

# WOMEN AND FOOD CHAINS<sup>1</sup>: THE GENDERED POLITICS OF FOOD

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## Introduction

Throughout history, the social relations of food have been organized along lines of gender. Today, in most societies women continue to carry the responsibility for the mental and manual labor of food provision—the most basic labor of care. Women's involvement with food constructs who they are in the world—as individuals, family members, and workers—in deep, complex, and often contradictory ways. Women perform the majority of food-related work, but they control few resources and hold little decision-making power in the food industry and food policy. And, although women bear responsibility for nourishing others, they often do not adequately nourish themselves. These longstanding contradictions are seemingly immune to the dynamism that characterizes nearly every other aspect of the agrifood system<sup>2</sup> in this era of globalization and innovation.

In this article we reflect on these contradictions, taking up three questions about gender relations in the contemporary agrifood system. First, we ask how the subordination of women and sublimation of feminist consciousness in relation to food has been engaged and explained in agrifood and feminist scholarship. We find a rich literature on body politics and gendered eating patterns, but substantial gaps in the areas of structural issues and social change. Second, we ask what are the configurations of food-connected gender relations? We discuss this within a framework of what we call food domains—material, socio-cultural, and corporeal—that define women's relationships to food. We find, unsurprisingly, that women are disadvantaged in each of these domains. This leads to our next question, what actions are being taken to change gender relations in the agrifood system? We look at the locations of women's agency in improving social and economic conditions in these three domains. While women are engaging in numerous important efforts to change the food system, these efforts are rarely coordinated. Neither are they generally identified as feminist projects, in the sense of being strategically oriented toward improving gender relations.

How can we work to better understand the complicated and contradictory connections between gender and food? Avakian and Haber (2006) have called for a new field of feminist food studies. For this field of study to emerge, the connections between women's food work in the labor market (material), their responsibility for food-related work in the home (socio-cultural), and their relationship with eating

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<sup>1</sup> We use the term “food chains” in a double sense. First, we are drawing on the scholarship of commodity food analysis (Barndt 1999; Dolan 2004). Second, we suggest that women's inescapable responsibility for reproductive work with food for their families and their relationship to food and eating, metaphorically “chains” them to food.

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<sup>2</sup> The agrifood system is the complex of institutions and organizations that define, regulate, and shape the organization of agriculture and food from field to table.

(corporeal) must be studied and adequately theorized. Until recently, these areas have been both understudied and unconnected, with little integration of the material, socio-cultural, and corporeal domains. Currently, feminist studies in the corporeal domain help to explain why gender relations remained so static in the food system despite the progress that women have made in many other arenas, such as medicine, law, and politics. However, other gender issues, including the relative absence of a feminist agenda despite women's increasing involvement in leadership roles in the food system, remain neglected. We suggest that weaving the strands of feminist studies together with political economy and sociology can provide strong theoretical grounding for a feminist food studies that would illuminate causes, conditions, and possibilities for change in gender relations in the agrifood system.

## **Theorizing the Connections between Gender and Food**

Women are occupied in and preoccupied with food on a daily basis, irrespective of class, culture, or ethnicity. While the edges of these occupations and preoccupations can blur, we find it useful to distinguish women's involvement in the food system in terms of material, socio-cultural, and corporeal. In discussing the material domain, we focus on women's labor in the formal labor force—women's productive labor outside the home and in the public sphere. In the socio-cultural domain, we are concerned with women's reproductive (usually unpaid) labor in the home and with their families, i.e., their work in the private sphere. Finally, the corporeal domain incorporates women's physical and emotional connections to eating and food, including the cultural forces that condition these connections.

Women remain disadvantaged in the material, socio-cultural, and corporeal domains of the agrifood system. Yet, while women engage in significant and far-reaching efforts to change the system, few of these efforts focus specifically on improving gender relations. How have these conditions been engaged and explained? Here we review scholarly contributions to our understanding of gender relations in the agrifood system. The most developed areas in terms of theorizing the connections between food and gender are the corporeal and socio-cultural domains, with fewer contributions in the material domain.

### ***The Corporeal Domain***

Feminist scholars have described and explained the ways in which women obsess about and are tormented by food. Women's identities are clearly tied to their often problematic relationship with food. Bordo (1998) suggests that women seek emotional heights, intensity, love and thrills from food. She also points out that the restriction of food and denial of hunger serve as central features of the construction of femininity (Bordo 1998). Bordo argues that most women who can afford to eat well are dieting and hungry almost all of the time.

Dieting, anorexia nervosa, bulimia, and obesity—all on the rise—mark the confused messages that women should have perfect (thin) bodies at the same time that they are encouraged to over consume and indulge in junk food. Advertising and media play an enormous role in perpetuating women's obsession with thinness. The media constructs idealized images of the thin and well-toned body and also promotes consumer products that help people, especially women, achieve this well-maintained body (Ballentine and Ogle 2005). Counihan (1998) points to many women's transformation fantasy—once I am thin everything will be fine. Being thin becomes a

panacea; women are socialized to believe that their problems come from being too fat. Counihan describes the quest for becoming thin as a pathetically reductionist channel for dealing with institutionalized powerlessness. Bordo's (2003) analysis of advertisements geared towards women finds that contemporary advertisements reveal continual and astute manipulation of women's dilemmas with conflicting role demands and time pressure. Messages for women emphasize mastery and control of the self compared to ads targeted towards men that emphasize mastery and control over others.

While the push for thinness may be media driven, women's social networks with partners, families, and friends also reinforce the media's message for acceptable bodies (Paquette and Raine 2004). Taken for granted and often well-intentioned social conventions of friendship and caring strongly influence women's body image. Women's body images are disciplined not by force, but through their own and others' critical gaze and surveillance. Thus, Paquette and Raine (2004) suggest that women will not be able to take control over their bodies only by resisting the enormous power of fashion, cosmetic, and diet industries. Everyday social relations and conventions and relationships with health care professionals must also change.

### ***The Socio-Cultural Domain***

Obsession with food is connected to another area of feminist food scholarship that centers on women's responsibility for feeding others. Food studies scholars hold contrasting perspectives on whether women's food work gives them power in the family or reinscribes their subordinate gender roles. Women's food provisioning represents their ties to family and also maintains cultural traditions that are at the heart of many women's identities. Anthropological studies of various countries, regions, and ethnic groups reveal how women construct their identities, cultures and class positions through food work (Counihan 2004; Devasahayam 2005). Women's daily work with food connects them in intimate ways with close relatives and friends. For example, newly arrived immigrant women in the USA attempt to maintain their culture by cooking Dominican or Indian meals, while women from upper-middle class families serve fresh fruits and vegetables and fine wines through which they display their class positions.

One of the first scholars to study women's work with food, Lewin (1943), argued that this feeding responsibility gives women power because they act as gatekeepers who control the flow of food into their households. Although Lewin's view of women as gatekeepers held sway for over fifty years, recent scholars of household food provisioning (e.g., McIntosh and Zey 1998) question how much power women gain from their roles as food providers. Food work can reinscribe women's subordination in the home as they put in long, often unrecognized hours working for others. In her 1991 hallmark study, *Feeding the Family*, DeVault documents women's central responsibility for feeding others. She argues that feeding work encompasses both physical and mental labor, although women often deny that feeding the family is work. She also observed that most women try to construct an "ideal family" through their caring/feeding work. Although as Kemmer (2000) points out, even through many women continue their efforts to construct this "ideal family," the structure of many families is not the traditional family, and women's service to their families reinforces women's subservience and other family members' entitlement.

Feminist theory has made multiple strides in examining the intersections between gender, race, ethnicity and class (Narayan 1995; hooks 1998). Rather than viewing women as a unified category, awareness of this intersectionality provides a more complex stance to understand women's work and lives. These intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, and class define who does what work in the food systems and under what conditions. White, upper-middle class women entrance into the labor force has been facilitated by transferring their care work to other women who are often poor, immigrants, and women of color (Tronto 2002; Duffy 2005). Much of the preparation and serving of food is now been transferred from women's reproductive labor in the home to other women, often poor women of color, who prepare food in processing plants, grocery stores, and restaurants. Race and ethnicity also define the spaces where women work. White women tend to be concentrated at the public face of reproductive labor in the paid labor force, especially in jobs that require interaction; by contrast, women of color are disproportionately represented in dirty, back room jobs (Nakono Glenn 1992). Recent feminist work also explores how images and symbols related to food are intricately tied up with gender and race (Inness 2001).

