been already stabilized. This is no better than the Chungnam Government committing a fraud against its own people." (M. C. Ho, 2012b)

The project's economic viability was also threatened by the fact that by 2009, international corn prices had fallen, making the Cambodian priced corn less competitive with U.S. corn and thus from the start jeopardizing the economic viability of the project. This fact had been known by the provincial government already in 2009 when a group of 10 Korean experts conducted a survey of the project and concluded that the economic viability of the project was shaky (M. C. Ho & Kim, 2012). This report however had been kept secret until the spring of 2012 when it was obtained by a local newspaper. The farmers that invested in the project reacted angrily demanding that the province to keep their initial promises of providing land and the promised investments.

Mr. Lee was not yet about to give up. Over the next couple of months, he worked frantically to develop a new business model, finding new investors, and partners. In August 2012, he had come up with a new plan to begin producing compound feed at the drying facility in Cambodia rather than just drying corn and soybean for re-export thus performing value-added activities in Cambodia. In order to do so, another company was established. The idea was to produce compound feed from agricultural by-products in the area while continuing to try to develop corn and soybean

production in the area. Producing compound feed, a higher value product, would generate bigger profits and more flexibility as it can be produced by a variety of grains and roughage and thus less dependent on one particular crop (Lee Woo-Chang, personal communication, September 26, 2012). It was this activity that was taking place during my visit in December 2012.

The provincial government finally responded the farmers' requests for support in the late summer of 2012 after pressure from the farmers. On July 30, 2012, an expert group was invited to Chungnam Provincial Government Office to try to settle the dispute. At the meeting, Mr. Lee the CEO stated that:

"This project was launched by the Government with great enthusiasm. The project is still called for as international grain prices go up. We have had difficulties in operating the project but we learned a lot of lessons from the failure. We hope that the Government continues to help us secure land in Cambodia and support the project with generators, etc." (S. W. Lee, 2012a).

One of the experts invited, Mr. Kim from the government research institute Korea Rural Economics Institute, and one of the conceivers of the overseas agricultural development strategy, supported the farmers and stated that:

"Overseas agricultural development is a risky business. Neither the central government nor provincial governments were successful yet. It is recommended that a regional government and a private corporation collaborate and the central government supports their efforts with a long term perspective." (S. W. Lee, 2012a)

In the end, the Chungnam provincial government pledged that they would support a reorganization of the project in Cambodia and the Vice Governor announced

"The [Chungnam] Government will do whatever it can do for the farmers who lost their investment. The Government understands the importance of overseas food bases. We will do actively whatever is within the capacity of the Provincial

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Government. For things the central government should intervene, we will do our best to persuade the central government to reflect them in its policies.” (S. W. Lee, 2012a)

The farmers however were still not satisfied. They demanded, first and foremost, for the provincial government to provide the 5000 hectares of farmland promised. A demand that the government refused on the basis that it was outside the province’s capacity. In response, CEO Lee threatened with legal action against the provincial government in order for farmers to at least recover their lost investment (S. W. Lee, 2012b). Chungnam Province officials however, argued that it was this was not possible for the provincial government to provide the 5000 hectares. They would however, try to support the project in other ways. The farmers threatened to take legal action against the government if their promise of land provision was not kept. The dispute had not been settled by 2013 the fall of 2013.

What the case of the Korean farmers in Cambodia illustrates is the consistent referrals to a national purpose. The project was initiated by the governor of Chungnam Province as a food sovereignty a few months after President Lee Myung Bak announced the new OADS. Some farmers that joined the initiative and invested in the new company also articulated that they saw this as part of a national calling to defend farmers and domestic agriculture for example by referring to themselves as freedom fighters and agricultural pioneers. Similarly, as the project faced financial difficulties and the provincial government reneged on their political and economic promised, farmers attacked the government’s lack of commitment as leaving behind those that had sacrificed their savings to take part in this food sovereignty project. Farmers did not demand financial compensation as such, but they did demand that the provincial government keep their promises to support the project. They did so by appealing particularly to the moral responsibility of the government towards the farmers who had

sacrificed for the food sovereignty project. It was as such a debate about the government's moral obligation to financially support the farmers' national endeavor.

Representations of a National Food Crisis

The case of the twenty-six farmers is illustrative of how the food price crisis of 2007-08 affected South Korean agriculture and raised fears over the future. First of all, rising grain prices hit livestock farmers disproportionately hard as a sector because feed supply chains had become increasingly internationalized over the course of the past two to three decades. For cattle farmers, the combination of rising competition from imported beef and rising feed costs were particularly alarming and the overseas agricultural development strategy was heavily encouraged and supported by the influential Hanwoo Association, who in fact lobbied for even more government support for overseas agriculture (Kim Yong-Won, personal communication, July 8, 2013). Thus, the case is indicative of how cattle farmers regarded the rise in feed grain prices as a potentially devastating trend that needed to be addressed through overseas agricultural investments that could stabilize feed prices in future crises.

The twenty-six farmers and Chungnam Province were not the only farmers and local governments to respond to rising feed prices by investing overseas. Similar companies in other provinces were set up by cattle and other livestock farmers in cooperation with provincial governments such as South Gyeongsang Province, North Gyeongsang Province, Gyeonggi Province, South Jeolla Province and even between farmers and local city governments (Korea Overseas Agricultural Development Service, 2012; Y.-H. Song & Hwang, 2009). Even if the Chungnam case revealed clear conflicts between the farmers and the provincial government these public-private partnerships were quite indicative of the overseas agricultural investments initiated in the early years of OADS when uncertainty and inexperience made such investments risky. Such public-private partnerships were according to an influential expert important in order to

reduce the financial risks of individuals and companies (Kim Yong-Taek, personal communication, July 11, 2012).

Yet what is of most interest to this study is the underlying, sometimes explicit, references to national security and sovereignty that the case provides. First, when governor Lee Wan Gu announced his MOU with the governor of Siem Reap, he presented the project as a “food sovereignty” project (M. C. Ho, 2012b). Secondly, some farmers also referred to themselves as *agricultural pioneers* and *freedom fighters* as already mentioned. In doing so, the farmers also paid reference to the narrative of peasant resistance and the peasant as the defender of the nation as discussed in the previous chapter. The cattle farmers wanted to protect the economic interests of their fellow farmers and the livestock sectors, but they linked their overseas agricultural development project to broader matters of national security and sovereignty. This claim of being driven by a broader national agenda and patriotism became a major aspect of how the farmers aired their grievances against the provincial government as their finances began to dry up. It was not only that the farmers had lost their life savings, they argued, but also that the provincial government had abandoned the farmers who had “selflessly” engaged in overseas agriculture for the sake of national food security and sovereignty.

It is impossible to say whether or not these claims were based on deep held convictions of their own role in contributing to national food security or a conscious strategy to shame the provincial government into honoring their commitments, by swaying public opinion and getting central government officials to support a resolution. In either case it seems to have created enough pressure on Chungnam Province to, at least in part, accede to farmers’ demands. While Chungnam Province did not want to promise land to the farmers they eventually did agree to meet many of the other demands for financial support.

One could argue that just as farmers and consumers had linked their struggle against the reopening of U.S. beef imports to a matter of national sovereignty, so did the Chungnam cattle farmers link their venture to a struggle for national sovereignty. Thus, these farmers on several occasions articulated their motivation for the project in terms of national sovereignty and by positioning themselves as the vanguard in defending that sovereignty. Food security in the sense employed here is as such much less about a material definition of food security as access and availability to food. Rather, food security is operates as a kind of legitimating function for a particular kind of economic prescription – that is overseas agricultural development.

Farmers, however, were not the only ones to justify and legitimize OADS on the basis of defending national sovereignty and security. In an article in the national newspaper *Segye Ilbo*, the overseas agricultural development strategy was presented as a matter of “...security to secure national sovereignty” (M. J. Wang, 2011). South Korea’s government, the article argued, had not done enough, compared to Japan and China, to establish preemptive measures to secure overseas food resources in this global *war without gunfire* referring to rising competition over food resources (M. J. Wang, 2011). Articles in other mainstream newspapers highlighted the fact that South Korea need vertically integrated grain trading companies like the ones in Japan, the EU, and the U.S. (G. J. Lee, 2011; Lim & Limb, 2011; S. Park, 2011a). The lack of any major Korean owned grain trading companies, they argued, had led to a situation in which the country relied on grain imports controlled by predominantly U.S. and Japanese trading companies (H. Park, Jung, Kim, & Chae, 2012; H. Park, 2011b). A report by the influential private think tank Samsung Economic Research Institute stated that:

“...high dependence on a few countries or a few companies (i.e. the grain majors) can cause substantial instability in risk management. Korea’s imports of corn, wheat and soybeans mostly come from the United States, Australia, Brazil,

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Argentina and Canada. Since Korea brought in 72.9 percent of its total import volume of grain through the four majors (as well as Japanese general trading companies like Marubeni and Mitsubishi), it has been subject to the market power and influence of these providers.” (H. Park, 2011b, p. 5)

In an interview with the newspaper *Korea Herald*, Senior Research Director Kim Yong-Taek from the government research center Korea Rural Economics Research Institute (KREI), who also mediated the dispute between the Chungnam farmers and the provincial government, also located the problem in lack of national control over supply chains as a weakness in Korea's food system:

“We have long lacked a control system for agricultural commodities. Despite tough conditions surrounding the issue, it's a timely decision given the necessity and a global trend.” (H. Shin, 2011)

Another influential researcher and head of the Korea Food Security Research Foundation (KFRSF), Professor Lee Cherl-Ho, similarly centered his critique on the lack of control and dominance of foreign firms:

“We don't have a large import company like the U.S., which already took over the grain futures markets, and our middle agents are mostly Japanese. We can't even buy our food by ourselves.” (H. Shin, 2011)

In all three quotes above, foreign corporate control is emphasized as a main weakness of South Korea's food supply system and in support of the OADS. In an article the major English language newspaper, *The Korea Herald*, experts warned that without securing overseas agricultural resources, there would a possibility of “...serious supply

crunch in two or three years” (H. Shin, 2011). Such statements of course, raise the fear of an actual material shortage of food in the near future. Katarzyna Cwiertka argues in her book *Cuisine, Colonialism and Cold War*, that this public memory of universal hunger developed over the decades as part of the national imaginary of a country gone from rags to riches despite foreign aggression. This common memory of hunger in mid-twentieth century South Korea is a powerful one, which Koreans have come to think of as “the common experience of all Koreans, despite the fact that not everybody went hungry” (Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, 2012, p. 1323). By emphasizing the possibility of a possible *supply crunch* in the near future supporters of the OADS invoke memories of food shortages and hunger to argue for the need to pursue acquisitions of agricultural land overseas.

The statements from the Segye Ilbo article above is very explicit in linking the global food crisis to a matter of national sovereignty. The comments from influential experts and research institutions however, also argue that rising global grain and food prices should be regarded as matters of national concern, not because there was a food supply crisis per se, but because the food supply was controlled by foreign corporations, putting the fate of Korea’s food supply in the hands of foreigners. This lack of control, they argued, could become a national threat in a future where food scarcity could lead to the weaponization of food and food wars (C.-H. Lee, 2013; H. Park, 2011b). In an interview with the Korea Times, Chang Tae-pyong, Minister for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, stated that:

“Expansion in agricultural investments should continue, like those currently in Southeast Asia and Africa. To Korea, raising food self-efficiency is as important as exploring oil fields abroad.” (Hyun-cheol Kim, 2009b)

Chapter 7 – The Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy: What Were the Problems Represented to be?

What is interesting in this quote is how the minister explicitly links national control of overseas farmland as not only important but necessary in order to increase food self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is in his definition not defined by growing food within the borders of South Korea, but rather on food being grown by Korean nationals and companies overseas. The focus for both the minister as well as the different experts interviews is the need to gain control of overseas farm land as well as supply chains in order to secure national sovereignty. Thus, the need for an overseas agricultural strategy came to be represented in national media as a matter of national sovereignty drawing on similar notions of a national threat caused by foreign domination, which had mobilized strong popular support against the U.S. beef imports in 2008 (M. Park, 2009, p. 460).

But at the same time, these media debates remained remarkably quiet on the actions and doings of Korean corporations overseas. When Daewoo's proposed 1.3 million hectare agricultural investment in Madagascar made headlines in major international newspapers such as the Financial Times and Time Magazine and led to international condemnation, domestic criticism remained almost non-existent (Y.-H. Song & Hwang, 2009).. Newspapers instead celebrated those Korean nationals and Korean companies that went overseas as national heroes (Lim & Limb, 2011; H. Shin, 2011; M. J. Wang, 2011). Several of the companies that went overseas as part of the government initiative presented their motivation in terms of solidarity with Korean livestock farmers or in terms of national food security. In an interview, a company official from Hyundai Heavy Industries, argued that the company had invested in two large farms in Far East Russia in response to the government's OADS, and that the project was initiated to "...help Korean livestock farms by freeing them up from sudden price changes and supply shortages" (Blas, 2009). When Daewoo Logistics was interviewed by *Financial Times* about their planned investment in Madagascar in 2008,

the company representative stated “We want to plant corn there to ensure our food security. Food can be a weapon in this world,” (J. Song et al., 2008).

The little criticism that did air in major media outlets was primarily focused on the lack of results from overseas investments. In 2011, The strategy became target for bipartisan criticism because overseas agricultural production only had reached 49.3 percent of the projected target and only 0.37 percent was imported back to Korea. Furthermore lawmakers on both sides argued that the crops being grown were not as intended. There was, they argued too many starches such as cassava rather than grains, which had been the primary aim of the strategy (ecambodia.co.kr, 2011). Thus, the critique of the OADS in the National Assembly was primarily aimed at the fact that the OADS so far had failed to reach its objectives. Other criticisms from interviewed researchers and politicians, who were opposed to the strategy, highlighted the economic inefficiency and high-risk nature of overseas production. What was remarkably absent in the public debate was any critique of how South Korean capital and companies engaging in overseas farming on moral, ethical or anti-capitalist grounds such as impeding on other countries’ sovereignty, jeopardizing livelihoods of farmers in target countries or expansion of corporate control of the global food system. One article in the *Korea Times* in 2009, was among the few critical articles to make its way into a major newspaper¹⁰⁹ (Durbach, 2009). In the article Durbach criticized Korean investments for amounting to *agricultural imperialism* based on a sense of entitlement and self-importance deriving from the country’s rapid ascend into the global economic elite (Durbach, 2009). Among Korean farmers, only a few organizations criticized the strategy as a form of land grabbing. The left-leaning Korean Peasants League (KPL) and the Korean Women Peasant Association (KWPA) were among the most vocal critics using similar arguments as Durbach, but they also acknowledged how little impact their

¹⁰⁹ Based on internet searches of the four major English language newspapers and news agencies in South Korea (Korea Times, Joongang Ilbo, Korea Herald, Yonhap News) during the period from January 2008 – December 2013.

criticism had on public sentiment. In an interview with the NGO GRAIN, a representative from KWPA described the lack of criticism in Korea:

“...almost all [Korean] people have an attitude of acceptance toward the Lee Myung-bak administration’s policy to secure the food base of Korea in foreign countries. They already know that there are food security issues in other countries because of the reports of riots in the streets in Africa and elsewhere. The idea is to have access to cheap food, especially animal feed for livestock, in other countries. Almost all people accept it. The reason for this is that the media spins the issue this way.” (GRAIN, 2008a).

In the quote above, the representative from KWPA points to a very central argument in this chapter: The representation of the strategy as being a *necessary* step by the government to ensure national security and sovereignty in a world where food was becoming “weaponized”. Under the current circumstances, foreign corporations and countries controlled South Korea’s food supply and it was needed for the nation to break free from such dependence and subjugation.

Another group that spoke out against the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy was Green Korea United: a coalition of small farmers’ movements, environmental NGO’s, and civil society groups. In a press statement, they argued that:

“The policy to expand farmland abroad is not acceptable because it encourages the destruction of the agricultural base within the target countries and plunders their agricultural resources.” (Green Korea United, 2010)

The statements from KPL, KWPA and Green Korea United were among only a few public statements made by Korean organizations against the overseas agricultural

development strategy. These statements, however, had no political impact at the national level. The same farmers' movements and civil society groups that had successfully mobilized public opposition against the KORUS FTA were now facing a different situation. They no longer had the power to frame their opposition in terms of defending national economic and cultural sovereignty. Their attempts to protest the overseas agricultural development strategy were thwarted by the *nation under threat* argument made by the government, other farmer segments, and influential experts in favor of the strategy.

Another nationalist perspective, which was also represented in the debate, was the *advanced nation* claim. A number of authors compared Korea's food supply to that of other "advanced" nations, and argued that South Korea lacked a strong food security policy and a Korean-owned grain trading companies, which other OECD countries had (H.-N. Kim, 2010; C.-H. Lee, 2013; H. Park et al., 2012). Thus, to become more like other advanced nations, there was a need to establish strong trading companies that could strengthen South Korea's position in the global economy. Thus, those supporting overseas investments not only did so based on fears of what the lack of control could lead to in an increasingly competitive global market, but also how the strategy could lead to new economic opportunities and the potential for Korean companies to become dominant global players. As a group of researchers from Samsung Economic Research Institute wrote:

"As for Korean companies that seek new long-term growth engines, now is the most optimal time to lay a foundation to develop global-standard resource majors. Resource development projects have proven to be fresh long-term revenue sources as the fatigue levels in Korea's core industries like IT and automobiles have been increasing since the global financial crisis. Resource development is a business sector where Korea is capable of creating synergy by

incorporating its competitive technologies in plant engineering and infrastructure construction.” (H. Park et al., 2012, p. 10)

What this quote illustrates is that it was not only the perceived submissive position vis a vis foreign powers, but also that South Korean agricultural investments overseas, presented a strengthening of national power and new opportunities in a globalized economy. The Hanu Association regarded expansion of Korean activities, not only in terms of securing feed as a defensive measure against future price volatility and supply crunch. The continued expansion of FTA agreements in the region also provided an opportunity to enter lucrative high-end beef niche markets in China, Taiwan and South-East Asia where rising economic affluence was increasing demand for high-end beef, such as Korean Hanu (H. Lee, 2013b). However for Korean Hanu to enter these markets, maintenance and continued improvement of quality was needed (Kim Yong Won, Personal Communication, August 7, 2013). The perception of Korean food as safe and high quality as well as the general popularity of Korean food and culture in those regions could provide new opportunities for Hanu exports and the Hanu Association had already initiated marketing campaigns overseas to promote Hanu (H. Lee, 2013a). Secondly, Hanu, according to the association, needs to receive the international recognition it deserves as a product on par with the global recognition of Japanese Wagyu and is lobbying the government to include Hanu in its promotion of South Korean food and food culture overseas (H. Lee, 2013a). By referring to Japanese Wagyu the issue of inter-regional competition for global recognition is another issue at stake.

Thus the OADS is not only promoted as a defensive mechanism to protect against foreign domination and to defend Korean agriculture, but also that the OADS, through government support, can lead to new economic opportunities for national companies and farmers as well as the expansion of South Korean food culture and international recognition.

Thus, At least three distinct nationalist motives can be identified from the above that operates as justification for the OADS. First of all, there is the narrative of the “subjugated nation”, which places the cause of the rise in food import dependence on the domination of South Korea’s food supply by foreign powers, corporate and state. The notion of a subjugated nation is perhaps the dominant nationalist perspective. It was, as I described in the previous chapter, the mobilizing force in much of the early nationalist anti-colonial movements seeking to assert political and ethnic distinctiveness during the Japanese occupation. This narrative argues that central to Korea’s existence, as a politically and ethnically homogenous nation stretching back millennia, is the historical and continuous struggle against foreign invaders. It is at times of foreign attempts to dominate and subjugate Korea that its people put aside their internal differences and unite against the external threat. The articles in the media and the reports by influential researchers all appeal to the idea of the nation under threat from outside forces and that a mobilization of the state, companies, and capital is needed if South Korea wants to break free of the foreign corporate control of its food system.

The second nationalist motive in the material is the idea of the peasant as the defender of the nation that I discussed in chapter six as the Minjung response to the more bourgeois nationalist ideology of Minjok nationalists. The farmers in Cambodia presented this view in their rationale for the overseas venture by comparing themselves to national freedom fighters and agricultural pioneers, defending not only their own sector’s economic survival, but also national food security and food sovereignty. This position as the patriotic peasant was further emphasized, but in a different way as they tried to get the provincial government to keep their economic promises. Here they claimed that they had been abandoned by those in power while performing their duty to the nation. This narrative is quite similar to the position of Minjung philosophy in chapter six, in which the peasant was regarded as the true defenders of the nation often

left alone by those in power to fight foreign invasions. In the same way the farmers' grievances towards the provincial government can be said to plead to the provincial government to not leave them behind in Cambodia since their investment came on the behest of the governor's call for a food sovereignty project in Cambodia. Thus there are clear parallels to a nationalist understanding of the Minjung peasant movements and the way that the cattle farmers rationalized their overseas activities.

The third kind of nationalism that is identifiable is the aspiration for a strong advanced nation that can compete economically with the powerful global nations, which was the view of the early nationalists of the Independence Club as well as for many decades the dominant state ideology. This perspective could, of course, be argued to be the other side of the idea of the subjugated nation. Yet, it should be treated separately because its motivation comes not from the defense of national sovereignty and identity from outside influences but rather from the aspiration to become a powerful or advanced nation by its own right. This is the position that Samsung Economic Research Institute advocated for in their report about the need for Korea to develop its own resource companies (H. Park et al., 2012). The current food crisis provides an opportunity for Korean companies to prosper and hence strengthen South Korea's global position. The Hanu Association also argue, in a similar vein, that the signing of FTA's with regional trading partners in Asia open up new opportunities for Korean beef. Not only to the benefit of the Korean cattle sector, but also because by including beef in the promotion of Korean food culture overseas, Hanu can contribute to the expansion of Korean cultural influence in East and South East Asia.

These different nationalist motivations in the promotion and justification of the OADS are important as they allow us to discuss how economic interest and the promotion of, or opposition to, particular economic doctrines are less about the economic policy itself as it is about how that particular doctrine may help achieve some broader national objective. By embedding an economic doctrine such as the OADS in

a broader national frame is what allowed the political coalition based in shared economic interests (Import dependence livestock producers and the state) to gain political support for its economic strategy of overseas agriculture. If we turn back to the 2008 beef protests, a number of authors argued that the 2008 beef protests were a reaction to the transnationalization and corporatization of South Korea's food system i.e. that they were opposed to the free trade economic doctrine that the KORUS-FTA represented (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010). Hart-Landsberg (2011) and Park (2009), on the other hand, argued in their analyses of resistance to the KORUS-FTA that the opposition framed the agreement predominantly as a question of national economic and cultural sovereignty versus economic and cultural imperialism and that it was this perception of national subjugation that fueled popular discontent rather than the economic doctrine per se. This framing as Park and Hart-Landsberg argue worked as a strategy unifying various segments of society in a political coalition against the government's position that the KORUS-FTA would lead to economic benefits for Korea as a whole. The government's economic benefit argument fell short against the argument that the KORUS-FTA was an effective secession of cultural and economic sovereignty.

The Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy proponents presented the OADS as an initiative designed to protect/reinforce national sovereignty and security, defending Korean cattle farmers, and opening up new opportunities for Korean companies overseas. This, I argue, explains the strong support and limited opposition it has encountered. The support for the OADS draw on similar notions conceptions of the nation that were in play in the KORUS-FTA struggles. Burmeister and Choi (2011) expressed puzzlement that more radical farmers' movements such as KPL and KWPA were not able to mobilize the population against the OADS as they had done against the KORUS-FTA. For Burmeister and Choi the government's attempt to outsource agricultural production through the OADS should provide numerous ways for the

farmers' movements to mobilize political support against the policy. The OADS takes advantage of the elimination of barriers of the movement of capital and goods across borders enabled by bilateral and multilateral FTA's. Burmeister and Choi identify many of the same concerns such as food safety, trade policy, and corporate control of the food that provided the foundation for broad mobilization against U.S. beef imports (Burmeister & Choi, 2011, p. 256). The failure to do so is in their view a lack organizational capacity and media connections.

But that puzzle (lack of a political coalition against the OADS) is only a puzzle if one assumes that the struggles over trade liberalization in South Korea have been a fight over economic policy alone. The struggles over agricultural trade policy has very much been fought within a national ontology. That is, struggles over agricultural trade policy have historically been fought on the basis on who represent the broader national interests, whether that be economic or cultural. By looking at the role of economic nationalism as the glue that have bound broader coalitions together historically, my interpretation of why the opposition to the OADS was unable to effectively oppose the strategy was because they were unable to articulate an effective argument against the claim that OADS was designed to ensure national sovereignty.

Kim Chul-Kyoo has argued that farmers' strategies for protection of the agricultural sector based in appeals to nationalist sentiments for continued trade protection are beginning to fade and would need to make way for a new kind of politics in which farmers and consumers join forces to protect food as central to life, body, and social meaning (Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008). Kim sees the 2008 beef protests as indicative of this shift towards a new kind of politics. I tend to disagree, not to the presence of this kind of "new" politics, but rather to the extent that the U.S. Beef and anti- KORUS-FTA demonstrations were predominantly expressive of anti-capitalist sentiments and anti-corporate sentiments. This is not to argue that some farmers' and food movements in South Korea are not seeking to build such alternatives to the dominant food system as

discussed by Hartsell, Kim, Yoon, Burmeister, and Choi (Burmeister & Choi, 2011; Hartsell & Kim, 2010; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). Also, I do not argue against that certain segments of the 2008 beef protest did in fact demand radical political reform or represented a new kind of political participation (J. Kang, 2012; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010). The point I am seeking to spell out here is, that these demands for a new kind of politics did not play the defining role in assembling the broad political coalition against the KORUS-FTA and the U.S. beef imports. What mobilized the broader coalition were representations of national sovereignty under threat. It was the adding of *foreign* or *U.S.* in front of *capitalism* and *corporate control* that enabled broad-based political mobilization against the U.S. beef imports.

If we turn to the OADS, Burmeister and Choi argue that a likely explanation for why the more radical farmers' movements in South Korea were unable to mobilize intra- and cross-sectoral opposition to the OADS, based on an opposition to OADS as a corporate outsourcing solution to Korea's food import dependence, was because they lacked the media connections of more powerful civil society organizations (Burmeister & Choi, 2011, p. 257). This is a quite possible explanation, but I argue that such coalitions that Burmeister and Choi envision would be difficult to mobilize against the OADS for a number of reasons. One reason is the fact that, as I discussed in chapter six, intra-sectoral economic interests between small cow-calf operations and the larger fattening farms, as a consequence of the production system have begun to diverge. Whereas both sectors tends to agree on lobbying the government for retail market protection, the fattening operations are fundamentally dependent on feed imports in order to maintain the quality standards that are rewarded with premium prices. The diverging economic interests between these two sector segments may also explain why the movements representing smaller farmers were less successful in mobilizing intra-sectoral support than the Hanu Association that is a more politically powerful lobby organization, against the OADS. For the Hanu Association, the OADS was a policy they

considered being in their economic interests (Kim Yong-won, Personal communication, August 8, 2013). In recent years, the Hanu Association has shifted its position on the issue of FTA's and now begins to see these as representing new opportunities for securing feed supplies as well as export opportunities for their product among the growing middle classes of China and South-East Asia (Korea Herald, 2013; H. Lee, 2013a). Thus, the sectoral unity against trade liberalization, which was the case in the struggle against the KORUS-FTA and other FTA's did not materialize in case of the OADS. In effect, small farmers' organization such as KWPA and KPL were quite alone in their opposition to the OADS.

My second argument for why a powerful coalition against the OADS did not come into being it did against the KORUS FTA is the fact that the proponents of the OADS from the onset managed to represent the OADS as necessary to counter *foreign and/or Japanese and U.S.* corporate dominance of Korea's food supply. Taking control of overseas food supply chains spearheaded by the Korean state and companies was thus represented as reinforcing national sovereignty and securing national interests. In effect, the OADS co-opted the nationalist argument that had been used against trade liberalization. Thus, the opponents to the OADS, were in an entirely different position than during the KORUS-FTA negotiations where they could argue convincingly that the agreement would pose a threat to economic and cultural sovereignty (M. Park, 2009). In the case of the OADS, Green Korea United argued that the government's policy was a kind of new colonialism that "...destroys the agricultural base in within the target countries and plunders their agricultural resources." (Green Korea United, 2010). The critique advanced by this coalition of environmental movements as well as KWPA and KPL's campaigning against South Korean investments overseas through the international peasant organization la Via Campesina, seek to argue that Korea's activities overseas are similar to the kind of corporate globalization and economic imperialism that Koreans were subject to in FTA negotiations.

The coalition formation in support of the OADS is clearly an alliance between the state, and certain segments of the agricultural sector, such as large cattle farmers, and the feed industry formed around similar economic interests. They are all interested in grain price stability and supply stability. But what makes the strategy acceptable to broader segments of society is that the overseas agricultural development strategy played on nationalist sentiments based on fears over loss of economic sovereignty and national control over food supply combined with the aspiration that South Korean state and corporate control of the nation's food supply would strengthen South Korea's global economic position. Political coalition formation thus remains strongly influenced by national purpose in South Korea, and it shows how nationalism can support and underwrite quite different economic policies and also that national protectionism is not necessarily linked to a particular economic doctrine. Nationalism played a significant role in building strong intra-sectoral and cross-sectoral opposition to the KORUS-FTA, but it also played a central role in supporting the expansionist policy of the government's Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy.

Thus nationalism, which provided the basis for the agricultural to muster broad coalitions against trade liberalization for almost two decades, also provided the ideological foundation for the promotion of overseas agricultural development, not only by the state, but also by segments of the livestock sector. It shows perhaps first and foremost that nationalism is employed to promote particular economic policies by particular economic interest to defend their interests disguised as general interests (Pickel, 2005, p. 4). As such it can be described as an instrumentalist perspective on how nationalism can shape economic policy in line with Eichler (Eichler, 2005). This could be said about both how the state and farmers have sought to articulate their specific, sometimes conflicting interests, in terms of who represent the nation and national interests. For such nationalist claims to form the basis for political coalitions there needs to be a widely shared perception of what constitutes the nation both in its

material and territorial form, but also in its more conceptual form. The idea of Korea's history as defined by its subjugation and resistance to powerful foreign interests remains a powerful idea in contemporary politics even at a time in which the country's economic power is among the biggest in the world. A key aspect of Korean agro-food politics remain, I claim, a political struggle between competing claims to defending the nation or national interests against foreign economic and political powers. The promotion of an economic doctrine, protectionist or (neo)-liberalist depends on how that particular economic policy is regarded as protecting the nation or not.