### ***The Material Domain***

In the material domain, a number of studies of women in agricultural production have been conducted in recent years (see, for example, Whatmore 1991; Sachs 1996; Chiappe and Flora 1998). However, very few studies explore the material aspects of gender relations throughout the food system, despite an explosion of studies of commodity chains and globalization (e.g., Friedland 1984; Tanaka and Busch 2003; Gereffi and Korzeniewicz 1994). Since these analyses highlight who controls and who is vulnerable in global commodity chains, commodity chain analysis is ideal for studying gender relations in the food system. In practice, however, other than studies by Barndt (1999) and Dolan (2004), few efforts call attention to women's disadvantaged positions in the agrifood system. Gender analysis remains on the margins of the sociology of agriculture.

As the sociology of agriculture moves more towards a focus on consumption,<sup>3</sup> it would seem that gender relations would emerge as an obvious key problematic. Agrifood studies of consumption regard consumers as active agents in shaping the food system (Goodman 2003), and consumers, especially food purchasers, are typically women. Yet, the gendered construction of production and consumption practices remains a major omission in the debates over the relationship between production and consumption (Lockie and Kitto 2000). Studies of consumption in the sociology of agriculture typically view consumers as ungendered subjects. This focus on consumption is driven by a shift in the politics of resistance in the food system. With the diminished power of unions and the erosion of production-based politics, some view consumers as the new actors in challenging institutions (Gouveia and

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<sup>3</sup> The sociology of agriculture has long neglected the relationship between the production and provision of food. Scholars have typically viewed production as determining consumption, thereby justifying the neglect of consumers (Lockie and Kitto 2000). Despite the historical disregard of consumption by agrifood studies, efforts to locate food production and consumption in a more symmetrical analytic framework are currently underway (Goodman 2003). Recently, agrifood studies attempts to bring the consumer in through research on systems of provision (Fine et al. 1996) and actor-network theory (Murdoch 1994).

Juska 2002).<sup>4</sup> This scholarly turn towards consumption presents an excellent opportunity for increasing our understanding of women's connection to food.

## Resistance and Feminism

Feminist scholarship also provides complex understandings of resistance strategies. Resistance to neo-liberal globalization in the food system and gender relations with food comes in heterogeneous forms that are not necessarily connected to each other (Della Porta and Diani 2006). As with resistance to neo-liberal globalization in general, these activities include individual acts, workers' movements including organizing union activities, and organizing in the form of new social movements that focus on gender, environment, race, ethnicity, and consumer movements.

Women's efforts to resist and reshape the food system take multiple forms. Molyneux's (1985) distinction between practical and strategic gender needs forms the basis of much gender and development analysis (Moser 1989), but is rarely applied to women's resistance in developed countries. In the case of food, this distinction between practical and strategic efforts proves useful in the U.S. context. Women may act to meet their practical needs, such as access to healthy food, without altering gender power relations. These resistance efforts focus on helping women survive within the current structure. Women also act to meet their strategic needs—acts that involve altering gender power relations—such as equity in the workplace, shared responsibility for cooking, and healthy approaches to women's bodies. These efforts strive to change the core of the structure that subordinates women in the first place.<sup>5</sup> Attempts at resistance to the food system occur in both production and consumption politics. In the USA, many of these efforts are often not explicitly feminist or part of the feminist movement.

How do we explain the perplexing absence of a feminist agenda in women's actions in food-system work? One key factor is agrarian ideology, which tends to support and reinforce the subordination of women. Fink (1992: 196) characterizes the exclusionary nature of agrarian ideology stating that it has been "a white male vision that has failed to consider the full human integrity of other persons." he points out that agrarianism is a gendered ideology that projects different ideals for men and women. Women have been expected to support the farm, men, and children ahead of their own needs or aspirations. Focused on the nuclear family and the male farmer, agrarian ideology embodies traditional gendered roles and can pose a roadblock to raising issues of gender equality for both men and women. And, even though agrarian populism emphasizes the importance of democracy, populist organizing and solidarity were based on a traditional gender division of labor (Naples 1994). Women have long been rendered irrelevant in their roles as farmers. Several studies explore the simultaneous centrality and invisibility of women's labor in agricultural production and also highlight the continual dominance of patriarchal family farms in shaping women's access to land, capital, and credit in the global food system (see Sachs 1996; Whatmore 1991, Friedmann 1986, Brandth 2002). Studies of masculinities and

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<sup>4</sup> Gouveia and Juska (2002) point out how production and consumption politics divide along race lines in the food system, particularly in the meat industry, with mobilization around production issues primarily led by Latino groups and consumer resistance largely led by non-Hispanic whites.

<sup>5</sup> As Gouveia and Juska (2002) remind us, these resistance efforts are not only gendered, but also defined by race and ethnicity.

farming also emphasize how gender constructs both men's and women's identities on farms (Brandth 1999). Hassanein (1999) points out that the limitations women face in agricultural environments come not only from overt discrimination or institutional barriers but also from their socialization in rural communities and unequal gender relations experienced in daily life. Women farmers report that they are often not taken seriously or treated respectfully by other farmers, family members, and agricultural professionals (Trauger and Sachs 2006).

## **Domains of Gendered Relations in Food**

Here we examine gender relations in the food system in the material, sociocultural, and corporeal domains. Beginning with the material domain, we trace women's labor from field to table within the agrifood system in the USA. Certainly these issues of gender and food are global, cross-borders, and are not confined to any one country. We focus principally on the USA to set boundaries to our study. The USA is a particularly interesting case in terms of the political economy of the food system since it often wields control in terms of globalization of the food system and has high levels of concentration in production, processing, and retailing.

### ***The material domain: women's paid labor in the agrifood system***

Increasing concentration and globalization of food production, processing, distribution, and retailing characterize the food industry. These changes have shifted the jobs in the food industry, the largest industrial sector in the USA, from production and manufacturing to service. In this section we document how material relations in the agrifood system are highly gendered from field to table.

The dramatic restructuring and concentration of production agriculture has resulted in fewer farms and farmers in the USA. The size of farms has increased at the same time that smaller family farms continue to go out of business. Despite, or maybe because of, these trends, more women are farming today than in the past. The percentage of women farmers doubled from 5 percent in 1978 to 10 percent in 1997 to 12 percent in 2002 (U.S. Census of Agriculture 2002). In addition, the Census of Agriculture began to count multiple operators on farms in 2002 and reported that 27 percent of farmers were women. Women farmers remain underrepresented relative to their proportion in the population, however. In addition, women farmers typically own smaller, less-capitalized farms and have lower farm incomes and farm sales than men farmers (U.S. Census of Agriculture 2002).

While women farmers face difficulty in terms of gaining access to land, capital, credit, and knowledge, women farm laborers are certainly even more disadvantaged. Women farm laborers earn extremely low wages and are often subject to sexual harassment. Among U.S. farm workers, women are more vulnerable to exploitation than men, and they are paid even lower wages and given fewer benefits than their male family members (Kearney and Nagengast 1989). Women farm workers median yearly earnings were between \$2,500 and \$5,000 compared to men farm workers whose median yearly earnings were between \$5,000 and \$7,500 (U.S. Department of Labor 2005).

Gender divisions of labor also characterize food processing and manufacturing. Global commodity chains, especially in horticulture, rely on women as disadvantaged workers in processing and packinghouses (Dolan 2004; Collins

1995; Barndt 1999; Barrientos 2001). Women are preferred workers in vegetable and fruit production, which is seasonal, part-time, and flexible. Increasingly, fresh fruits and vegetables are tended and harvested by women in Southern countries for export to the USA and Europe. In the USA, women are the preferred workers in the lower echelons of food processing, where they tend to dominate low-level, high-intensity jobs, while men dominate supervisor and driver jobs. According to the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005), women comprised 75 percent of graders and sorters of agricultural products, but only 20 percent of meat processing workers; in both cases their earnings were approximately three-fourths of men's earnings. Indeed, the lowest paying occupation for women in the USA in 1998 was farming, fishing, and forestry occupations with median earnings of only \$302 per week for full-time work (Bowler 1999).

With shifts in diet, farm-export policies, and retail stores demand for prepackaged meat; processors have deskilled jobs and shifted plants from unionized areas to rural areas with cheaper land and labor. The meat industry has changed with changes in diet—the shift from beef consumption to poultry consumption due to health concerns has resulted in poultry processing becoming the largest sector of the meat industry (Kandel 2006). Women, immigrants, and Hispanics have become preferred workers in these low-paying, difficult, and dangerous jobs.<sup>6</sup> These jobs fit the International Labor Organization's definition of 3D jobs: jobs that are dirty, dangerous, and degrading.

In food retailing, globalization has led to dramatic restructuring, with the 10 largest food companies now controlling 49 percent of food sales. Grocery stores ranked among the largest industries in the USA in 2002, providing 2.5 million jobs. Food retailers rely heavily on women workers. In 2002, women worked 49 percent of the hours in grocery stores (Clarke 2003). In their efforts to be competitive, retailers' cost-cutting strategies often translate into low pay for the women workers on whom they rely. For example, 72 percent of sales workers at Wal-Mart are women, who average \$7.50 per hour with no health benefits. At the other end of the spectrum, management in the food retailing industry has been male dominated, so much so that one large grocery chain recently instituted policies to increase the number of women in management.<sup>7</sup>

One of the major shifts in food labor results from increased dining outside the home—in restaurants and other institutions such as schools, hospitals, and prisons. The percent of food expenditures for food eaten outside the home increased from 33 percent in 1970 to 49 percent in 2005 (Economic Research Service 2006). This shift away from domestic food preparation is due in large part to the entry of more women into the labor force and their lack of time to prepare food at home. As more and more people eat out, the number of jobs in food service increases. Women hold most of the jobs in food service. The 2002 U.S. Census reports that women comprise 77 percent of the 6.5 million workers in food preparation and service. Sixty-eight percent of food servers and 78 percent of restaurant greeters are women (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005b). The number of jobs in the food service industry is predicted to increase, but these are not necessarily "good" jobs. Many of these food service

<sup>6</sup> While in 1980, 74 percent of meat processing workers were white, by 2000, 49 percent of meat processing workers were Hispanic (Kandel and Parrado 2005).

<sup>7</sup> Between 2000 and 2005, Safeway increased the number of women store managers by 40 percent, 34 percent for white women and 65 percent for women of color. During the same period of time, the number of women in vice-president positions increased from 12 percent to 25 percent (Catalyst 2006).

workers are entry-level employees who often work long shifts in temporary positions and wield very little power in terms of their schedules or other terms of employment. Many of the jobs held by women in food service are part-time, flexible positions in which the workers earn relatively low wages with few benefits. Part-time work is more common among food and beverage serving workers than among workers in almost any other occupation. In 2004, half of all food servers worked part-time schedules (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005a). Jobs in the food sector are also often "contingent," in that they are conditional, transitory, and irregular.

In the commercial kitchen, we might expect women to outnumber men as cooks. After all, cooking is almost universally coded as women's work in the home. Yet women are less likely than men to work as cooks in restaurants—whether McDonald's or five-star restaurants. Women comprise less than 40 percent of paid cooks and less than 20 percent of head cooks and chefs (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005a). Wages of chefs and cooks vary significantly by type of eating establishment. In 2002, median hourly earnings of chefs and head cooks, jobs that men dominate, were \$13.43 with the highest 10 percent earning more than \$25.86 per hour. By contrast, women cooks often work in institutions and cafeterias earning an average of \$8.72 per hour. Fast-food cooks earned the least—\$6.90 per hour (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005a). Not surprisingly, women in the cooking occupations predominate in places with lower earnings.

Women are not well represented in the leadership of agribusinesses. Even though the number of women-owned businesses in agriculture has almost doubled since 1980, only one business sector (the transportation, communication, and utilities sector), reported fewer women-owned businesses than agriculture. In 1997, women owned only 16 percent of agricultural service businesses, 20 percent of food manufacturing businesses, 21 percent of retail food stores, and 23 percent of retail drinking and eating places (U.S. Census Bureau 1997). In addition, of 11 major U.S. industries, agriculture has historically been the least likely to employ women as managers, executives, or administrators (U.S. Department of Labor 1989). Women employed in these positions made up less than one percent of the total managerial force in the agricultural industry. The food industry, national governments, international trade organizations, and multilateral organizations set policies about food. In 1992, 82 percent of managers in the U.S. Department of Agriculture were male (U.S. Office of Personnel Management 1992), and the percentage was even higher in senior executive positions.

Decisions related to agriculture and food often rely on science and scientific data about agricultural production and food that contain little input from women. Feminist critiques of agricultural science suggest that women's knowledge is often devalued (Feldman and Welch 1995; Sachs 1996). Agricultural and food-related sciences are historically extremely gendered, with men predominating in agricultural science and women finding a place in nutrition or home economics. For example, in 1976, nearly all (99.6 percent) of agricultural scientists were male (Busch and Lacy 1983). While women have historically been excluded from scientific professions in general, their exclusion continues to be particularly glaring in the agricultural sciences. In 1995, women comprised 13 percent of employed agricultural scientists compared to 28 percent of biological scientists (Buttel and Goldberger 2002). However, the underrepresentation of women in the agricultural sciences is shifting, with the percentage of women receiving their Ph.D. degrees in agricultural sciences



increasing substantially in the past ten years from 23 percent in 1995 to 36 percent in 2005 (National Science Foundation 2006).

Women are increasingly performing labor in the formal labor force on farms, processing plants, grocery stores, and restaurants. Much of this work has shifted from labor previously performed by women in the domestic sphere. Women are overrepresented among low-wage food workers, but are underrepresented in the areas of management and science. Food work, earlier performed by middle and upper-middle class women in the home, has been transferred to low-wage workers, often women of color, in the labor force. This imbalance of power between men and women is similarly evident in the domestic sphere. After all, it is in the home and the family—the next domain we discuss—where gender differences in treatment of individuals and access to resources begin (Engberg 1996).

### *The socio-cultural domain: nourishing others*

Although women rarely work as chefs and head cooks in restaurants, they almost always hold the position of head cook in their homes. Regardless of culture, class, or ethnicity, the majority of women cook and serve food for their families—a cultural universal of care and sustenance. Food work involves physical, mental, and caring labor. Women go to the store, shop, unpack groceries, prepare food, cook meals, serve food, wash dishes, and clean the kitchen. Food work is not merely physical but involves relentless mental and caring labor—planning meals, worrying about nutrition, and arranging and serving meals (DeVault 1991). Women must know the food likes and dislikes of their family members, plan the timing and location of meals, and keep up with complicated and ever-changing news on nutrition and food safety. Devault likens this work of feeding the family to solving a puzzle. Devault addresses class differences between women, she suggests that in solving the puzzle of what's for dinner, middle-class women consult recipes and working-class women rely on tradition. However, she neglects to consider how race and ethnicity effect women's cooking efforts (Avakain and Haber 2006). Gullah women, African American women, and Jewish women also attempt to maintain their marginalized cultural traditions through food production (Betts 1995; Harris 1995; Kishenblatt-Gimblett 1997).

In solving the food-provision puzzle women typically select food that pleases other family members, especially their husbands (Sutor and Barbour 1975; Burt and Hertzler 1978; Schafer and Bohlen 1977). Furthermore, since men's needs dominate the organization of cooking and eating in terms of the composition and timing of meals, many women face serious repercussions if food is not prepared correctly and on time (Bell and Valentine 1997). Women who fail to please their husband's food preferences often experience negative consequences ranging from small arguments to domestic violence. Indeed, the purchase, preparation, and serving of food often serves as a key instigator of violent incidents in the home (Ellis 1983; Murcott 1983). Thus, although women choose the food from supermarket shelves, their decisions often reflect the preferences of others. And, if they make the "wrong" decision, tension, arguments, or violence may ensue. As with other household work, women experience a fundamental ambivalence between the tedium and marginalizing aspects of their work and the love and caring they feel for their families. Such work can be pleasurable or onerous depending on circumstances such as time or financial pressure.

While women remain responsible for food provision in the home, the nature of this caring work of feeding others has shifted over time. Few families or individuals in households eat all of their meals together. Household members who work, go to school, or spend time outside the home often eat breakfast, lunch, and sometimes dinner away from home in restaurants, cafeterias, or other food establishments. Women who work outside the home have less time to prepare food for their families. Much of food processing and cooking activities for food eaten at home now takes place in the market. Convenience foods, such as pre-cooked meals, save women time preparing meals and bring increased profits to the processing, retailing and restaurant industries. But, convenience foods are expensive, stretching the budgets of low-income women. And as we discussed in the previous section, the labor to produce these convenience foods is often provided by women, often women of color, working for low wages in difficult working conditions (Julier 2006).

Still, despite the increasing entry of women into the labor force, women spend at least twice as much time as men doing domestic chores, an imbalance particularly marked in food labor. Even when men share more domestic labor in the home, they are only marginally involved with food provisioning activities (Engberg 1996). Studies show that mothers, still considered the experts on children, do the majority of work in taking care of children, including feeding them (Zimmerman et al. 2001; Coltrane 1996).