The representation of OADS as a food security initiative was thus a call for national mobilization to counter the foreign domination of South Korea's food supply including national and regional state agencies, public funds, private capital and a broad collection of national actors including major corporations, but also small entrepreneurs and farmers. Through chapter six and seven, I have documented the central role that nationalism has played in agro-food politics in South Korea in the past decades. The linking of agro-food politics to matters of national sovereignty and preservation of national identity in the face of globalization and foreign domination thus has clear historical precedents. While usually associated with anti-trade liberalization, nationalism also played a central role in mobilizing political support for the OADS. It was from this nationalist position that the OADS proponents were able to gather momentum and political support. Not in an advancement of a particular economic doctrine, but in what OADS did to protect the nation from foreign domination and aggression.

So far, I have focused mostly on how the OADS was justified and legitimized by representing South Korean food import dependence as caused by externally imposed agricultural trade liberalization that in turn could lead to food insecurity. This representation played into popular perceptions of South Korean agriculture and food being under siege by trade liberalization, which in turn played on nationalist ideas of

historical subjugation to the interests of more powerful nations. This is a politically powerful problem representation, but hardly nuanced or historically correct as I have attempted to show in chapters four and five. As argued by Carol Bacchi (Bacchi, 2000, 2009), policy proposals represent certain problematizations, which justifies the policy, while other potential problematizations are relegated to the background.

The proponents of the OADS only problematized the foreign influence on South Korea's food supply and not the role of the state and the agricultural sector itself. This also meant that the perspectives I have sought to uncover in the previous chapters were relegated to the background of political debates. This was also the case in the 2008 beef protests and the global food crisis. By proposing that national sovereignty was the key issue (Hart-Landsberg, 2011; M. Park, 2009), also meant that the economic critique was less prominent than argued by other scholars who regarded the Anti-FTA and beef protests as a new wave of democratic action, anti-capitalist sentiment, and possibilities for alternative economic and agro-food policies (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; J. Kang, 2012; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013).

The question arises if the OADS would have been as widely accepted if the arguments had been closer to the material reality of food import dependence? That is, would the public and media have responded as positively to the strategy if food import dependence had been presented more as a matter of obtaining cheap animal feed? What if the debate on food import dependence had focused on the domestic livestock sectors' dependency on imported feed grains rather than on the notion of food security? And how this shift to imported was a major cause for the country's rising grain imports? Could that for example have led to a different debate about the appropriateness of current beef cattle production systems and whether consumers perhaps should accept less fat marbling in their beef to allow for more locally based feed sources? For a number of years, some farmer and consumer movements have advocated for improving national self-sufficiency by reversing the decline in farmland and increasing

domestic feed grain production. For example, the 385,000 hectares that the government set as the desired target for overseas land acquisitions is less than the 437,000 hectares of farmland in South Korea, which was lost predominantly to urbanization and industrial development since the early 1980s with a majority of those hectares lost since 1990 (The Hankyoreh, 2009). The reduction in farm land and lack of domestic feed production have been points of criticism from people and organization advocating for boosting domestic production rather than venturing overseas but this perspective did not enter mainstream public debates. So while, for example, Hanu had become the symbol of resistance to corporate globalization, it itself had become deeply part of that very system it claimed to be the alternative to. It also did not represent the growing polarization between smaller and larger Hanu producers, and the economic stress on the smaller producers that was brought on not just by trade liberalization, but also by the concentration of profits in the fattening process of beef production. Thus, three key factors in declining self-sufficiency, the rise of livestock production, its dependence on imported feed grains, and the decline in arable land were not represented as problematic in the public debate.

Following the 1997 financial crisis, the Korean feminist scholar Haejoang Cho reflected on her disenfranchisement with popular responses to the financial crisis. She described people's enthusiasm for patriotic responses to economic depression as "Pavlovian reactions to catch-phrases such as 'the nation' and 'unity'" (Cho, 2000, p. 58). She argued that this sense of national unity, first established in resistance to Japanese colonialism and later mobilized for the national development project, left little room for more differentiated perspectives and political subjectivities to enter mainstream politics. The rapid development of Korea based in this historical understanding of foreign suppression and desire for national greatness had drawn people into a logic of dichotomies that deprived them of the capacity for self-reflection (Cho, 2000, p. 51). Progressive branches of society hoped that the 1997 financial crisis

would provide opportunities to deepen democracy and change the direction of economic development, but grew deeply disenfranchised as the economic policy only became more aggressive in pursuing chaebol-centered economic growth by accelerating economic trade liberalization.

Cho Haejoang's critique applies well to how the OADS was received with mostly enthusiasm. The OADS, a response to the global food crisis, rode a similar wave of nationalist and anti-imperialist sentiments rather than an anti-capitalist critique or demands for an alternative social and economic order. 15 years after Cho Haejoang's critique of how people in Korea responded to the financial crisis, nationalism understood as a perception of historical subjugation, desires for national greatness still seems to be dominant themes in South Korea agro-food politics. What is particularly striking in the OADS is how certain segments of the beef cattle sector has shifted their support in favor of overseas agricultural production as well as promoting beef exports overseas. This is a shift in agricultural politics that for decades has been defined by an agricultural sector that at least on the surface has appeared to be solidly against economic trade liberalization. Yet as I have shown, much of the growth in the livestock sector was predicated on the free flow of cheap animal feed from overseas. The political split in the cattle sector between the Hanu Association, which represents predominantly larger cattle farmers and the KPL/KWPA representing smaller farmers on the issue of the OADS thus appear to indicate diverging political stances on the question of trade liberalization. So far, the state and the Hanu Association have managed to present the OADS as a matter of national security and sovereignty rather than as particular economic interests. The opposition to the OADS remains limited and muted as it tries to grapple with how to oppose the OADS effectively. It seems that the current strategy of arguing that it constitutes a form of neo-colonialism and neo-liberal economics and diverts attention from domestic agricultural policy has proven ineffective in mobilizing political support against the OADS.

Conclusion

The focus on economic nationalism as an important determinant for forming political coalitions and thus policy formulation is an important aspect in understanding how certain intra-class segments within the agricultural sector and the state in South Korea have been able to mobilize support for and legitimize OADS. In the previous chapter, I discussed how gastronationalism, understood as linking agro-food policy to questions to specific nationalist historiographies, was used by farm organizations and state agencies alike over the past decades in an attempt to build a conceptual border around Korean produced food to limit the impact of trade liberalization. It tied Korean agriculture and consumption of Korean food to an understanding of historical struggle for sovereignty and resistance to foreign aggressors as well as positioning the farmer, agriculture and particular foods as central to Korean identity. The construction of this kind of gastronational conviction has been an important element for Korean agriculture to build broad political coalitions against trade liberalization. Thus, it is perhaps no surprise that nationalism has been associated with protectionist economic policy as Helleiner and Pickel argue in their treatment of mainstream understandings of economic nationalism.

What I have argued in this chapter, is that those actors (state, farmers, industry) who promoted the OADS, a strategy that in its essence demands the free flow of goods and capital across borders and hence in line with free market policy, were able to frame OADS as a nationalist endeavor rather as a strategy designed to protect particular economic interests of a group of Korean economic actors such as the government and large cattle operators. The dominant representation in the media was that a national food crisis was in the making because foreign trading companies dominated South Korea's food supply. This foreign domination and food import dependence in turn was presented as the historical consequence of the dismantling of national agriculture and incorporation into an international food system dominated by the U.S., Japan, and

global corporation (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008; C.-H. Lee, 2013; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). What the OADS proponents thus suggested was for South Korea to assert itself vis-à-vis this system and take control of the nation's food supply.

One example of such an analysis that historicizes the current food import dependence as the outcome of a national history of subjugation can be found in a 2013 book with the title name "Food War 2030 – hastening the collapse of capitalism" (C.-H. Lee, 2013) written by an influential retired food scientist and head of the Korea Food Security Foundation. In the book, he argues that globalization, free trade, and Western capitalism are the causes for the dismal food production in South Korea and other parts of the developing world¹¹⁰. The author draws a straight line from western (and Japanese) imperialism, exemplified by the expropriation of soybeans from China, Japan, and Korea in the 19th century and the expansion of corporate control of the global food system exemplified by Monsanto's dominance in the global soybean seed market (C.-H. Lee, 2013, pp. 127–135).

Lee's book exemplifies a particular and widespread opinion among South Korean policymakers and agricultural experts of how imperialism, capitalism and the international division of labor have crippled South Korean agriculture. It draws predominantly on ideas and concepts borrowed from dependency theory, World Systems Theory, Food Regime Theory and similar theories. It thus proposes a Marxist inspired core-periphery analysis of the global food system as explanation for South Korea's food import dependence. Thus, there are very close resemblances between the analysis of the causes of the food crisis proposed by McMichael and those of several Korean influential researchers (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; Chul-kyoo Kim, 2008; C.-H. Lee, 2013; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). All of them locate the source of the crisis in the global corporate food system and the logic of transnational/global capital, but they do so

¹¹⁰ This notion of South Korea still belonging to the developing world is a position that I have often frequented especially in talks with Korean agricultural expert.

without thoroughly analyzing the role of material and ideological contexts of domestic politics.

This understanding of the historical subordination of the nation to transnational capital is thus central to the Korean understanding of the causes of food import dependence. The Korean of the OADS similarly locate the source of a South Korean food security crisis in this very power relationship so central in food regime analyses of the global food crisis. Trade and financial liberalization has led to transnational consolidation of agribusiness and the dismantling of national protection of agriculture (Philip McMichael, 2009a, p. 287). The difference arise when it comes to identifying the effects and the remedy needed. McMichael is quite clear in his analysis of the effects most notably the compromising of state sovereignty and accelerated de-peasantization (Philip McMichael, 2009a, p. 287). Thus, McMichael both sees the corporate food system, following a logic of capital, as eroding the state-system but also and to him perhaps more importantly a class relations issue.

In the Korean debate in promotion of the OADS, the subordination of the nation to transnational capital was the central focus, not class relations. OADS proponents tied the country's food import dependence to a historical understanding of South Korea as a nation subject to foreign aggression and subjugation discussed in the previous chapter. This is slightly different from the political mobilization against the FTAs, which were represented not only as an attack on national sovereignty, but also an attack on the Korean peasant: the symbol of a particular national class identity. In the case of OADS those movements clearly identifying as representing the peasant class sought, as discussed earlier, to raise a critique of the OADS based on international class and Third World solidarity. The critique never made it into the mainstream media where the dominant narrative was how the food crisis caused by foreign corporate control challenged the nation's food security. The focus was on Korea as a nation state vis-à-vis foreign state and corporate interests.

What these analyses tended to leave out, was of course the role of state development policy and the transformation of Korean agriculture itself in producing that very food import dependence, which I discussed in chapter four and five. By focusing almost exclusively on external drivers for a potential food crisis, more critical and perhaps self-reflective discussions of the causes and potential solutions to rising food import dependence were relegated to the background. It resembles what Cho regarded as a nationalist Pavlovian reaction in the wake of the 1997 financial crisis. There is no time for critical self-reflection in times of threats to the nation. What is of particular interest of course is how nationalism in agro-food politics, which historically has been linked to protectionist economic policy, in the case of the OADS becomes a justification and vehicle for mobilization for the kind of security mercantilism that McMichael identifies (P. McMichael, 2013).

The farmers in Cambodia clearly linked their activities to patriotic endeavors during the colonial era, by arguing that they felt as freedom fighters. They also used the term *agricultural pioneers* who risked everything for the nation in their grievances against the provincial government. These cattle farmers thus attempted to link their investment in Cambodia, and their economic interests in gaining control of the feed supply chain, to a national purpose by drawing on the idea of the peasant as the historical defender of the nation from foreign dominance and their patriotic sacrifice. But cattle farmers and the Hanu Association were not the only ones to link their economic interests to a national crisis.

Policy researchers, industry analysts, and politicians supporting the government OADS argued in similar veins; that if South Korea did not act immediately and establish overseas supply bases, the country could be facing serious food shortages in the near future. This very material fear of food shortages, appeal to the memory of mid-twentieth century hunger, which Cwiertka argued had become a national memory even if not all people had experienced it (Katarzyna Joanna Cwiertka, 2012, p. 1323). The

second nationalist historical memory that these advocates used was the idea that this pending food crisis was caused by foreign states and corporations. As such, it externalized the cause of the crisis and it positioned the OADS as national endeavor to protect the country's food supply chain and in the end national sovereignty.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, nationalism has played a central role as a way to protect Korean food and agriculture from competition after trade liberalization. As Gareth Dale argued in his discussion of Polanyi's concept of the *Double Movement*, people turn to political ideas and organizations that claim to defend society against market excess (Dale, 2010, p. 220). In the case of the 2007 food crisis, nationalism, understood as external forces seeking to subjugate the Korean nation became the political idea that the state, farmers, and experts turned to and presented OADS as the way to protect Korea from foreign domination. In the previous chapter, I showed how nationalism has usually been associated with trade protectionism in defending Korean agriculture. The debates surrounding the causes of the food crisis and the OADS show that food security and the representation of food import dependence as a food security crisis linked the OADS to similar ideas of defending the nation. Though this time to support mercantilist policies enabled by the same erosion of trade barriers that Korean farmers has protested against for decades.

The question of agro-food politics during a time of economic liberalization and globalization in South Korea is not reducible to a matter of competing economic interests. It is also a matter of being able to argue that particular economic interests are of importance to the nation as a whole. During the KORUS-FTA negotiations in particular and other FTA negotiations in general, the challenge of those in favor of agricultural trade liberalization has been to convincingly argue that it would be to the benefit of Korea as a nation. It was a difficult sell as it was regarded as ceding sovereignty more powerful trading partners. However, prompted by the 2007 food crisis, represented as externally induced by the very same powerful trading partners,

Chapter 7 – The Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy: What Were the Problems Represented to be?

the OADS was regarded as a national imperative, even as the strategy effectively reproduced the very same relations of power, which those movements opposing the FTA's had argued would subject Korean agro-food systems to outside domination.

CHAPTER 8 - CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I have attempted to provide a historical analysis of how South Korea became food import dependent, and how that dependence prompted the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy for Food Security in the wake of the 2007 food crisis. First of all, I questioned the use of the terms food import dependence and food security as objective facts, and hence also their ability to accurately describe the drivers behind South Korea's overseas agricultural expansion. Rather, I argued these terms should be interrogated more closely as implicitly referring to particular problem representations that legitimized the OADS as a necessary political response. Instead, this dissertation sought to critically interrogate the specific trajectory of agro-food politics that led to South Korea's heavy dependence on grain imports, and how this import dependence in the wake of the 2007 food crisis came to be presented as a food security crisis. This included critically examining what specifically was referred to in South Korean public debates about food security.

In the case of food import dependence, the dissertation has attempted to provide an explanation as to the causes of rising food import dependence. It differs from dominant perceptions in South Korean popular media and in academic circles that situate the rising dependence on imported grains in the dynamics of trade liberalization and subjugation of South Korean agriculture to the interests of major agricultural exporting nations and transnational agro-corporations. Rather, I argue rising import dependence was the outcome of more complex political processes between changing state development objectives the transformation of the agricultural sector itself towards livestock production.

The second objective was to study how the food security imperative ascribed to South Korean agricultural investments may best be interpreted as an attempt to protect national sovereignty and national identity from foreign domination. As such, I argue,

food security is best understood in a nationalist sense rather than in terms of food availability.