Another aspect of the entry of women into the labor force is that in upper-middle and middle-class U.S households employed women lack the time to do housework and child care. Male household members rarely step in. Women either work almost around the clock or, if they can afford it, hire domestic help. Affluent career women increasingly maintain the illusion of "doing it all" by hiring domestic workers and nannies to clean the house, feed the children, and magically disappear from sight (Ehrenreich and Hothschild 2002). While most women in U.S. households maintain responsibility for cooking and serving food, the dislocation of third-world women to the USA and other industrialized countries enables relatively affluent women to hire immigrant women to perform domestic work while they work outside the home (Mack-Canty 2004). White, upper-middle class women transfer their care work to other women—often poor, immigrants, and women of color (Tronto 2002; Duffy 2005).

### ***The corporeal domain: embodied politics***

While women have primary responsibility for feeding others, they often fail to take care of their own nutritional needs. Many women, regardless of their age or weight are dissatisfied with their bodies (Paquette and Raine 2004). Seventy-five percent of "normal" weight women consider themselves overweight, and 90 percent of women overestimate their body size. The average woman sees 400 to 600 advertisements per day and by the time a girl is 17 years old, she has received over 250,000 commercial messages. Most of these messages directly or indirectly promote physical attractiveness, including being thin. Nearly three-quarters of girls report that magazine models influence their concept of an ideal body shape, yet a woman between the ages of 18 and 34 has only a one percent chance of being as thin as a supermodel. Body discontent leads to dieting by normal weight women, unhealthy weight loss practices, restrained eating, eating disorders, depression, and poor self-esteem (Paquette and Raine 2004).

Within the agrifood system, the diet industry profits enormously from women's obsession with thinness and attempts to maintain unattainable body weights. The numbers of girls and women on diets has skyrocketed. Dieting, now a normal female lifetime preoccupation, begins with girls in pursuit of the perfect body. In a 1986 study of five hundred schoolgirls, 81 percent of ten-year-olds reported they had dieted at least once (Mellin et al. 1992). That the perfect body is, by definition, unattainable, traps many women and girls in a relentless cycle of failure. The proliferation of eating disorders, heavily gendered, is also class specific. Bordo (1998) claims that many women, who can afford to eat well, diet and go hungry most of the time. Girls and women, especially from the upper and upper-middle classes, deny themselves food as they tie their hopes for happiness on being thin.

On the other end of the weight continuum, the number of women who are overweight and obese is increasing. Sixty-two percent of women in the USA are overweight and 28 percent are obese (National Institutes of Health 2006). Gender, class, ethnicity, and race intersect in defining who is likely to be overweight or obese. A negative correlation exists between income and weight; as incomes go down weight goes up. People with low income find foods high in sugar and fat are cheap and readily available, while "healthy" foods are relatively expensive and not necessarily available in their local stores (Morton et al. 2005). Obesity in women is also correlated with race and ethnicity. Obesity is most prevalent among non-Hispanic black women (49 percent) compared with Mexican-American women (38 percent) and non-Hispanic white women (31 percent) (National Center for Health Statistics 2004). For men, however, there is very little difference in obesity levels based on race/ethnicity (National Center for Health Statistics 2004). Obesity is connected to many health problems and the link between obesity and diabetes is particularly high in women. Obesity among children is also on the rise. Mothers often take the blame for their failure to provide their children with nutritious foods. Women with children are caught in a double bind as they are enjoined to make their children happy by feeding them junk food while they are simultaneously exhorted to be "good mothers" by ensuring the nutritional health of their children.

Eating disorders, whether resulting in being too thin or too fat, have been analyzed and treated principally as individual, psychological, and medical problems. Studies of obesity similarly focus the problem on individual eating behaviors rather than the food industry, limited access to nutritious food, or the increasing loss of public space for physical activity. Medicalization and individualization of public health and social problems obscure the food industry's role in constructing people's food desires and behaviors and blame the individual. Since food is women's responsibility, the corollary of the individuation of food-related health problems is that women are to blame.

Women cannot help but be caught up in some form of schizophrenic positioning with regard to food—eat more, eat less; eat well, eat badly—due to the contradictory and simultaneous marketing of thinness and food indulgence. At the same time that fashion advertising tells women to be thin, food advertising advocates indulgence, including eating junk food. Despite, or maybe due to, their schizophrenic position, women are leading efforts to create change in the agrifood system. We highlight some of these efforts in the next section.

## Working against homeostasis

Gender relations in the agrifood system have remained surprisingly static despite sea changes taking place in other dimensions of the agrifood system. One thing that has changed, however, is the extent of women-led initiatives. While women have always been involved in the food system, they now are playing expanded roles in changing material, socio-cultural, and corporeal conditions. Their efforts take multiple forms ranging from individual-level actions to collective resistance in the form of union organizing or involvement in agrifood social movements.

Women have taken the lead in resisting the repressive and exploitative conditions women face as hired labor in the food system. For example, women farm workers have organized for the rights of women farm workers, farm worker health, and day care and schools for migrant children. One group, Organización en California de Lideras Campesinas (Farm worker Women's Leadership Network), organized in 1992, trains and organizes farm worker women on health issues, nutrition, pesticide issues, domestic violence, and economic development. Women have also taken the lead in the retail workers movement, beginning in 2000 when Betty Dukes filed a sex discrimination claim against Wal-Mart, her employer.<sup>8</sup> Wal-Mart is the largest food retailer in the United States as well as one of the largest employers in many regions of the country.<sup>9</sup> The suit charged Wal-Mart with discriminating against women in promotions, pay and job assignments, and that the company was in violation of the Civil Rights Act (Featherstone 2004).<sup>10</sup> *Dukes vs. Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.*, eventually expanded to represent 1.6 million women, making it the largest civil rights class-action suit in history. Recognizing the central importance of Wal-Mart policies on American women, National Organization of Women (NOW) actively supports this legal action.

In the public domain, women have worked to reshape the food system through organizing around livelihood issues and claims made on the state. Women were instrumental in establishing and managing federal food assistance programs to combat hunger and poor nutrition, and they continue to lead the fight to hold the line on cutbacks in public programs that provide assistance to impoverished families in the USA. For example, the National Council for Women's Organizations has a food security program that works to protect and expand the Food Stamp Program, the WIC Program (Women, Infants, and Children), and other supplemental food programs.

Women have also played central roles in shaping and furthering alternative agrifood movements and institutions. For example, women have led the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture, the California Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture, the California Food and Justice Coalition, the USDA Community Food Projects program, and the USDA SARE program. Peter et al. (2000) found that women are better represented and more prominent in sustainable agriculture organizations than they are in conventional agricultural organizations. Women often take the lead in urban agriculture, developing community gardens in diverse, low-income communities (Hynes 1996). For example, women have created Grow

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<sup>8</sup> Specifically, Dukes claimed that despite her hard work and excellent performance, she was denied the training she needed to advance to a higher, salaried position.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Wal-Mart is the largest employer in Pennsylvania.

<sup>10</sup> In February, 2007, a Federal Appeals Court in San Francisco upheld a lower court ruling granting class action status to the lawsuit against Wal-Mart.

Pittsburgh, an organization that works to reclaim abandoned urban lots, build kitchen gardens to improve nutrition, and engage youth in food system work (Grow Pittsburgh 2006).

In Vermont, Maine, Iowa, and Pennsylvania women farmers have formed new types of networks for educational, social, and entrepreneurial support to empower women in sustainable agriculture and food-related businesses (Trauger 2005). For example, the Pennsylvania Agricultural Women's Network began in 2003 as a fledgling organization of women farmers and agricultural professionals with the goals of creating an empowering learning environment and network. The network's rapid growth surprised the organizers. As of 2006, more than 600 members participate in the network, the majority who work as farmers on small or medium-sized operations. Women farmers often lead the way for environmental sustainability and innovative entrepreneurship on farms. For example, in DeLind and Ferguson's (1999) study of community supported agriculture, they discovered that women were the primary workers on CSAs. Other women farmers, frustrated with working so hard to raise crops and livestock with very little return, form non-profits or educational programs on their farms—one woman runs a farm camp for girls and several women involve at-risk children on their farms (Sachs 2006).