In this sense, my analysis differs from a number of studies of agro-food policy formation in South Korea, which have studied it mainly as a struggle between competing economic interests between state-led neo-liberalization policies and corporate globalization versus farmers movements and civil society (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; S.-O. Lee et al., 2010; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013). The limited partial analyses of the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy have similarly identified as a South Korean state-corporate alliance to outsource food production away from domestic agriculture (Burmeister & Choi, 2011; P. Mcmichael, 2013). This led some observers to express surprise that Korean farmers' movement were not able to leverage any organized resistance against the government's overseas agricultural development strategy (Burmeister & Choi, 2011).

It was this second question, the dissertation also sought an answer to. If farmers and civil society groups historically have resisted trade liberalization based on an anti-corporate and anti-free trade platform, then why did no resistance occur against the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy, which purportedly shares many characteristics with such an economic doctrine? This inquiry started from the supposition that perhaps the authors above underestimated the significance of nationalism as an underlying factor for the broad political coalitions that mobilized against free trade agreements but did not oppose the overseas agricultural strategy. The aspect of nationalism as a politically mobilizing factor has been proposed by a few scholars studying South-Korean agro-food politics. These scholars argue that rather than the anti-liberalization movement usually defined by its resistance to neoliberal globalization it rather a movement that mobilized on nationalist and anti-U.S. sentiments (Hart-Landsberg, 2011; M. Park, 2009).

This study explored the historical trajectory of agro-food policy from the perspective of policy formulation as a political struggle between competing economic interests (Winders, 2009a) as well as competing national identities (Eichler, 2005; Helleiner & Pickel, 2005). To do so, I presented four research questions that would help in understanding the historical trajectories of rising food import dependence and critically examine the central claims or more precisely central problem representations (Bacchi, 2009) that dominated the debates about the causes of food import dependence, food insecurity and policy response. The first two research questions are examined in chapters 4 and 5 (Part 1) in which I seek to study the rise of import dependence as the outcome of shifts in policy preference from self-sufficiency to trade based food supply as well as a sectorial transformation towards livestock production. In chapters 6 and 7 (part 2), I explore how the agriculture and food became constructed as symbols of national sovereignty and identity, and how this identification of food with a sense of national unity was used by economic actors in their advocacy for, and justification of, the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy.

In chapter 4 I set out to understand the broader trajectory of agro-food policy in South Korea as the product of changing world economic conditions, state development priorities, and agricultural sector adjustment and resistance. The second research question turned attention to the trajectory of beef production in South Korea. The beef sector was selected as an agricultural sector case because it exemplifies the transformation towards livestock production and because beef production is the biggest consumer of grain imports, and thus a key contributor to rising grain imports. The third research question in turn studied the historical trajectory of nationalism in agro-food politics, and how beef became a symbol of national sovereignty and identity in the struggles against trade liberalization. The fourth research question turned its eye to how the 2007 food crisis became represented as a threat to national sovereignty that required the overseas agricultural development strategy in response.

To answer the first research question, I traced the trajectory of agro-food policy since the early 1970s identifying how the emphasis on imports of self-sufficiency shifted over time in response to the world economy and inter-sectorial interests. It documented how Korean agriculture and diets have been shaped by state intervention in production, distribution, and consumption to achieve particular macro-economic and political goals ultimately related to national survival and economic advancement within a changing world economic and political order. Up until the late 1960s, the modernization of the domestic agricultural sector in Korea was largely ignored by the state compared to other sectors. It was subject to heavy taxation by the state as well as tight control of distribution, but farmers were offered very little investments to increase domestic production. The substantial U.S. food aid support enabled the government to “neglect” agricultural modernization while transferring agricultural surplus value to industrialization and militarization instead. Land reform, the Grain Management Law, and U.S. food aid were thus key factors that contributed to South Korea’s rapid industrialization without a preceding agricultural modernization. With changes in Korea-U.S. political and economic relations in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the situation changed. The U.S. was no longer willing to provide the military support and food aid that South Korea had relied on until then.

The fear of dwindling economic and military support, prompted the regime to focus on capital-intensive heavy industrialization and food self-sufficiency through agricultural modernization. Food self-sufficiency aimed to limit costly food imports, no longer subsidized by the U.S., and enabled South Korea to direct foreign exchange towards financing heavy industrialization. A complimentary shift in consumption policies also occurred. Whereas Koreans had been encouraged to eat dairy and wheat to support national development in the 50s and 60s, they were now increasingly encouraged to eat nationally produced foods to help the nation, while import of foreign foods became strictly limited. The statist-productivist period of the 1970s raised

rice output, but Korean consumers also began to include more meat in their diets, which led the government to encourage livestock production, first chicken, then pork, and finally beef.

The large-scale rural modernization programs for self-sufficiency, however, experienced a serious setback in the late 1970s. Poor harvests, economic crisis, and external pressures forced the Korean government to gradually abandon the self-sufficiency project and open up agricultural markets for some commodities during the 1980s. This was one reason for rising dissatisfaction among farmers and civil society. Anti-government sentiment grew stronger during the 1980s leading to political democratization in the late 1980s. During the Uruguay Round negotiations, Korean farmers and other societal groups strongly protested against liberalization of agriculture, but the government eventually caved in to external demands in order to improve export markets for Korean manufactured goods. In response, the government and agricultural cooperatives began a strong cultural campaign to support Korean agricultural producers against foreign imports. Meanwhile, In international negotiations, Korean negotiators stressed the importance of the multi-functional character of agriculture as well as running campaigns internally to strengthen the conceptual boundaries around Korean-produced agricultural products. This was to compensate, at least partially, for the more porous borders that free trade agreements entailed. The government began to negotiate several bilateral free trade agreements with agricultural exporting nations such as Chile, EFTA, the EU, and the U.S.

The preference for a trade-based agro-food supply policy, however, shifted with the onset of the 2007 world food crisis. Fears over how rising global food prices may impact the national economy prompted the president to announce the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. The purpose of this policy was to create a buffer stock of grains such as wheat, corn and soybeans that the government could control in case of global grain price increases. The strategy involved a mix of state-owned

enterprises involved in overseas agriculture in joint ventures with private logistics companies as well as a financial support for private companies seeking to establish supply bases overseas. Whereas the Korean government claimed that it played primarily a facilitating role, the law that provided the basis for overseas agricultural development clearly defined that the government could obtain control of grain inventory of these Korean-owned companies in case of a food crisis. It showed the continued strong interventionist role of the state even under conditions of economic liberalization. The retreat of the state from food supply management, which became more conspicuous after the 1997 financial crisis, was now reversed and the government once again intervened in food supply management. The organization of the strategy bore no small resemblance to previous state-efforts to control food supply by mobilizing both government agencies, agricultural cooperatives, state-owned enterprises as well as private companies.

The historical analysis of agro-food policy shifts show with little doubt that agricultural trade liberalization has resulted in increasingly unfavorable policies for agricultural producers since the early 1980s and declining terms of trade for domestic agriculture. This does not mean, however, that state intervention into agro-food supply management has been abandoned altogether. The Overseas Agricultural Development Policy features many of the same characteristics as earlier efforts to maintain control over food supply associated with statist agriculture, but the crops that are in demand, and the general environment of the world economy has shifted supply management focus to overseas agriculture. A major aspect of the overseas agricultural development strategy is the effort to obtain control of feed grains for the domestic livestock sector, which was hit particularly hard by rising world prices for feed grains.

The rising dependence of imported feed grains was the subject of chapter 5 where I sought to answer research question two by studying the historical trajectory of the commercial beef cattle sector in South Korea. Commercial beef cattle production

commenced in earnest during the agricultural modernization drive of the 1970s and as such, it was part of the government's self-sufficiency policy. Commercial beef cattle production started out predominantly as an agricultural side-activity on small farms using on-farm produced feed. Only a small number of larger specialized grain-fed beef farms existed and they predominantly raised imported beef cattle breeds, supplying meat to high-end hotels and restaurants catering to domestic elites and foreigners. At the time, the native cattle breed was not considered suited for beef production and was predominantly used as a draft animal. It was however also in the 1970s that systematic breeding activities on native cattle commenced in order to improve the breed, yet despite these efforts, commercial beef cattle production remained centered on crossbreeds and imported breeds. As beef cattle production grew, the government sought to develop a domestic feed supply base by converting upland farmland and rotational crop systems on paddy land. Production grew rapidly in the latter half of the 1970s, but the cattle sector was severely hit by the economic crisis in 1980 followed by a period of oversupply and price plunges in the early 1980s due to government mismanagement and corruption.

On the back of these corruption scandals and the general dissatisfaction with authoritarian rules, beef farmers began to organize and protest government policy by staging large protests demanding that the government compensate farmers for their financial losses. The political pressure by farmers led the government to shut down beef imports in 1985. Because of the shutdown, domestic production increased quickly to meet demand. Beef imports reopened in 1988 partly to supply the many visitors for the Olympic Games and pressure from the major beef exporters such as Australia and the U.S. During the same time, Korea transitioned to a democracy, which gave beef farmers direct political control over the hitherto state-controlled National Livestock Cooperative, turning it into a powerful political pressure group that sought to stop agricultural trade liberalization. In the 1990s, as trade liberalization came to be seen as

inevitable, the Ministry of Agriculture and cooperatives decided to refocus domestic production on the high-end segment of the retail beef market, a market so far dominated by U.S. beef. A national quality standard was launched in 1991, which imitated beef standards in the U.S. and Japan, and the Korean native cattle breed, which had been transformed from a draft animal to meat animal through selective breeding, became the preferred breed. High fat marbling became a key quality criteria requiring significant conversion of feeding regimes. It was through these decisions the contemporary Korean beef product known as *hanu* came into being. The quality standard, however, also meant the entrenchment of the beef cattle industry into grain-based feeding systems, and these grains had to come from overseas.

After a decade of growth, the late 1990s and early 2000s were difficult periods for the beef cattle sector. The East Asian financial crisis and the liberalization of the beef market led to a rapid decline in beef producers. Smaller farmers predominantly involved in breeding activities were severely hit in particular. Forty percent of farmers with less than 50 heads of cattle exited the sector during this time. Only the number of large feeding farms remained steady during that period. The ban on U.S. beef in 2003 provided Hanu farmers with an opportunity to recapture parts of lost market shares since liberalization in 2001. However, the 2008 reopening of U.S. beef imports and the rise in feed grain prices of the 2007 food crisis spelled new challenges to the industry that remained almost entirely dependent on imported feed grains to sustain its system of production.

The quality standard accentuated sector segmentation between small breeder operations and larger fattening operations. Since the price premium is achieved in later stages of production controlled by specialized fattening farms, smaller breeder operations found it increasingly difficult to operate at a profit. This also led to differentiation in intra-sectorial economic and political interests. Whereas breeders were primarily concerned with the downward pressure on calf prices, larger producers

were advocating for stabilizing feed prices and maintaining retail prices for Korean produced beef. This differentiation led to the formation of the Hanu Producers Association, a national industry group predominantly representing specialized fattening farms and large vertically integrated operations. The Hanu Association in actively supported the government's overseas agricultural development strategy together with domestic feed companies. This has led to tension within the sector, in which the smaller producers feel that their economic interests were ignored by the government and the larger farmers in advocating for the OADS rather than price stabilization of calf prices.

The third research question was explored in chapter 6, where I sought to understand how agriculture and food became enmeshed with questions of national sovereignty and identity. I argued that this process was also part of the political struggles over trade liberalization and domestic political debates over what the nation-making process entailed. The attempt to strengthen the competitiveness of Korean-produced beef did not only focus on improving quality and yield, but also operated on the conceptual level in what Patricia Goff calls "endowing borders with meaning" as a response to increasingly materially permeable borders caused by trade liberalization (Goff, 2000, p. 538). Producers' organizations and state agencies actively promoted the idea that agriculture was central to national uniqueness and that domestically produced food was central to maintaining connection to the land. It did so by linking agriculture and particular food items to nationalist historiographies that presented the Korean nation as a continuous entity since antiquity but subject to continuous foreign aggression.

The construction of Korean agriculture, the peasant, cow and beef as central to national identity was not a given nor an automatic evolutionary process. It was very much an active and conscious process of claiming their position within sometimes competing nationalist historiographies that emerged during the 20th century and

collided in the 1980s and 1990s' struggles over political and economic liberalization. Beef consumption, for example, only became mainstream in the late 1980s as urban household incomes rose and the consumption of beef was predominantly a symbol of social status and modernity. This new wealth, however, also led consumers to explore new ways in which to celebrate their improved conditions of living. The spread and popularity of exclusive beef barbecue restaurants often decorated to resemble the banquets of Joseon rural nobility provided consumers with a venue to celebrate the consumer culture of modernity through the practice of emulating the feasts of nobility past. This culture of a national cuisine based on royal court cuisine, however, was only one of the ways in which beef, the Korean cow, and the peasant came to be incorporated into a national imagination.

In the 1980s, the peasant became a symbol of an alternative class-oriented nationalism that stood in contrast to the state endorsed Minjok nationalism and the western-oriented modernization project, which had dominated Korean politics for three decades. The pro-democracy and anti-government movements that sprang from the authoritarian period of the 1970s reversed the hitherto dominant notion of the peasant as backwards and an impediment to modernity and building a strong and prosperous nation. In their interpretation, the peasant became the bearer of an authentic Korean culture and symbol of resistance to foreign aggression, elite oppression, and western modernity – the authentic national subject. This representation of the peasant and “traditional rural life” as central to national identity did not only find support among students and intellectuals but also among farmers themselves who were disillusioned with state policies and repression. The peasant represented an anti-state, indigenous alternative modernity. As pro-democracy movements gained ground in the 1980s, so did the political power of farmers. The peasant was among the dispossessed, but also the patriotic subject that had defended the nation against corrupt domestic elites, colonization, and foreign aggression. This

positioning of the peasant in the pro-democracy movements provided the political space for farmers' grievances to become of national importance. In defending their economic interests, they managed to build broad popular support for the notion that peasants and rural communities were the bearers of an uncorrupted national culture. The positioning of the peasant as the self-sacrificing patriot was employed numerous times during anti-free trade protests in which beef farmers practiced public slaughter of cattle and suicide to appeal to national sentiments and link the sacrifices of contemporary farmers to those of peasants past in defending the nation.

In the aftermath of democratization, however, a shift in Minjung philosophy moved from the peasant as the revolutionary subject to emphasize the peasant and peasant life as the alternative to capitalist modernization. This shift from the peasant as revolutionary subject to the caretaker of the land and a pre-modern authentic culture also moved into mainstream ideas about food through the Sintoburi campaign. Sintoburi draws from a Buddhist term that means "earth and body is one." The Sintoburi campaign was launched by the NACF and MAFF to encourage consumers to buy Korean agricultural products instead of imported ones. It advocated that a diet based on Korean-produced agricultural products connected modern lifestyles with the health and vitality of a materially and culturally indigenous diet. It was a major shift in official dietary advice, which for decades had encouraged western inspired diets based on wheat and animal protein.

The convergence of Sintoburi, Minjung rural romanticism, and the position of beef as a status symbol now associated with an ancient tradition provided the platform onto which beef producers and cooperatives could endow hanu with national meaning. I documented these associations through analysis of two popular movies in which the Korean cow and the practice of eating beef were inscribed in to a longer trajectory of Korean history, culture and ethnicity. In both movies, the cow became symbolic of the people's struggle and self-sacrifice, whether Minjung or Minjok, against internal

oppression and foreign aggression, and in the movie *Sikgaek*, the practice of eating beef was tied quite explicitly to pre-colonial Korea. This notion of hanu as belonging to ancient practice mainly came into being during the late 1980s and 1990s as a process of convergence between initiatives to protect Korean cattle farmers' interests in the face of trade liberalization and consumer desires for status consumption that represented national heritage and culture as an "indigenous" alternative to westernized status consumption. Hanu consumption became symbolic both of preserving rural heritage, achieving socio-economic status, but also representative of an opposition to an anti-imperial or anti-U.S. political positioning. I argued that the national emotional sentiments surrounding Korean feed in general and the Korean cow in particular that had been built up since the early 1990s came to full expression in the 2008 beef protests in which millions of Koreans, producers and consumers alike, protested the president's decision to reopen for U.S. imports. This was not only a matter of a fear of BSE, I argued. In a similar vein as Desoucey's claim that an attack on foie gras was an attack on France itself (Desoucey, 2010, p. 433), I argued that many Koreans interpreted the decision to reopen beef imports from the U.S. as an attack on Korean beef producers as well as an attack on South Korean heritage and culture. Protesters saw the president's decision as trading away economic and cultural sovereignty to a foreign power rather than directed towards the direction of economic policy alone. The protest showed the emotive power that Korean beef producers could bank on. It was a significant political miscalculation by the government that perhaps anticipated protests from farmers, but not such a broad popular mobilization.

In chapter 7, I discussed the fourth research question that sought to answer what problem representation dominated the public debates the global food crisis and the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. The issue of national sovereignty also played a central role analyzes of the causes of South Korea's food import dependence and the ensuing support of the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy. In fact,

many arguments in favor of the OADS were quite similar to those employed against the KORUS FTA and the reopening of beef imports. The Korean cattle farmers venturing to Cambodia argued that the project was to protect fellow farmers' economic interests, but also that at a more general level as a project that defended national sovereignty. They did so by comparing themselves to colonial freedom fighters sacrificing their life savings and farms to defend the nation. They employed the same rhetoric as the project soured and attempted to pressure the provincial government to honor their promises of financial support. Their grievances were not only about economics, but also of a moral character: The provincial government should support the project as promised because the farmers had sacrificed their money in defense of national food sovereignty.

At the broader national level, the issue of sovereignty and subjugation to foreign states and corporations also pointed to nationalism as an important justification for the OADS. Even though it could be argued that the government's primary concerns were economic – how rising prices may affect consumer prices and competitiveness in the future, the public debate in favor of the strategy relied heavily on the mobilization of nationalist sentiments. It did so both by pointing towards the desire for national reunification as well as by representing foreign control of the nation's food supply as a threat to national security and sovereignty. By not controlling the grain supply and leaving it in the hands of foreign corporations, it was argued, South Korea's sovereignty and security was at stake. The use of terms such "weaponization of food," "a war without gunfire," and "food security" invoked memories of hunger and foreign aggression.

As such, proponents of the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy employed a rhetoric of a foreign threat to national sovereignty and culture, mainly posed by U.S. and Japanese corporations, to justify the policy. But this nationalist subtext obscure other more self-reflexive critiques to the course of food import

dependence in South Korea. Alternative discussions of South Korea's "food security" problem could have focused on domestic transformations that also contributed to rising food import dependence such as shifting government preferences, the drastic decline in farmland due to industrialization and urbanization, or perhaps more importantly, the expansion of livestock production. In the case of beef cattle, the relentless pursuit of high fat marbling is a major cause for high grain imports and only a few consumer and producer organizations advocate for a restructuring of livestock production away from imported feed grains and the appropriateness of grain-fed beef. The impact of this production system on national self-sufficiency is not questioned in mainstream political debates, nor is feed import in itself problematized. What the Korean media, experts, and farmers in Cambodia express as problematic, in line with the government rhetoric, is that feed imports are controlled by foreign companies.

This leads me to the answer to my problem formulation in which I asked what historical trajectory that can explain South Korea's rising food import dependence and how this import dependence lead to a perception of a food security crisis that needed and overseas agricultural development strategy in response. For the first part of this question, I argue that rising food import dependence is not only a matter of South Korea being subjugated by powerful outside interests as it was represented in the media and also mirrored in Korean academic articles and to some extent also in the international academic literature. These explanations of South Korean import dependence being caused by the logic of transnational capital, corporate interests, and state collusion with such interests, overlook the shifting and ambiguous stance of the state on the matter of trade liberalization as well as domestic agricultural transformations.

I turned attention to two central aspects, which I found the existing literature failed to pay significant attention. How shifting geo-political and geo-economic circumstances, national development objectives and domestic politics have influenced

the South Korean state's agro-food policy preferences for either self-sufficiency or import dependence. Secondly, I find that one of the most important causes of growing grain and oilseed imports, the transformation to more livestock intensive production in South Korea, reveals a more dynamic and complex story of how food import dependence came to reach such high levels. It was not merely the outcome of global logics of capital or subjugation to the interests of more powerful states. The Korean state, farmers and population at large, was participating in the making of food import dependence through the choices of agricultural policy, quality criteria, and production systems set in the place in the last decades. These were mainly changes initiated to adjust the Korean agricultural sector to trade liberalization, but they were not forced upon the state and farmers. Rather, it should be regarded as the contingent outcome of political struggles between the competing economic interests between the central government and the interests of farmers, their political organizations and those inside the state bureaucracy supporting agricultural sector interests.

The second part of my research question was inquiring into how the rising import dependence came to be regarded as food security crisis. This perception of a food security hinges very much on an interpretation of rising food import dependence having been inflicted on South Korea by outside corporations and states. This dominant interpretation, I argue, is the product of how agro-food politics during the past three decades became enmeshed in broader political struggles over the objectives of development, democracy and especially the role of agriculture in an increasingly industrialized nation. Up through the 1980s and 1990s agro-food politics became linked to ideas of what constituted the nation especially the promotion of the idea of domestic agriculture and food as expressions of an authentic Korean culture uncorrupted by waves of colonialism, imperialism and rapid modernization grew throughout this period. In doing so agro-food politics and especially the struggles over trade liberalization were not only a matter of competing economic doctrines, but

perhaps more importantly that agriculture and food came to constitute symbols of sovereignty and national pride in an era of rising affluence as well as pressures for trade liberalization. The 2008 beef protests mobilized a broad coalition that spanned both traditional opponents to trade liberalization such as farmers' movements, civil society groups, and left-wing labor unions as well as non-traditional parts of society such as high school students and housewives.

Some saw this broad-based opposition to U.S. beef imports as a new form of democratic grassroots resistance to corporate globalization and free trade. However, as I have argued in line with a few other scholars, the political mobilization was more likely based in nationalism than opposition to economic liberalization per se. Whereas the initial mobilization happened because of fears over food safety, the ensuing mass mobilization was fueled by anger over what was perceived as ceding cultural and economic sovereignty to the U.S. I would add that the mobilization around beef was not coincidental because of the status that hanu had come to play in national food culture in the previous decade where industry campaigns and cultural production had emphasized the central role of hanu beef and cattle in Korean identity formation. This does not mean that agricultural economic interests were not present in the protests. Farmers in general were united in opposing the KORUS-FTA because the FTA would further erode the general terms of trade of domestic agriculture as the U.S. was pressuring for tariff reductions on a range of agricultural products in which Korean farmers were engaged in as well. But what enabled broader mobilization by the opponents to the KORUS-FTA including farmers' organization was the successful linkage of their economic interests to a representation of the U.S. beef posing a threat not only to people's health but also to economic sovereignty and hanu as a central part of cultural and culinary heritage. The angry response against the government was predicated upon the perception that the government was willing to concede sovereignty to foreign interests. The 2008 beef protests were as such perhaps less

about resistance to economic liberalization and advocacy for democratization of the food system, as argued by Hartsell and Kim (2010) among others, but rather the threat that foreign economic interests would pose to national sovereignty.

This interpretation of the 2008 beef protests provides clues to how to understand the positive reception of the Korean Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy, which has been described by some as a government-corporate alliance seeking to control the country's food supply (Burmeister & Choi, 2011). This however did not seem to evoke the same sentiments that fueled the 2008 beef protests and furthermore, what I have discussed is that agricultural producers themselves were split on the issue unlike during the U.S. beef protests. This study highlights that the alliance behind the overseas strategy is broader and that sectors of the agricultural sector support the strategy as well. Segments of the beef cattle sector, represented by the Hanu Association, and other livestock sector groups dominated by larger producers, have been supportive of the strategy as they regard it a protective measure against price volatility in the global grain markets on which they depend. The differing responses between cattle farmers in relation to the KORUS-FTA negotiations and the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy illuminates a less all-out opposition to agricultural trade liberalization of some segments of the agricultural sector such as beef farmers. Trade liberalization is at once both a major threat to their position in the retail market, but at the same time, livestock sectors including beef producers depend almost entirely on overseas grains to produce the quality that consumers have come to expect of hanu beef. This very dependence on overseas feed supplies to remain competitive in the domestic beef market explains the ambiguous stance of cattle farmers. In the context of rising global grain prices, cattle farmers' economic interests to keep feed prices low, aligned with the state's concern about the economic impact, price volatility may have on the national economy and economic competitiveness.

Thus, in this case, cattle farmers formed an alliance with the state to promote a national effort to secure control of overseas agricultural resources.

In the media, the representation of rising grains prices as a national food security crisis caused by foreign corporate domination of the nation's food supply played on the same nationalist sentiments that had mobilized broad-based support against the U.S. beef imports. In talking about a food security crisis, it was not food security understood as availability of food that was at stake, but rather that the control of the country's food supply was not in the hands of Koreans. It situated the roots of the crisis within a longer trajectory of national subjugation to powerful foreign interests. Just as the beef protests can be interpreted more as a nationalist and anti-American reaction to the KORUS-FTA in general and the beef issue in particular, the global food price crisis was similarly perceived as induced by foreign (read Japanese and U.S.) corporations. Overseas expansion was necessary for defending national sovereignty, to take back control of the nation's food supply. Cattle farmers justified their own involvement in overseas agricultural development in similar terms. As such this analysis has implications for how to understand south Korea agro-food policy formation not only as a matter of competing economic interests struggling for power, but how certain groups, by linking their economic policy preferences to nationalist agendas of protecting economic and cultural sovereignty are able to push their agendas to the fore. This also means that we need to revisit the perception that South Korean agro-food politics is a struggle fought only on the terrain of competing economic doctrines as argued by some (Hartsell & Kim, 2010; B.-S. Yoon et al., 2013).

As long as it is Korean capital and Korean corporations perceived to work for national interests, criticism is muted. Chul-Kyoo Kim, a noted scholar on Korean agrarian politics, has argued that food activism based in nationalism is an outdated form of practice in the current era of globalization (Chul-kyoo Kim, 2006, 2008) and that farmers should focus on nurturing ties with urban consumers to protect the

agricultural sector against corporate takeover. While I sympathize with this position, this study shows that nationalism remains powerful political tool in South Korean agro-food politics. Burmeister and Choi expressed surprise over the different responses to the beef protests and the government's overseas agricultural strategy. This element of surprise predicates that farmers and consumers follow a coherent logic of resistance to the economic doctrine of trade liberalization, but the position of livestock farmers do not follow such a logic. Firstly, as much as they may oppose FTA's that threaten their domestic retail market position, they are also deeply integrated into the global food system they are expected to oppose. Secondly, the formation of political coalitions form not only the basis of economic interests as argued by Winders or expected by Burmeister and Choi, but also on the ability to link economic policy proposals, or resistance to them, to perceptions that a policy will reinforce or undermine national economic and cultural sovereignty.

Finally, I want to end with a few reflections on my choice of theory, its potential and limitations. This study raises questions about the formation of food and agricultural policy as a process of competing economic interests as the determinant for political coalition formation. Debates about who and what constitutes the nation has played a central role in the formulation of food and agricultural policy in South Korea, but as Helleiner and Pickel argue, they do so in economically indeterminate ways. Maya Eichler argues that the politics of national identity should be seen as a terrain of struggle between and among state and societal actors over the course of economic policy (Eichler, 2005, p. 73). Competing visions of the role of farmers, agriculture, and foodways in the national imaginary has served as the subtext for debates for and against agricultural trade liberalization, and they continued to do so in the debates surrounding the 2008 beef protests and the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy.

Whereas my theoretical point of departure was a Marxist and Polanyian-inspired historical materialist political economy, it increasingly became clear to me that nationalism played a central role in South Korean food and agricultural policy formulation, but analyzing cultural aspects such as nationalism and its impact on political coalition formation was difficult from within Winders framework. Its focus on production-centered capitalist economic logics made it difficult to grasp some of the cultural aspects of policy formulation in South Korea. I thus turned to more consumption-inspired approaches to understanding the links between food consumption and national identities, but here again I ran into challenges because they had difficulty explaining material transformations of production. The conundrum I faced is not unique to my study. It is, as Dupuis and Goodman have argued, a general challenge in the study of food and agriculture in the social sciences caused by deep theoretical rifts between production-oriented Marxist-inspired approaches and more cultural and consumption-oriented approaches. I have attempted to overcome this rift by combining a production-centered political economy approach with recent work on economic nationalism and gastronationalism.

Inspired by Winders' analytical framework for analyzing U.S. agricultural policy formation in the 20th century, I have outlined how food and agricultural policy alternated between periods of political prioritization between self-sufficiency and food imports as a form of oscillating double movement between protectionism and free markets. Winders argues that this oscillation in the U.S. was determined predominantly by shifting intra-sectorial political coalitions formed on the basis of economic interests. There are, however, a number of limitations to Winders' framework when it comes to analyzing the formation of food and agricultural policy in general and in analyzing the formation of South Korean food and agricultural policy in particular. In South Korea, these shifts have been shaped by inter-sectorial as well as intra-sectorial class interests. The state has played a much more direct role in defining food and agricultural policy

to align it with broader developmental objectives, but it has not done so entirely autonomously. I agree with Winders' view that shifts in the world economy and domestic political pressure from various interest groups have also influenced policy formulation, but perhaps to a lesser degree than in the decentralized state structure that Winders argues is the case of the U.S. The dominant role of the state in South Korean food and agricultural policy formulation does, as Winders argues, have to do with a structure of the state. However, as Winders argues, intra-class segmentation have also played a central role in differentiating economic interests between different agricultural sectors, and within each sector as well.

Where Winders' framework needs modification to fit a South Korean context is the process of class formation and political coalitions. In Winders' work, class formations form on the basis of economics interests determined by the position in the production process, and political coalitions in turn form on the basis of similar economic interests between different classes. Political power is from this perspective predicated upon the ability to form coalitions based on similar economic interests, and this in turn shapes the double movement between protectionism and free markets. As I have tried to document, this has provided some analytical challenges in this study of South Korean agricultural policy formulation. What I found is that political coalitions may form according to similar economic interests, but it is from the ability to articulate these economic interests as a matter of defending national sovereignty and identity was what provided economic doctrines political legitimacy. This also means that we need to examine political coalitions that form across the production-consumption divide.