Women also lead broad-scale efforts to create, healthy, environmentally sustainable, and socially just food cultures and systems. For example, women are key leaders in pushing for changes in food and agriculture issues in the anti-globalization struggle (Mohanty 2003; Shiva 2002). While some organizing efforts engage the state, most fall into the domain of the consumer politics of food. Women are at the forefront of ethical buying, supporting fair trade, humane, organic, and local food. Some of these efforts are individual acts by consumers and business owners, others are collective actions, and some combine individual and collective actions. For example, Judy Wickes, owner of the White Dog Café in Philadelphia, works with her restaurant and her Fair Food Foundation to strengthen and connect locally owned businesses and farms committed to working in harmony with natural systems, providing meaningful living wage jobs, supporting healthy community life, and contributing to economic justice (White Dog Café 2006). Her efforts are tied more broadly to the fair trade, sustainable agriculture, and local food movements. One of their innovative projects, the Sister Restaurant Project develops "sister" relationships with African-American owned restaurants. They promote visits to their sister restaurants to encourage their customers to visit neighborhoods they otherwise might not go to in order to increase understanding, build citywide community, and support minority businesses and cultural institutions.

In the corporeal realm, women's organizations combat the cultural impositions such as advertising that contribute to the destructive eating behaviors of many women and girls. The concern with eating disorders is the major food-related issue that has been taken up by the feminist movement. For example, the National Organization for Women organizes a "Love Your Body Day" to provide a forum for people to speak out against advertising and images of women that are harmful or offensive. Millman's now classic book, "Such a pretty face: Being fat in America" (1980) explored stereotypes of overweight women and inspired scholarship and activism around issues of body image and feminism.

Despite all of these women-led efforts in the agrifood system, there is a curious absence of feminism per se in women's efforts to create change in the

agrifood system, with the exception of corporeal politics. This is true in three ways. First, while the efforts described above are by women, they are not necessarily consciously "feminist" in the sense of resisting the oppressive nature of gender relations. Second, some of the efforts may be counter to a feminist agenda. Third, the feminist movement rarely takes up issues relating to women and food in material and domestic realms.

Women's efforts to change the food system rarely take an explicitly feminist approach. The leader of the farm women's network studied by Hassanein (1999) emphasized that it was not a "feminist" organization. Luminary women such as Dolores Huerta played strong roles in the farm labor movement. While Huerta was herself a feminist,<sup>11</sup> the farm labor movement, infused with a machismo culture, rarely addresses women's issues. In some cases, women may be instigators, but still play support roles. For example, a study of women in the sustainable agriculture movement in California found that while women were active in the movement, particularly at the grassroots level, men tended to hold the more visible leadership and decision-making positions (Sachs 1996). A Minnesota study found that men acted as teachers, leaders, and decision makers in the sustainable agriculture movement, while women involved in the movement tended to occupy support roles such as providing food, working registration tables, and sending mailings (Meares 1997). Men are disproportionately represented in leadership roles in sustainable agriculture such as project directors, conference speakers, and authors just about everywhere. Women have been correspondingly overrepresented in social cohesion roles such as organizing conferences, coordinating community endeavors, and fostering networks among different groups. The "traditional" roles played by women in these movements may serve to reinscribe and normalize gendered relations.

Beyond this, agrifood women activists have also historically tended to overlook their needs or subordinate themselves. For example, rural women in the USA have tended to join organizations that support their families or farm organizations rather than participating in organizations dedicated to women's empowerment (Sachs 1996). For example, one supporter of the California Women for Agriculture in the 1980s said that the women were involved basically on behalf of their men, from whom they get their ideas (Friedland 1991).

In other ways, some of women's food-system efforts are contradictory—or at least ironic—in terms of a feminist agenda. For example, some practices advocated by alternative agrifood movements, such as farmers' markets and CSAs, can add both to the workload of farm women and to women's already overburdened workload in food procurement and preparation in the home (Allen 1999). Some of the women in Meares' (1997) study of the sustainable agriculture movement reported that their workloads had increased as a result of their partners' participation in the movement, but that the workloads of their male partners had not increased. And, the slow food movement, a shining light of contemporary food movements, promotes the leisurely consumption of elaborate, home-prepared meals without acknowledging that time pressures for the women who are the traditional preparers of food have tightened. On the other hand, a woman resisting domestic servitude in the kitchen might turn to fast

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<sup>11</sup> Huerta worked diligently with Cesar Chavez to organize farmworkers in the United Farm Workers of America, AFL-CIO (UFW) until his death in 1993. At age 75, Huerta continues her work organizing farmworkers as Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus of the UFW and also organizes on feminist issues in her position as a board member of the Feminist Majority Foundation (Dolores Huerta Foundation, 2003-2006).

foods to feed her children and then feel guilty. And, the body-acceptance movement rightly resists cultural stereotypes of thinness for women, but may lead women to accept obesity, a condition that negatively affects their health.

The feminist movement has taken on issues with regard to women and food in the corporeal domain, but has attended far less to the material and socio-cultural domains. Rather, feminist organizing efforts have focused more on women's involvement in the formal economy, formal politics, and concerns with women's bodies and reproductive rights. In the private sphere of the home, the major feminist issue has focused on domestic violence, although rarely is it linked to the apparently crucial trigger of food and meals. Changing the division of labor in the home or kitchen has largely been a struggle for women at the individual level of negotiating with their partners and other family members, as opposed to an organized feminist struggle.

## **Conclusion**

Nearly all women spend a significant portion of their day occupied and preoccupied with food. This responsibility, a key component of women's identity, also serves as a key component of their exploitation, oppression, and, accordingly, their resistance. Women do the majority of food-related work, but have little power. Women feed others and deprive themselves. For Western women and girls, dieting serves as a normal and often lifetime activity. In conditions of food shortage, women and girls go hungry more often than men and boys. Gender discrimination and contingency is enabled by an accepted cultural orientation that undervalues women and their labor. Despite these conditions and their seemingly immutable character, women are taking action to create change. Women's subordination is locked into food, but their resistance in the material, socio-cultural, and corporeal domains of food challenges global capitalism and male privilege. As women work to reshape the food system in the interest of better health, social justice, and environmental soundness, they are also creating possibilities for women to gain control of their bodies and their lives.

We suggest that gender relationships in the food system can be understood through exploring three intersecting and overlapping domains: the material, the socio-cultural, and the corporeal. Feminist scholarship's focus on the connections between gendered divisions of labor in the home and in the labor market and distinctions between the private and public realms prove useful in understanding women's relationship to food. Women's work with food spans the formal economy, informal economy, and household economy. Thus, in studying women's connections to food, we have examined their work in both the formal economy and the household.

Barndt's (1999) Tomasita project is an example of this type of interaction that combines research and action. In the commodity chain tradition, the research traces women's work with tomatoes from the fields and processing plants in Mexico to the supermarkets and fast food restaurants in Canada. This research shows how labor practices of Maquilization and McDonaldization have resulted in the feminization of the workforce as deskilled, part-time, low-wage women workers replaced skilled, permanent, often male, workers. What makes Barndt's project particularly important is the way in which it went beyond research to bring Mexican and Canadian women workers and scholars together to discuss strategies for action and resistance.

Women's experiences in the food system also must be examined through feminist standpoint theory, which holds that feminist social science should be conducted from the standpoint of women in order to examine and understand the systematic oppressions of women in society. Sometimes a source of power, more often one of subordination, the fact remains that we need to understand much more about gender relations in the food system. We need to know much more about who women food activists are, their motivations, and their visions for the food system. We have much to learn about the possibilities for changing gender relations and the emerging field of feminist food studies can lead the way through weaving together feminist studies of food and the body with feminist work in the sociology and political economy of agriculture.



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# FRAMING MULTIFUNCTIONALITY: AGRICULTURAL POLICY PARADIGM CHANGE IN SOUTH KOREA AND JAPAN?

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## Introduction

In the aftermath of the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture (URAA) and the subsequent establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), South Korea (hereafter Korea) and Japan face some of the most serious agricultural policy adjustment problems of all WTO signatories. Attempts during the last three or four decades to maintain politically acceptable farm income levels within their minifarm structures of agriculture relied upon a combination of protectionist domestic price support, import control, and high tariff policy measures. These policies must be gradually dismantled under the agricultural reform “disciplines” stipulated in the URAA (Nelson, et al. 2001). Ongoing challenges faced by both countries in meeting reform targets are evident in their present ranking among the most protectionist OECD countries in terms of Producer Support Estimates (PSE) used by the OECD in its periodic agricultural policy reviews (see Table 1 below; OECD 2004).

During the course of the URAA negotiations, Korea and Japan, along with the EU and other European countries, insisted that Non-Trade Concerns (NTCs), such as food security and rural socioeconomic stability, be recognized as legitimate rural/agricultural sector policy objectives (Normile and Bohman 2002). The subsequent inclusion of a NTC provision in the URAA accords has provided the impetus for the development of a new multifunctionality (hereafter MF) policy paradigm, codified in such OECD publications as *Multifunctionality: Toward An Analytical Framework* (2001). In this new paradigm, policy attention is directed to a range of valuable public goods that are co-produced as by-products of agricultural production, but that are not presently marketised in ways that reward producers for their provision. Examples of such by-products, in addition to aforementioned NTC food security and rural socioeconomic stability concerns, include environmental service, aesthetic landscape maintenance, and cultural heritage preservation social amenities. MF proponents argue that such valuable positive externalities of agricultural production may be threatened in regions where agricultural trade liberalization measures jeopardize the survival of the farm sector and surrounding rural communities.

Policymakers in Korea and Japan have found MF ideas inviting rationales for continued support of their domestic agricultures in a changing global agricultural

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policy environment. It is even suggested that MF policy ideas originated earlier in Japan in analyses of the ecological functions of paddy rice agriculture (Goda 2005; Kajii 2001). Both Korea and Japan have joined the “Friends of Multifunctionality” and the “food importing countries” groups as promoters of MF policy options in the WTO Doha Round agricultural negotiations. Recent policy documents from their ministries of agriculture highlight their strong support for MF as a legitimate policy option within the WTO framework (JMAFF, n.d.; KMAF 2004).

In light of their stated commitments to MF policy principles, this study examines the extent to which domestic agricultural policies in Korea and Japan have taken a MF turn. Both Korea and Japan provide important case study benchmarks for comparative analysis of MF policy initiatives in high income countries with subsidized agricultures. Both countries are heavily reliant on food imports and lack significant agri-export subsectors. Their paddy rice-based agriculture, a distinctive, centuries-old agro-ecological adaptation to a monsoonal climate, poor soils, and high population densities (Bray 1986; Oshima 1986), is threatened by ongoing trade liberalization pressures from both bilateral (particularly the United States) and multilateral (WTO) sources. Such rural/agricultural sector profiles compound sectoral restructuring and agricultural policy reform problems, making Korea and Japan interesting candidates for MF paradigm shifts in their rural/agricultural development policies. Exploring the emergence of MF policy initiatives in the East Asian region provides important additional insights into the nature and scope of the current MF policy challenge to the market competition, comparative advantage agricultural policy orthodoxy that currently undergirds the WTO agricultural regime.

## **The Multifunctionality Policy Debate: Paradigm Shift or Policy Shuffle**

We situate our paper in a debate about an agricultural policy paradigm shift in the OECD countries. The ongoing globalization of the agri-food system, in accord with neoliberal ideas of marketisation encoded in the WTO agricultural trade regime, threatens significant rural/agricultural sector displacement in regions that are not competitive in global agricultural markets. Not surprisingly, there are policy reactions to counter such threats. In the literature under review, the emergence of a MF policy challenge to WTO orthodoxy is framed in these Polanyian terms, a policy “countermovement” in response to globalization’s disruptive threats (Hollander 2004; Losch 2004; McCarthy 2005; Polanyi 1944).

Coleman, Grant, and Josling (2004:93-109) capture this current agricultural policy contestation conjuncture in the world political economy in their recent analysis of competing competitive, global production, dependent, and multifunctional policy paradigms in an era of global agri-food system restructuring. The competitive and global production paradigms emphasize market-driven agri-food system restructuring policies based on the logics of trade liberalization and comparative advantage as encoded in the WTO regime. The dependent paradigm, premised on food security as a vital national interest and on the inherently unstable nature of agricultural markets that periodically jeopardize producer economic viability and consumer price stability, justifies protectionist government interventions when necessary. This policy paradigm is now judged to be trade-distorting under WTO rules. The URAA disciplines mandate gradual dismantling of domestic price support, import control, and tariff measures that have been characteristic dependent paradigm policy instruments. The

new multifunctionality paradigm challenges the neoliberal market-oriented paradigms by emphasizing the loss of positive externalities in the event of displacement of farming and rural communities by trade liberalization (competitive paradigm) and/or spatial re-organization of agri-food commodity chains (global production paradigm). It should be emphasized that Coleman, et al (2004) have developed this policy paradigm typology as an ideal type construct. Real world policy regimes show considerable intra-paradigm variation and inter-paradigm mixing as policies in one country often vary across commodities, farm enterprise types, and/or regions.

Policy paradigm change and contestation themes loom large in recent literature on MF policy initiatives, with the focus primarily on the agricultural policy reform debate in the EU. Beginning in the early 1990s, claims about the transformation of European agriculture from a “productivist” to a “post-productivist” mode began to appear in the rural studies literature, with strong linkages posited between socioeconomic changes in the rural/agricultural sector and post-industrial, post-Fordist, and post-modern socioeconomic trends (Ibbery and Bowler 1998; Shucksmith 1993; Symes 1992, 1991; Ward 1993; Wilson 2001). The post-productivist era is viewed as a response to a new consumer-driven valorization of organic and locally grown foods (Gilig and Battershill 1998), distinctive artisanal regional products (Knickel and Renting 2000; Ray 1998), and agri-tourism (Armesto Lopez and Martin 2006; Knowd 2006), resulting in the emergence of a “consumptionist countryside” (Marsden 2003; Lockie and Kitto 2000) that is transforming the production activities of many farm households and reshaping local rural economies. It is also a response to increased societal concerns about the negative externalities of a productivist agri-food system that is prone to overproduction, environmental degradation, and food safety crises and that has exacerbated rural depopulation trends (Ploeg 2006).

The idea that emergent MF policy initiatives mark a new post-productivist era in EU agriculture generated a vigorous counter-response (Evans, Morris and Winter 2002; Potter and Lobley 2004; Potter and Tilzey 2005; McCarthy 2005; Wilson 2001). Those challenging the post-productivist transition argument pointed to increasing sectoral dualism, rather than a structural transition, as the contemporary EU rural/agricultural sector reality. They argue that a world-competitive farm enterprise agri-food subsector based upon productivist development principles co-exists with an increasingly marginalized small farm subsector in “less favored” agricultural regions, often within the same country. Accordingly, increased sectoral polarization explains the present bi-furcated nature of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). At present, the bulk of subsidies go to individual farm enterprises in the competitive subsector on a productivist output, hectareage, or livestock headage basis. A modest new “second pillar” 2000 reform initiative providing de-coupled support to economically marginal farm households has been added to effect the MF goals of landscape and cultural heritage preservation, environmental amenities provision, and rural depopulation slowdown in the less favoured agricultural production regions (Potter and Tilzey 2005).

In our view, this sectoral dualism reality is reflected in several recent policy analyses that distinguish articulations of “strong” and “weak” versions of the MF paradigm (see Hollander 2004; Losch 2004; Potter and Tilzey 2005). The main thrust of the weak version is to employ MF policy ideas to reposition existing productivist-oriented subsidy programs as suppliers of positive externalities. A common route is to turn commodity support programs into environmental stewardship programs by tying

benefit eligibility to environmental cross-compliance measures. This policy change is an attempt to increase the WTO regime compatibility of existing productivist domestic support programs by arguing that the re-configured policy now fits in the acceptable green box policy category. It is also a remediation response to the negative environmental externalities of industrial agriculture associated with productivist subsidy programs. Such weak MF versions represent a policy “shuffle.”

In contrast, the strong version of MF reorients agricultural policies away from support for industrial agri-food systems. The goal is to incorporate agriculture into more holistic, territorially-based rural development initiatives that promote ecological sustainability and the economic and sociodemographic viability of rural communities. In this strong version, the model for production agriculture becomes a more ecosystem-friendly, craft-artisanal agri-food system, embedded in locally-centred, short chain food production, processing, and marketing structures. Accordingly, both agricultural products and social amenity by-products are enhanced in quality and value terms. This strong MF version represents a paradigm “shift” (Hall 1993) signalling that a Kuhnian revolution has occurred in the way policymakers think about what agriculture contributes to development and how policies promoting agriculture must be restructured to achieve new objectives.