In analyzing Polanyi's concept of the double movement, Gareth Dale has argued that a central weakness in Polanyi's work is the conflation of dissimilar policies and motives into one category of societal protection against market forces (Dale, 2010, p. 86). Dale argues that what Polanyi saw as a wave of protectionism against the *ravages*

of uncontrolled market forces in Europe in the late 1900s in fact induced economic globalization (Dale, 2010, p. 87). This tendency to conflate different kinds of state regulation or calls for state regulation of markets as a countermovement has according to Dale led to Polanyi inspired social scientists to assemble a sprawling smorgasbord of policies, movements and institutions under the label protective response (Dale, 2010, p. 219). Under this label, everything from anti-globalization movements, imperialist states, capitalist corporations and stockbrokers have been celebrated for seeking to reassert social control. This leads Dale to ask how we can determine whether an act of economic protection is contributing to marketization or protective counter movements (Dale, 2010, p. 219)? Karl Polanyi's *the Great Transformation* has been a hugely popular theory in South Korea since the late 1998, when in the wake of the financial crisis, his book was translated into Korean and provided a compelling argument for how things in Korea went so wrong. The decline of the agricultural sector has often been used to illustrate the devastating effects of free markets on the social fabric of society and it is in this regard that many observers regarded the 2008 beef protests as a countermovement that rejected the destruction of society by the forces of the self-regulating market. But similar claims was made by those who supported the Overseas Agricultural Development Strategy as a protective response against the ravages of global market forces. The economic prescriptions are quite different between a demand for continued market protection against trade liberalization and that of a global expansion of Korean agricultural activities, but some groups supporting the former in the KORUS-FTA negotiations also support the OADS despite the very different economic pol. How did these two very different economic policies come to gain broad political support and how to explain that those resisting KROUS-FTA also supported the OADS? Dale argues that the countermovement should be understood as a heuristic in which people turn to political ideas and organizations that claim to defend society against market excess (Dale, 2010, p. 220).

This requires us to be much more specific in understanding the political ideas that so-called counter movements turn to. In the case of South Korea, the political idea that people turned to in 2008 was above all the idea of Korea as a nation under siege, rather than an idea of an alternative anti-capitalist food system. This is not limited to Korea. In Europe, many food movements find political support in notions of a national food culture being challenged by the forces of globalization without questioning that claim's historical substance. There is a critical need to scrutinize movements claiming to defend or promote an alternative food system with the same analytical fervor as those labeled industrial, global, and corporate. Questions of nationalism and gastronationalism are thus important to incorporate into the analysis of national food politics in a globalizing world to critically examine the claim of globalization's economic and cultural homogenizing forces. But just as economic interests can shift, as argued by Winders, claims to who and what constitute the nation can also shift according to shifts in the global political economy. It is thus important to take a historical view to document how particular definitions of national identity come into being in response to economic transitions and acknowledge their impact on policy formulation, but that nationalism does not necessarily call for protectionism in the economic sense. Economic policies based in nationalism can advocate for economic expansionism and imperialism, but in both cases, the defense of the idea of an external threat to national sovereignty operates as a legitimizing force. This has implications for how to conceptualize the idea of double movement in agro-food studies. Whereas a materialist-based political economy perspective regards the double movement as pendular shifts between free markets and agricultural protectionism, this dissertation argues that protectionism can operate at the material level as well as the ideational level and that protecting the nation does not mean adhering to one economic doctrine. The economic nationalism and gastronationalism literature provided a refreshing lens

through which to study the political economy of South Korean agro-food politics as well as elsewhere.

This study as such has provided an explanation of South Korea's decision to invest in overseas agricultural agriculture for both economic and nationalist reasons. The state and certain intra-class segments in the agricultural sector support the strategy, while other segments of the agricultural sector are more ambivalent towards the OADS. Yet, what the proponents of the strategy has been able to do, is to frame the OADS as a necessary initiative to defend and protect national sovereignty. Taking control of the country's food imports is discussed primarily in national terms rather than economic ones. This has implications for how to interpret the drivers behind various food import dependent states' attempt to acquire overseas agricultural farmland. The case of South Korea does have aspects of security mercantilism, as argued by Woertz (2013) and McMichael (2013) or developmental outsourcing (Hofman & Ho, 2012), but such statist explanation, in the case of South Korea does not tell the full story. What this study suggest is that in South Korea, overseas investments are characterized by broader national mobilization involving state, large corporations, individual entrepreneurs and farmers. This mobilization, based on the idea of defending the nation, also limited the possibility for opponents to mount any significant political coalitions against it. It was as such a protectionist response against the free market, but one that reproduces the same unequal economic relations it supposedly is a reaction to, yet it is considered appropriate and legitimate within a national ontology. There still remains much to be studied regarding what drives different food import dependent states' to respond in different ways to address vulnerability to global food price hikes. We still lack in depth studies of why, for example, Taiwan does not seem to be actively engaged on a large scale in overseas land acquisitions. This study was one contribution to identify the multitude of drivers

behind varied responses to the 2007 food crisis by capital rich net food importing countries.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWS

- Kim, Young-taek, Research Director, Korea Rural Economics Research Institute, July 11, 2012
- Park, Hwan-il, Research Fellow, Samsung Economic Research Institute, July 12, 2012
- Yi, Eun-soo, Director, Overseas Agricultural Development Service, July 23, 2012
- Yi, Eun-soo, Director, Overseas Agricultural Development Service, January 7, 2013
- Eo, Dae-su, Executive Vice President, Korea Overseas Agriculture Association, July 24, 2012
- Eo, Dae-su, Executive Vice President, Korea Overseas Agriculture Association, January 16, 2013
- Lee, Cherl-ho, Chairman, Korea Food Security Foundatin, August 29, 2012
- Lee, Tae-joo, Chairman, Overseas Development Assistance Watch, August 30, 2012
- Kim, Eun-mee, Professor, Graduate School of International Development Studies Ewha University, September 17, 2012
- Hong, Ju-sik, Director General, Food Business Support Center, Korea Agro-Fisheries & Food Trade Corporation, September 18, 2012
- Lee, Woo Chang, CEO, Chungnam Global Agriculture Development Corporation, September 26, 2012
- Kim, Sung-hoon, Former Minister of Agriculture (1997-1999), October 11, 2012
- Yoon Seok-won, Professor of Agricultural Economics, Chung Ang University, October 18, 2012
- Anonomous, KOMER CN village representative, Koh Sla Development Village, December 5, 2012
- Geum, Soon-yoon, la Via Campesina International Coordinating Committee and former chairwoman of Korea Womens Peasant Association, January 11, 2012
- Choi, Jia, President, Ongo Food Communication, July 7, 2013
- Richardson, Kip, CEO, KOBAEK Foods, July 7, 2013

Moon, Kyung-sik, Former President, Korea Peasant's League, August 14, 2013

Shin, Seung-cheol, Beef Wholesale Retailer, Mahjang Meat Market, August 13, 2013

Hong, Sung-soo, Director of Market Research, Korea Feed Association, August 14, 2013

Kim, Yong-won, Director, Hanu Association, August 8, 2013

APPENDIX A - RISING MEAT DEMAND AND FOOD IMPORT DEPENDENCE

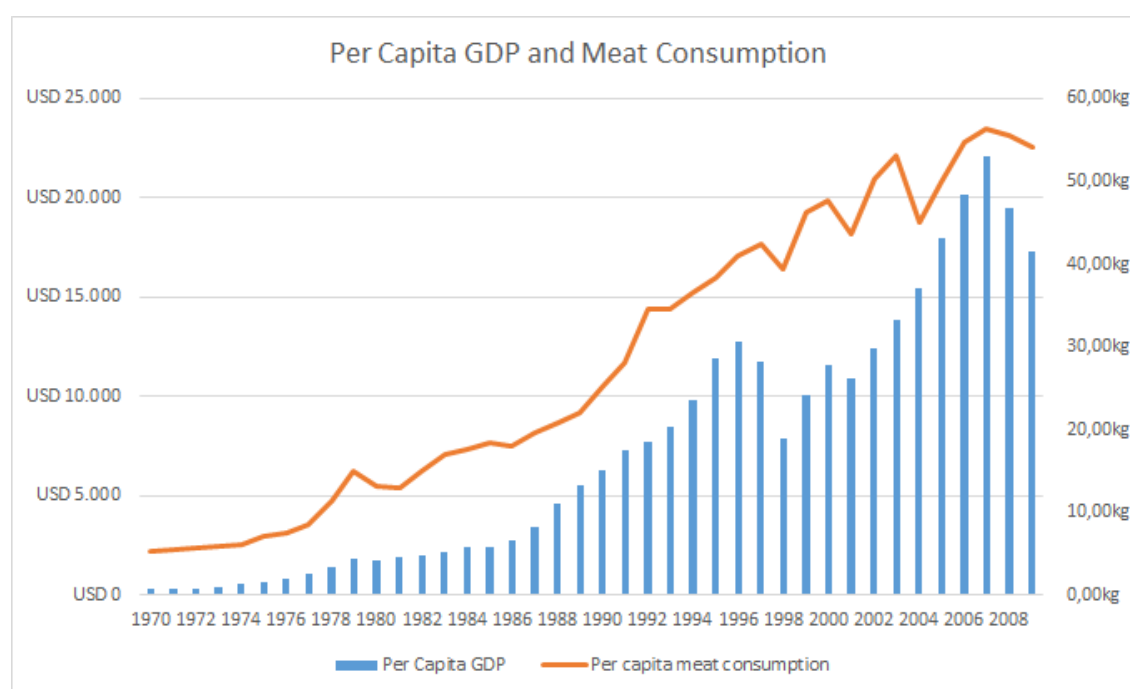
In mainstream economics, the correlation between economic growth and meat consumption is in general considered to be a positive one (Cole & Mccoskey, 2013; Pinstrip-Andersen & Watson II, 2011, pp. 71–72). The positive correlation between rising income and meat consumption however, does not necessarily say anything about how much meat is consumed at a given level of income or the dynamics of meat consumption. Meat consumption and its growth rates are also affected by cultural, religious, social, and political aspects. China's growth in meat consumption is for example in one study expected to be 5.1 percent compared to a 0.92 percent estimated growth rate for India due to religious and cultural beliefs among parts of the rising middle class (Cole & Mccoskey, 2013, p. 32). The general observation that meat consumption increases with rising income seems to be acceptable as a very general observation across countries, but it does not provide information on variations across countries. Time series data of one particular country data tends to be able to illustrate deviations from this trend. An economic discussion of the relationship between rising income and meat consumption is not the focus here. On the other hand, this relationship may be important to understand at least some shifts in meat consumption in Korea. But other shifts in meat consumption trends may be related to other aspects such as government policies, politics, cultural heritage, media campaigns, and food safety issues. This will be the focus of Part Two and Part Three. For now, however let us look at the numbers for South Korea between 1970 and 2009. What do they tell us, and what do they not tell?

South Korea's meat consumption grew slowly up until the second half of the 1980s. Up until then, meat consumption remained under 15 kilograms per year per capita. Poultry, pork and beef constitute the bulk of meat consumed. The rise in meat consumption seems to follow the rise in economic wealth as can be seen from Figure

5 and hence the relation between economic growth and meat consumption seems to be positive in the case of South Korea. Per capita meat consumption was 5.4kg in 1970 rising to nearly 55kg in 2009¹¹¹ a ten-fold increase in 40 years. During the same time, GDP per capita rose from 284 USD to approximately 20.000 USD at current prices. The correlation coefficient between per capita GDP and Per capita meat consumption for the period between 1970 and 2009 gives a result of 0,96. This provides a quite strong proof for a relationship between rising GDP per capita and meat consumption. Correlation of course does not mean causality.

What can also be read from the data is that meat consumption took significant leaps in the decade between 1987 and 1996 and then again from 2001 to 2007 periods when GDP per capita grew at higher rates giving an indication of a positive relationship between rates of economic growth and meat consumption during these periods. The relationship can also be read in three periods in which macro-economic events resulted

Figure 5 - - Per Capita GDP and Meat Consumption. Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



¹¹¹ Faostat at <http://faostat.fao.org> accessed January 20, 2014

in contraction of the Korean economy around 1980, in 1997, and 2007. Meat consumption declined in all three periods indicating a relatively low price elasticity for meat products. But there are also periods of declining meat consumption that do not necessarily correspond with economic growth rates most notably around 2000 and again around 2003. The explanations for what caused meat consumption to decline at these two points in time will have to be explained by other elements than economic crisis. This indicates that demand is not necessarily the independent variable, but rather, at least during certain periods, may actually be the dependent variable.

While rising incomes may lead to higher consumption of meat, other processes may be at play that determines deviations from this general rule and determines the relative growth/decline of meat consumption at different times, as the data indicates. It is of particular interest to delve into those periods in which rising GDP per capita does not result in an increase in meat consumption, because they shed light on other causal factors that can affect meat consumption. For now it can be concluded that meat consumption has risen quite significantly in the past 40 years, and that some, possibly much, of this growth may be related to rising incomes, but also that other dynamics may be at play that affect the consumption of meat. For now let us turn to the composition of meat consumption.

Figure 7 - Composition of Meat Consumption (Production/Imports). Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online

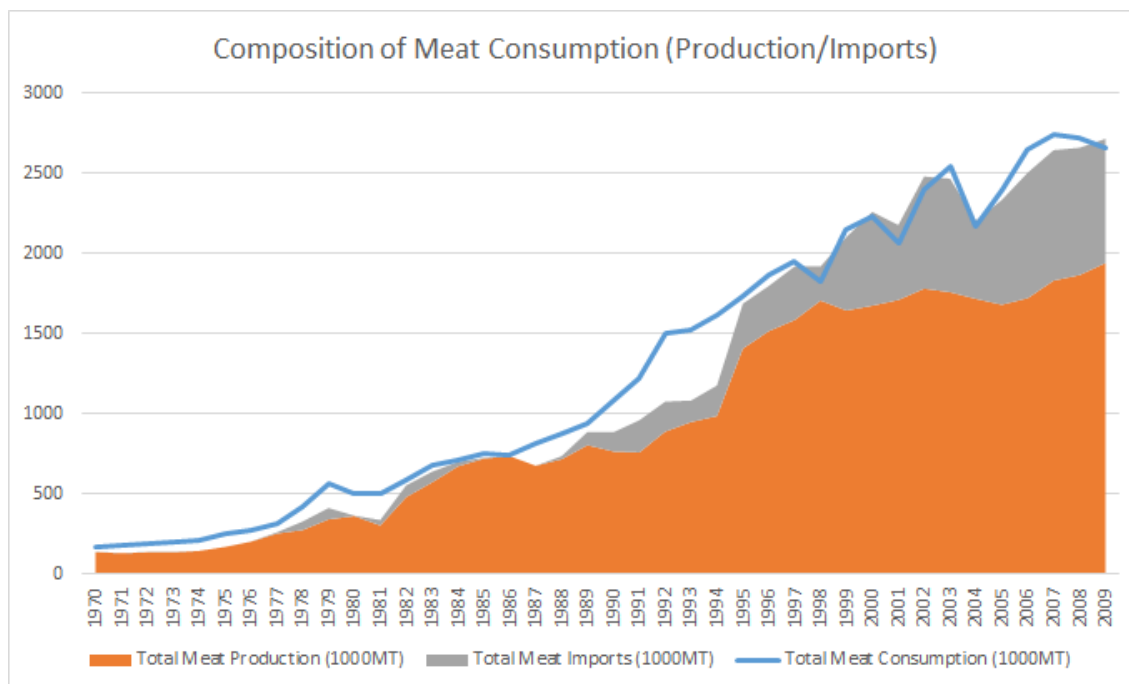
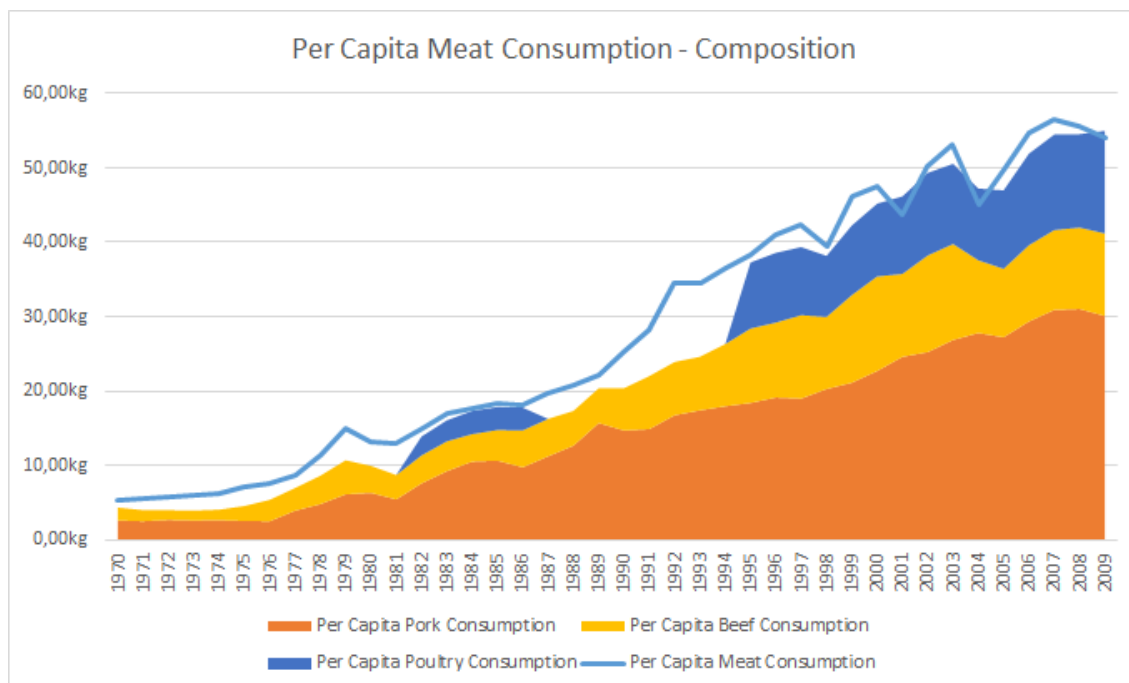


Figure 6 - Per Capita Meat Consumption – Composition. Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



Composition of meat consumption

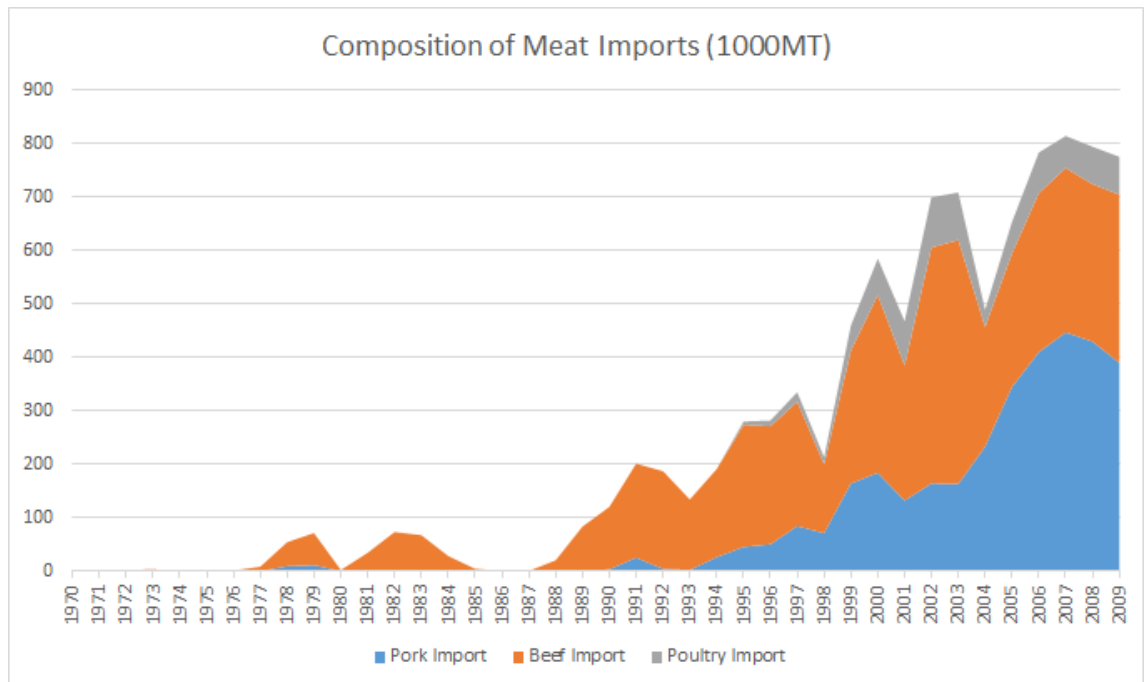
In Figure 7, total meat consumption is presented along with a breakdown of the share of the three major meats consumed in South Korea: pork, beef and chicken.¹¹² Pork is the most important meat consumed with more than 50 percent of total meat consumption throughout most of the time period. Chicken and beef has been consumed in somewhat equal quantities since the mid-1990s. Figure 7 also shows us that pork consumption seem to follow a more steady curve than beef and chicken. This relative stability of pork consumption is by som ascribed to the substitutability between pork and beef. If incomes decline, consumers are likely to shift from beef to pork, which is cheaper (Yeon Kim et al., 2009, p. 11). Figure 6 shows that the share of imported meat remained quite low as a share of total meat consumption until the late 1980s¹¹³ when meat imports begins in significant amounts. In the mid-1990s meat imports begin to obtain a significant market share with a brief decline around 2003-04.

If we look only at meat imports only (Figure 4) it is evident that beef imports make up a majority of total imports up until 1997. Pork imports begin to rise in the late 1990s and by the end of the 2000s pork imports become the major meat import commodity.

¹¹² Data on poultry consumption was only available for the periods 1982-1986 and 1995 - 2012.

¹¹³ The lack of reliable data on poultry consumption, production and meat imports explain the missing areas especially in the period from 1986 to 1995 where poultry data was not available.

Figure 8 - Composition of Meat Imports (1000MT). Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



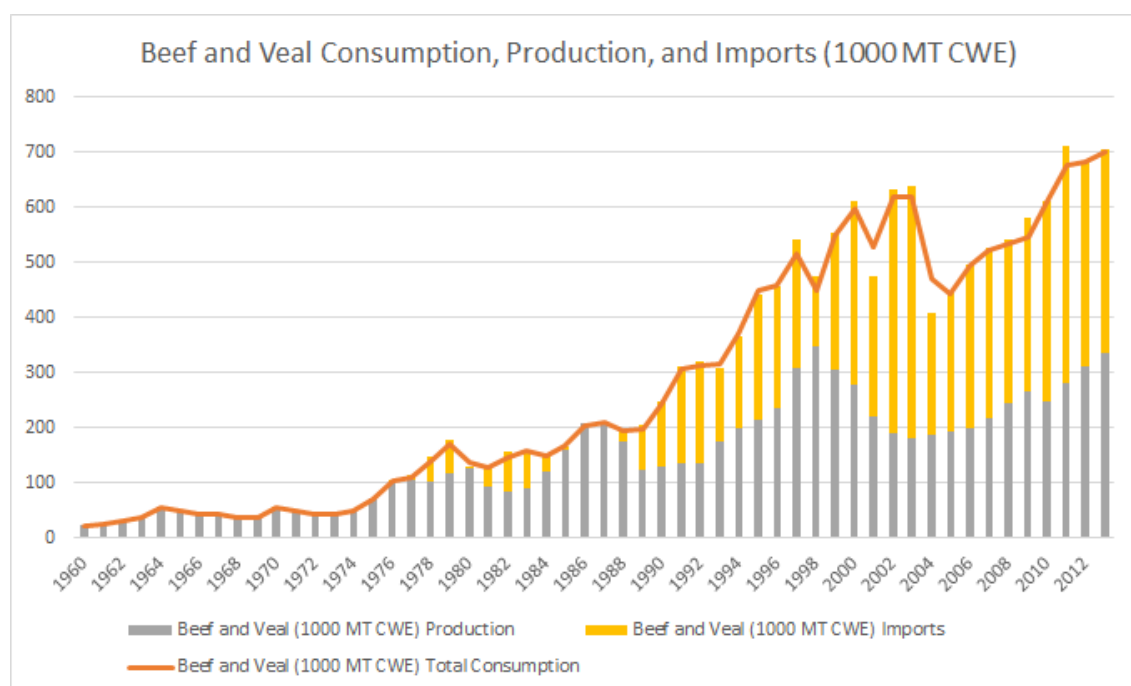
For meat, in general it can be concluded that domestic production of pork, beef, poultry have risen significantly since the early 1980s. Meat imports rose in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but then it dropped to almost zero between 1985 until 1988. During this period, consumption flattened out as well and aligned with domestic production. This may indicate a drop in availability rather than a drop in demand, and the reasons for this will be discussed later. Since the late 1980s, meat imports have experienced significant peaks and drops and these variations will be discussed later. For now, let us turn to data specifically on beef consumption, production, and import.

Rising Beef Consumption and Production

As we could see from the previous data, beef consumption has risen from less than 100,000 metric tons in the mid-1970s to approximately 700,000 metric tons in 2010. The correlation coefficient between per capita GDP and beef consumption between

1970 and 2009 is 0.90, indicating quite a close relationship, but nevertheless a bit lower than the 0.96 calculated for meat consumption in general.

Figure 9 - - Beef and Veal Consumption, Production and Imports (1000MT CWE). Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



Production of beef in South Korea has increased from 54,000 metric tons in 1970 to a peak of 348 thousand MT in 1998 (

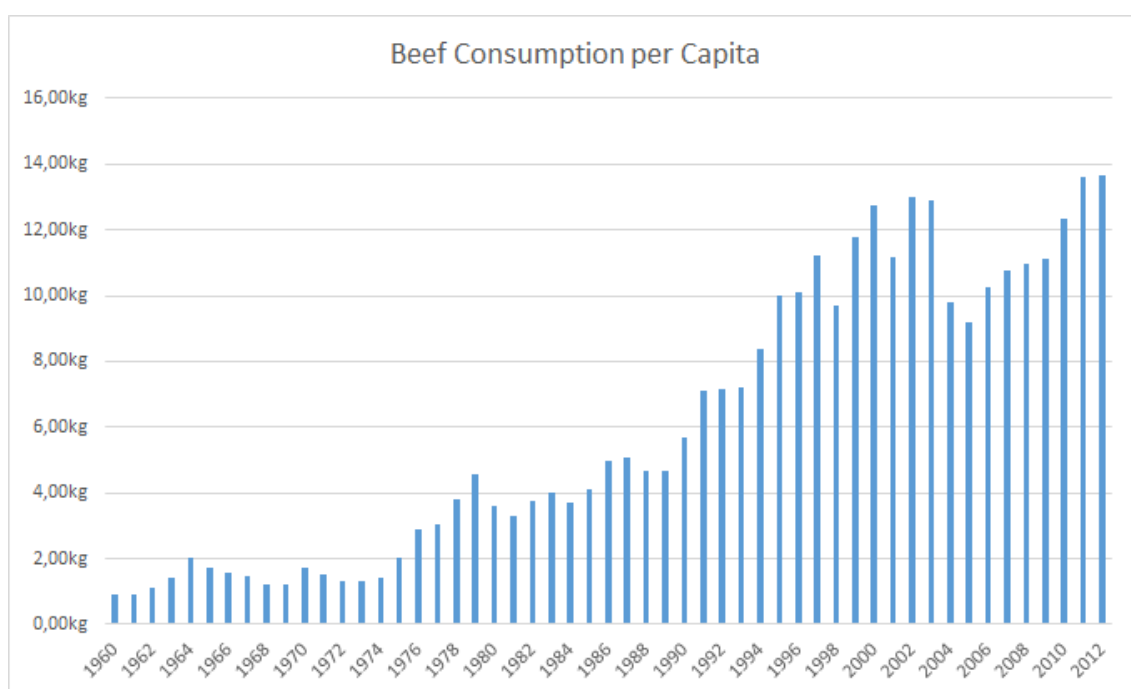
Figure 9). The remaining consumption of meat has been covered by imports. The first significant import of beef occurred between 1977 and 1979. A total of 113 thousand metric tons of beef was imported from overseas in those three years. In the 16 years prior, only seven thousand metric tons were imported in comparison. During the first half of the 1980s (1981-1984) a total of 202,000 metric tons of beef were imported, but then stopped for a number of years before being resumed in 1988. Since 1989, beef imports have varied quite a bit, but as evident from the graph, it quickly gained a significant market share in a rapidly expanding market for beef.

If we look at per capita beef consumption (Figure 10), we can see the rise from less than two kilograms of beef per capita per year until the 1970s. By the early 2000s, beef consumption had increased to over twelve

kilograms per capita. The graph also shows that beef consumption does not rise in steady progressions, which may have to do with changes in the broader economy. This is probably the case between 1979 and 1980 when South Korea experienced an economic recession. This also explains the sudden drop in 1999 following the East Asian financial crisis when GDP per capita contracted by more than 33 percent between 1997 and 1998. The decline in beef consumption did not occur until 1999, but this is explained by the fact that a lot of cattle was slaughtered prematurely in 1998. Many farmers simply decided to liquidate their stocks and left the sector. The reduced inventory of domestic stock is apparent in the figure above (

Figure 9) where domestic production declines from 1998 to 2004 to recover only slowly.

Figure 10 - Beef Consumption per Capita. Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014

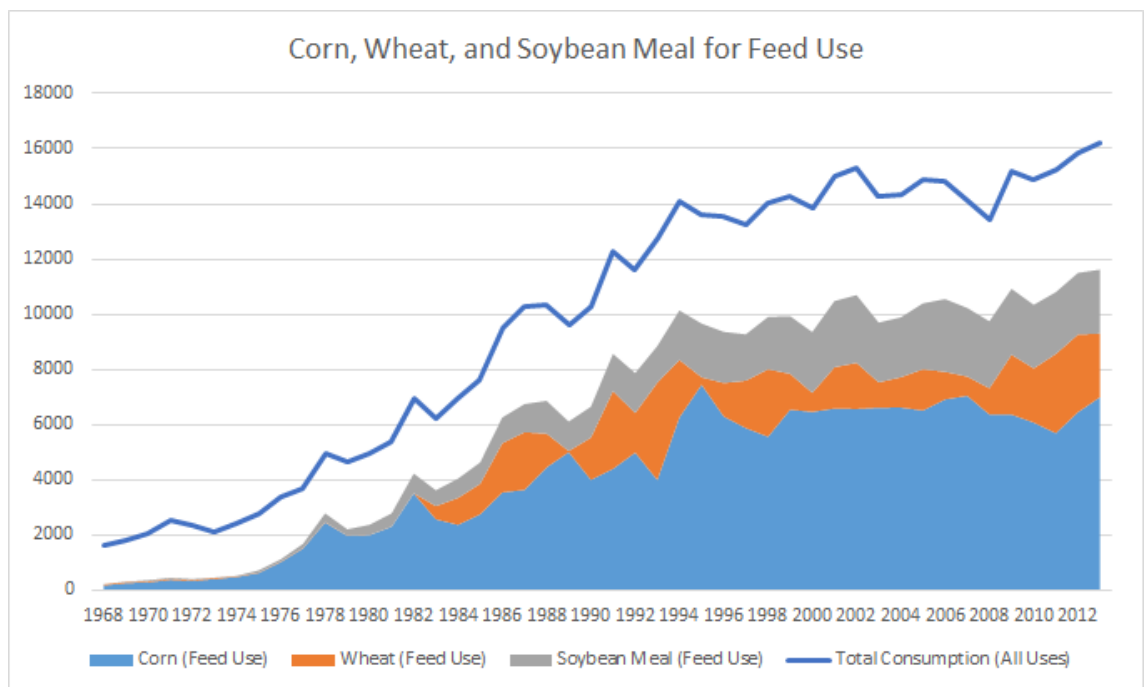


Food Import dependence - A result of Rising meat production?