The debate about what the MF paradigm is and the extent to which there is an emerging MF agricultural policy paradigm shift has been carried out largely on EU turf. The Korean and Japanese cases provide interesting rural/agricultural sector contrasts with the EU. Table 1 below, a snapshot of current Korean and Japanese rural/agricultural sector conditions, highlights this contrast. Average farm size remains quite small in cross-national comparative terms, with unusually large numbers of farm households given current stages of economic development. This minifarm structure has made competitive restructuring of production agriculture very difficult. As a result, neither country has a significant agri-export sector and both are among the world’s biggest food importers. Governments in both countries fear the collapse of their strategic rice production subsectors if they are forced to open this market widely to foreign competition. There are major policy worries in both countries that a precipitous fall in farm household incomes accompanying the dismantling of current support programs would accelerate an already serious demographic hollowing out process in many rural regions (Park and Park 2003; Kim and Lee 2006; see also discussions by Investigative Council on Basic Problems Concerning Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas). It seems that the general public shares these concerns, as public opinion surveys carried out in both countries show strong support for preserving agriculture (Korea Rural Economics Institute [KREI] 2004, 1999; Prime Minister’s Office of Japan [JPMO] 2000). From our perspective, these current sectoral realities make Korea and Japan a promising environment for an agricultural policy shift in the MF direction, providing the major rationale for this study.

**Table 1. Key Features of the Farm Sector/Economy in Korea and Japan**

<i>Features</i>	<i>Korea (2004)</i>	<i>Japan (2004)</i>
Calorie-Based Food Self-Sufficiency	43 %	40 %
Average Farm Size	1.48 ha (3.7 acre)	1.69 ha (4.2 acre)
Percentage of Agricultural Production in GDP	3.4 %	1.4%
Percentage of Agricultural Workers in the Labor Force	8.1%	4.3%
Percentage of Full-Time Farm Households	63 %	20%
Number of Farm Households (thousands)	1,240	2,161
Total Population (millions)	48.0	127.7
GDP per capita (US dollars)	14,144	33,778
Producer Support Estimate, 2001-2003	64	58

Sources: 1) KREI 2005, 2) KMAF 2005, 3) Bank of Korea 2005, 4) Korea National Statistical Office (KNSO) 2005a, 5) KNSO 2005b, 6) JMAFF 2005b, 7) JMAFF 2004, 8) Cabinet Office of Japan 2006, 9) Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (JMIC) 2005a, 10) JMIC 2005b, 11) OECD 2004:21.

## **Analytical Framework**

Our study of the emergence of MF agricultural policy initiatives in Korea and Japan is based upon a frame analysis of official ministry of agriculture documents in both countries. Official policy documents are produced by ministry of agricultural officials or other affiliated researchers who are playing the role of policy entrepreneur (Kingdon 1995:122-124, 179-183). This role is especially important during the current period of agricultural policy contestation, as new policies are being developed in response to a challenging environment of domestic economic reforms, global agri-food system restructuring, and WTO reform pressures that are roiling their rural/agricultural sectors. In the process of unveiling new policy solutions, policymakers must explain, justify, and advocate the new initiatives to domestic constituencies and the rest of the world. As noted in the social problems construction literature (Best 1989; Spector and Kitsuse 1977), policymakers engage in claims-making, identifying a policy problem that requires innovative policy intervention. The most effective claims-making strategy is to portray the policy problem in social crisis terms. In the Korean and Japanese rural/agricultural sector restructuring case, the putative crisis is rural sociodemographic collapse in the face of fears of a precipitous decline in the minifarm economy due to the withdrawal of agricultural production

subsidies. Such a social crisis requires policy remediation, with MF policy interventions as potential solutions or at least partial remedies.

In order to analyse similarities and differences in recent Korean and Japanese agricultural policy initiatives, we identify and compare MF policy frames found in government agricultural policy documents. Following Benford and Snow (2000:614), we employ the frame concept in a two-dimensional sense. First, frames consist of “schemata of interpretation,” i.e., cognitive meanings of something which distinguish it from something else. In our analysis, we want to see how MF policy is defined and delimited as a distinctive policy option or approach. In addition to the cognitive dimension, a policy frame has an advocacy character in that it is being used by policy entrepreneurs to convince significant others of its situational relevance as a viable, desirable policy option. So when we compare MF policy frames that exist in Korean and Japanese agricultural policy documents, we identify rationales for MF-oriented policy change and policy instruments that are posited to effect desired MF outcomes. While the cognitive and advocacy dimensions are integrally connected in the policy framing process, it is often possible to identify these separate framing dimensions in policy documents. In our view, such framing is the foundational step in the development of alternative MF policy options during a period of policy contestation in reaction to discontent over the problematic outcomes (realised and/or projected) of WTO neoliberal agricultural policy measures (Coleman, Grant, and Josling 2004; Hollander 2004; Potter and Tilzey 2005). Our use of the frame concept follows, at least to some extent, other examples of framing analysis in the policy literature (Apthorpe 1996; Kolker 2004; Rein and Schon 1991).

Following Gasper and Apthorpe (1996), policy production is theorized as a relationship between *text* (policy dialogue transcribed in policy documents) and *context* (the political economy environment in which policies are made). Our approach to explaining the ideational and programmatic content of MF policy frames in Korea and Japan is best described as contextualized interpretation. In terms of comparative case methodologies, Korea and Japan represent a similar case design. As mentioned earlier, these countries have very similar agricultural sector profiles with the rest of the world and their rural/agricultural sectors have quite similar agro-ecological and minifarm structural foundations. In addition, the last decade can be characterized broadly as a period of market-oriented policy reforms in the domestic economies of both countries (George Mulgan 2005; Hundt 2005; Kong 2000), complicating policy initiatives premised on new mechanisms of government intervention. This allows us to bracket these important external and internal political economy contextual factors as “constants” in terms of policy impacts, and frees us to focus on other domestic political economy contextual differences in the two countries that are likely to influence the content of MF policy frames found in their official policy documents. The most important political economy factors we posit as critical for explaining differences in MF policy frames are variations in structures of agriculture (in addition to the farm size component); in agricultural policymaking structures and processes, including the range of actors involved in policymaking networks; and in historical development legacies that influence how policymakers think about political economy futures.

## Methods and Data Sources for Policy Frame Analysis

We identify and analyze MF policy frames through a review of recent rural/agricultural sector policy documents. The policy documents we examine for this paper are shown in Table 2 below. Due to our limited accessibility to the government document archives, we rely primarily on the documents provided on the websites of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Korea (KMAF) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Japan (JMAFF). In each of the documents listed, we identify cognitive and advocacy components of MF policy frames through examination of policy text that specifies definitions of what MF is, rationales for why MF policies are needed, and policy instruments employed to achieve MF policy goals. Analysis of policy frame components enables us to position MF policy developments in both countries on the strong-weak version continuum we outlined in pp. 28-29.

**Table 2. Policy Documents Reviewed**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Document titles</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Korea	Basic Law on Agriculture and Countryside	Enacted in 1999, “Korean Basic Law”
	Basic Plan for Agricultural and Rural Development	Published in 2004, “Korean Basic Plan”
	Annual Report on Agricultural Policy	Issues from 1995 to 2003
	National Survey of People’s Attitudes about Agricultural Multifunctionality	Published in 2002 (KREI)
	Government Budget Management Plan 2005-2009 (agricultural sector)	Published in 2005
Japan	Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas	Enacted in 1999, “Japanese Basic Law”
	Basic Plan on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas	Published in 2000; revised in 2005, “Japanese Basic Plan”
	Annual Reports on Trends in Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas	Issues from 1989 to 2004, “Japanese White Papers”
	Public Opinion Survey on Trade of Agricultural Products	Published in 2000 (JPMO)
	Prospectus of the Direct Payment Program in Mountainous and Semi-mountainous Areas	Published in 2000, final revision 2005, “Direct Payment Program Prospectus”

Sources: Documents listed above accessed on websites of the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (JMAFF) and the Korean Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (KMAF).

## Findings

Our examination of the documents listed above resulted in the identification of the following Korean and Japanese MF policy frame similarities and differences:

### *The Multifunctionality Concept in the Basic Laws*

Both Korea and Japan have recently revised their principal rural/agricultural policy statutes, called Basic Laws, that spell out sectoral goals. The most striking point in the new Korean Basic Law, enacted in 1999, when compared with the old Basic Law enacted in 1967, is that it prescribes public or extra-economic roles for agriculture. Article 2 (which states the overriding rationale for the Law) characterizes domestic agriculture as “the key industry that performs economic and ‘public functions’ such as food security, environmental conservation, and balanced growth for the national economy.” Although the term “public function” is used in the document instead of MF, this recognized new role for agriculture implies a significant change in the overall Basic Law agricultural policy frame.