In 2008, South Korea imported a total 12.4 million tons of corn, wheat, and soybean the three major grain import commodities. Much of this is used for feed use, a development that began in the 1970s. The following two graphs illustrate this development from 1968 until 2013. Figure 11 indicates the growing consumption of

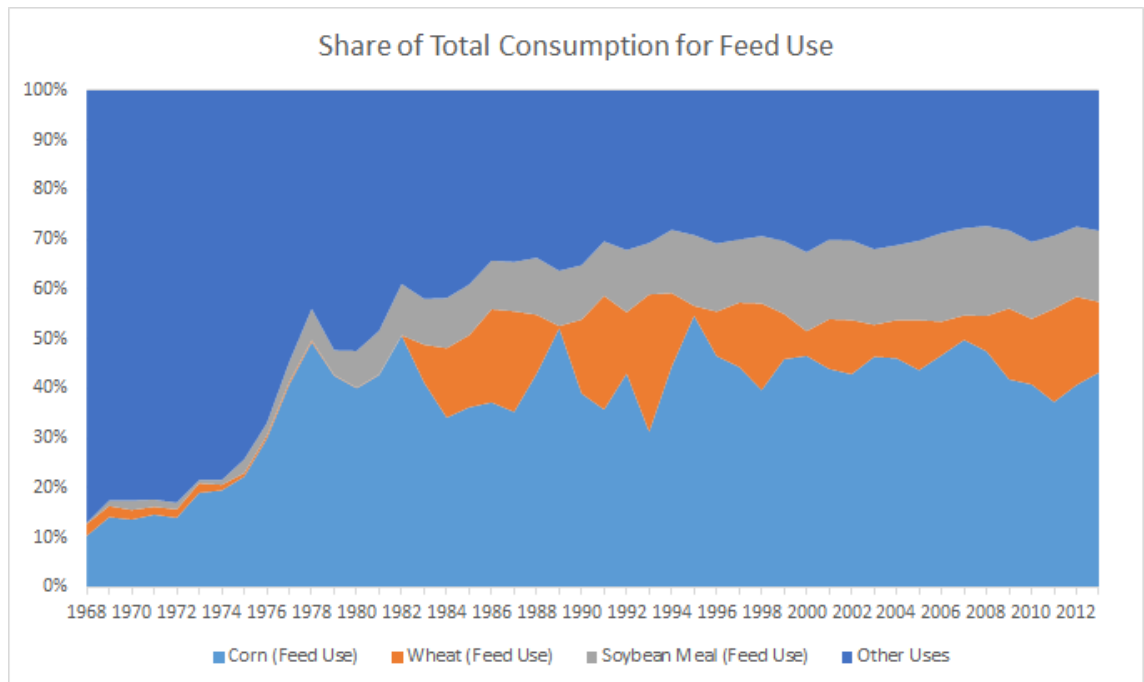
corn, wheat and soybean in general from less than 2 million metric tons in 1968 to more than 16 million tons in 2013. One can also see that much of this growth is because of animal feed. It is also noteworthy that the rise in feed use consumption grows particular fast in the mid-1980s and then again in the early to mid-1990s.

Figure 11 - Corn, Wheat, and Soybean Meal for Feed Use. Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



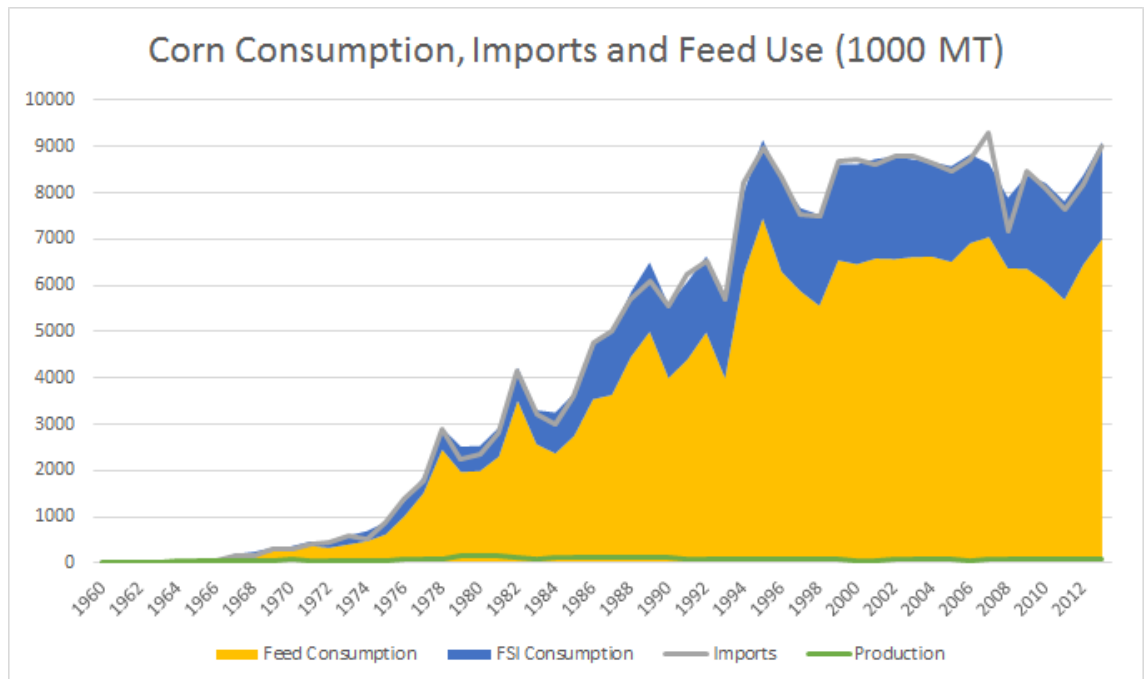
The rising need for feed grains is better illustrated in Figure 12. In 1968, less than 15 percent of total consumption of the three commodities were used for animal feed. Since 1990, the share of feed grains has hovered around 70 percent of total consumption. From this data, it is clear that there has been a rise in grain consumption over the past 40+ years and a significant portion of this is due to rising feed demands.

Figure 12 - Share of Total Consumption for Feed Use. Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



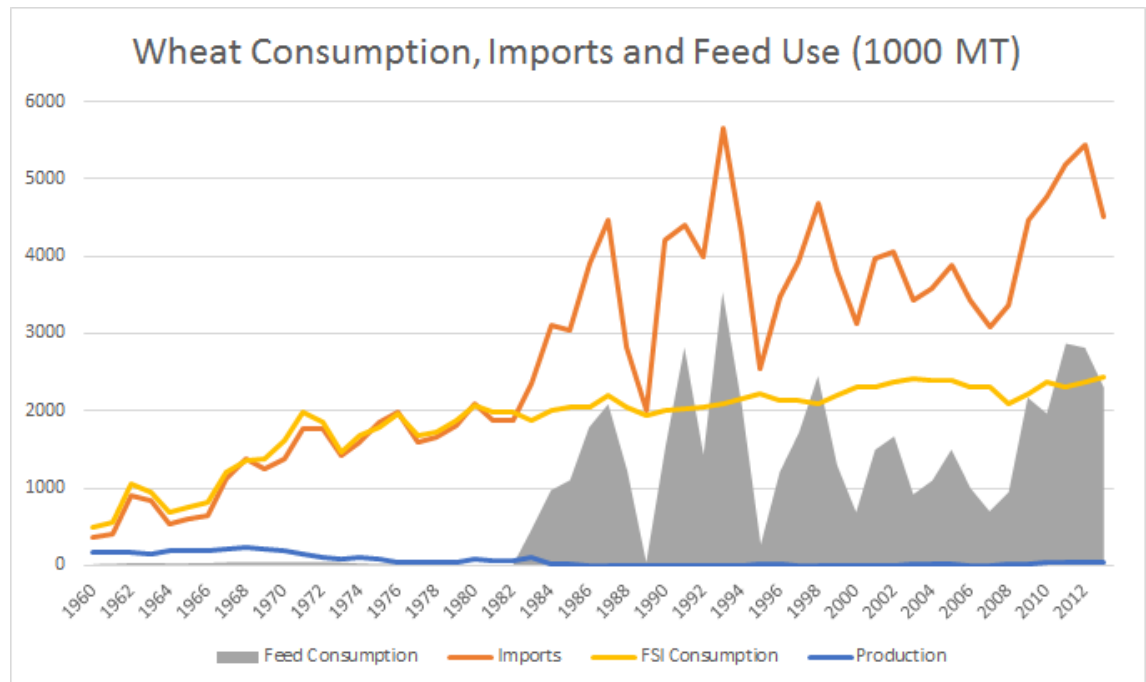
To better understand the individual contributions, it is useful to break down consumption and production data for each of the three commodities. In Figure 13 it can be seen that corn is the most important grain of the three in terms of volume. Domestic production has remained low throughout the entire time series. Only in the 1960s did domestic production provide a significant share of total consumption. The first rapid rise in corn consumption occurred in the 1970s when industrial pork and broiler operations began to develop. The ratio between feed use and FSI (Food, Seed and Industrial Use) has remain quite stable at around 75 percent dedicated for feed use throughout the entire period. The rapid rise of feed corn consumption in the first half of the 1990s correspond well with the rapid expansion of meat, especially beef consumption, in this period and the resulting sharp decline recorded around 1997 is the result of the East Asian financial crisis that significantly lowered the demand for meat in general, and beef in particular.

Figure 13 - Corn Consumption, Imports, and Feed Use (1000MT). Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



If we turn to wheat (Figure 14), the picture is a bit different. Up until the early 1980s, wheat was used mostly for noodles and bread. The bulk of wheat was imported, but a small domestic production also existed although it declined gradually until the early 1980s when domestic wheat production came close to zero. Up until 1976, most wheat was imported as part of the U.S. food aid program PL480, a significant aspect of Korean economic and food supply management policy since the program's beginning in 1954. By the early 1980s, wheat becomes more important as a feed grain, but unlike feed corn, feed wheat consumption behaves rather erratic. This is because feed wheat use often depends on its price relative to feed corn. The drastic variations in wheat imports are the direct outcome of feed wheat consumption since the early 1980s. From the graph, it can also be seen that wheat FSI consumption has been quite quite stable since the 1980s.

Figure 14 - Wheat Consumption, Imports, and Feed Use (1000MT). Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014

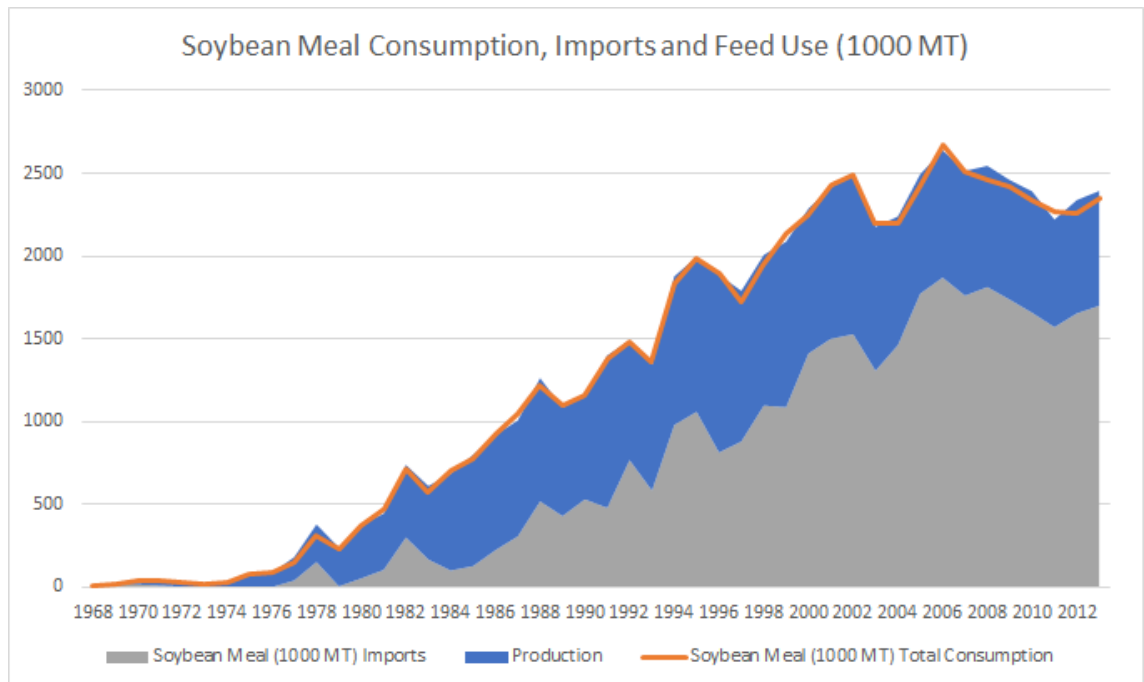


For soybean meal (Figure 15), the data reads a bit different. First, there is a measurable domestic production of soybean, which for the most part is used for food processing including soybean oil, tofu, doenjang¹¹⁴, and Ganjang¹¹⁵. Secondly, soybean is also imported as oilseed and the waste product is soybean meal. As such, a large proportion of the domestically produced soybean meal is from imported soy oilseeds. Only around 10 percent of the oilseed consumption in 2013 came from domestically produced soybeans (U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, 2014).

¹¹⁴ A fermented soybean paste.

¹¹⁵ Korean soy sauce.

Figure 15 - Soybean Meal Consumption, Imports and Feed Use. Source: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution Online 2014



The statistical data presented in this chapter shows a clear correlation between rising meat consumption and rising per capita GDP. There are however also variations, especially when it comes to beef consumption in the period around 2004 when beef consumption declines drastically despite high growth rates. This drop in beef consumption, unlike most other drops were caused by the ban on U.S. imports in response to mad cow disease being discovered in the U.S. Based on the data presented, it also seems safe to conclude that the rise in food import dependence should rather be called a rise in feed import dependence. The rise in grain imports in the past 40 years is caused primarily to the rise of domestic livestock production. Of the three major import commodities, on which South Korea depends, almost 70 percent is used for feed purposes. For corn, 70-80 percent of total consumption is used for feed. Soybean meal is a feed product in itself and as such, 100 percent of soybean meal is used for feed. Feed wheat behaves a bit different and this has to do with its substitutability with feed corn. As such, wheat imports for feed use peak in years when

feed wheat is competitive with prices on corn. What is interesting is that while livestock and broiler operations have become important activities in the Korean agricultural sector, domestic feed crop production has not increased. Instead, producers have relied primarily on imported feed. Why this is the case, is a central aspect that is explored in later chapters.

The data for beef production and consumption shows that growth has happened in étapes with the first rapid growth period in the second half of the 1970s, and then again from 1990 to 2003, but with a brief but drastic drop in 1998. Beef consumption experienced another growth period beginning in 2006. These shifts do not follow GDP per capita growth rates or growth in meat consumption in general. From the data, the 1980s was a period with a rapid rise in meat consumption and GDP per capita growth, but beef consumption grew very slowly in the 1980s only to grow rapidly in the 1990s. As the data shows, these changes seem to be related to trade policy. Since the late 1980s beef imports grew very rapidly overtaking domestic production by the early 2000s.