In a similar vein, the roles for agriculture embodied in the new Japanese Basic Law enacted in 1999 contrast sharply with those adumbrated in the earlier 1961 version, which aimed primarily to upgrade productivity of domestic agriculture. The new Japanese Basic Law incorporates the “fulfilment of the MF of agriculture” (Article 3) as one of the four key pillars of agricultural and rural policy. A more recent document, the “Basic Plan on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas” (published in March 2005), points out that “delays in structural reform of agriculture” could hinder fulfilment of MF. The MF concept, thus, has been enshrined as one of the key postulates guiding Japanese agricultural and rural policy interventions.

While promotion of the MF attributes of agriculture is identified as a substantive goal for rural/agricultural sector policies in both countries, closer examination of the Basic Laws elucidates an important difference between Korean and Japanese frames in terms of the centrality of the MF paradigm in the revised documents. The phrases that explicate the significance of MF reveal important differences in the intensity of commitment to the MF paradigm in rural/agricultural sector restructuring. The Korean Basic Law Article 5 (Basic Direction of Agricultural and Rural Policy) reads, “agricultural policies should pursue efficiency based on the principle of market economy, but *they should also consider public functions of agriculture*” (emphasis added). In contrast, the Japanese Basic Law Article 3 (Fulfilment of Multifunctions of Agriculture) reads, “In consideration of the importance of maintaining the stability of the people's lives and the national economy, *the multiple roles that agriculture plays ... shall be fulfilled sufficiently for the future*” (emphasis added). The critical difference between two clauses is that the Korean Basic Law treats the MF concept as supplemental to the structural adjustment project of construction of a competitive farm sector, while the Japanese Basic Law highlights agriculture’s multiple roles as central to policy by explicitly relating the benefits of MF to the national welfare.

### *Legitimizing Multifunctionality Policy Initiatives through Public Opinion Surveys*

In our review of policy documents, we found that ministries of agriculture and/or affiliated research institutes in both countries employed public opinion surveys

to build a case for MF policy initiatives (KREI 2004; JPMO 2000)<sup>1</sup>. The surveys reviewed elicited citizen opinions about the importance of different functional roles for agriculture. The question of what roles agriculture plays or should play in society is, of course, one of the key differences between MF and the other agricultural policy paradigms. The proponents of MF policies argue for an expanded role concept that incorporates explicitly the valorisation of co-produced social amenities of agricultural production that fulfil a variety of valuable social and economic functions.

Interestingly, there are distinct country differences both in the way the survey questionnaires were constructed to measure public opinion about roles for agriculture and in the survey results. Table 3 shows the results of the surveys. The Korean survey respondents put more priority on the food security role, whereas in Japan such values as environmental conservation and preservation of the nation's land garnered more respondent support. From the governments' perspectives, the survey results construct two important "facts" about public support for revised agricultural policies articulated in the Basic Laws. First, the results confirm that the general public has a high level of interest in the general idea of MF roles for agriculture, an advocacy framing device. Second, given that the response categories asking about MF were closed, multiple-choice items, the surveys projected perspectives of the government agencies (e.g., ministries of agriculture) on what MF means in order to show public support for their specific cognitive policy framings. Thus, the Japanese survey elicits public support for a more expansive vision of various MF roles for agriculture than the Korean survey. This was accomplished through the phrasing of the role question and the response categories provided. The Korean survey asked the respondents to identify what constitutes MF roles with a focus on the future: "*In the future*, what are the most important roles for agriculture?" (emphasis added); and the survey included food security as a functional role response category. On the other hand, the Japanese survey excluded the food production function as a response category in the following way, "*Besides food production and supply*, what roles for agriculture do you think of?" (emphasis added). In short, the public opinion surveys in the policy documents reviewed show both a domestic audience and the rest of the world that publics in both countries advocate a MF policy change, and they reflexively enhance the policymakers' own distinctive ideas about what this policy change means.

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<sup>1</sup> The governmental institutions primarily responsible for the farm and rural sector in Korea and Japan are KMAFF and JMAFF, respectively. Nonetheless, perhaps due to jurisdictions and implementation capacity, these surveys on MF were conducted by different governmental agencies in both countries.



**Table 3. Results of the Public Surveys on MF Values in Korea and Japan**

<i>Korea</i> (2004 government survey)	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Japan</i> (2000 government survey)	<i>Percent</i>
Food security	29.5	Natural environment conservation	65.3
Environmental conservation	27.9	Preservation of the nation's lands	56.4
Rural amenities	13.3	Fostering water resources	45.3
Balanced development in rural/urban sector	12.0	Food security	39.8
Agro-tourism	9.1	Creation of scenic landscape	38.4
Cultural heritage	8.0	Aesthetic education	34.4
		Climate remediation	32.1
		Cultural heritage	32.1
		Preservation of vitality of rural communities	29.9
		Provision of amenities	18.4

Note: In the Korean survey, respondents were asked to provide only two answers; the results were standardized to sum to 100%. In the Japanese survey, respondents provided all applicable answers; the figures represent percentage of respondents who indicated a specific value as MF. Sources: JPMO 2000; KREI 2004.

### ***Multifunctionality Roles as Rationales for Direct Payment Programs***

In our assessment of new agricultural policy initiatives and their correspondence to MF ideas, we focus on how direct payment programs are framed in official policy documents. Direct payment programs that are decoupled from production are viewed as permissible agricultural policy reforms under WTO reform guidelines, as they are recognized as non-trade distorting. For countries like Korea and Japan that must wean themselves from protectionist agricultural policies to comply with WTO policy reform mandates, direct payment programs offer possibilities to redirect agricultural subsidies into more permissible policy instruments. Since these programs require significant budget outlays, policymakers engage in advocacy framing to justify their existence.

In the Korean case, the KMAF pronounces in its Basic Plan that “to stabilize the highly volatile farm income structure under the expansion of market liberalization, [it is necessary] to consolidate and expand various direct payment programs [including enhancement of public functions].” Here “various programs” include separate programs for farm income stabilization, the enhancement and expansion of

agricultural public functions, and the promotion of rural amenities (implemented in 2006). Among these programs the budget earmarked for farm income stabilization far exceeds the other program budgets (Korea Development Institute [KDI] 2005). Thus the direct payment program in Korea seems primarily focused on helping stabilize farm incomes during a period of restructuring to achieve increased farm enterprise market competitiveness. The program's commitment to enhance social amenity by-product provision roles for agriculture seems quite limited.

In contrast, to justify its direct payment program, the JMAFF pronounces in its Direct Payment Program Prospectus (JMAFF 2005a) that (1) “the lives and wealth of the nation's people including the urban residents living in the lower watershed areas are protected by MF [fulfilled by agriculture in the (semi-)mountainous areas],” therefore (2) [direct payments are instituted to] “maintain the multi-functionality in the (semi-)mountainous areas in which there exists the growing concern that MF is deteriorating due to the increasing abandonment of farmland.” These statements suggest a decidedly MF policy rationale, the preservation of farming in remote rural areas where flood prevention and other ecological functions provided by agriculture are under imminent threat due to rural depopulation. Direct payments are warranted as a crisis remediation measure to stem the outmigration of farm households in these areas. This advocacy framing contrasts markedly with the Korean framing noted above in terms of the distinctive MF social amenity provision role set forth as the goal of the direct payment program.

### *Summary of Frame Differences*

In summary, in terms of MF policy cognitive and advocacy framings, our findings show that Japanese policy documents incorporate the MF policy paradigm in stronger terms. This is particularly evident in scope and temporality emphases. The Japanese policy texts focus on the need to continue implementing MF initiatives aimed at post-productivist rural/agricultural sector goals, while the Korean documents postpone the provision of such MF social amenity services to the future. The current Korean focus is to use new MF policy initiatives, couched in a narrow food security role, to support productivist farm enterprise restructuring efforts to enhance sectoral market competitiveness.

## **Discussion**

In this section, we interpret the differences we discovered in the Korean and Japanese MF policy frames as effects of variations in political economy contextual factors that are now influencing rural/agricultural sector policymaking in both countries. As indicated in Table 1 above, while agricultural restructuring in both Japan and Korea is difficult due to their minifarm structures, the Korean problem is much more acute due to the heavy reliance of Korean farm households on income from agricultural commodity production. This is revealed in a comparison of the “percentage of full-time farm household” statistic, with 63 percent of Korean farm households classified as full-time farming operations, whereas only 20 percent of Japanese farm households fit this category. These statistics help explain the current inter-country disparities in average farm/non-farm household income ratios. In Korea, average farm household income has fallen to approximately 80 percent of average non-farm household income, while in Japan average farm household income remains higher than average non-farm household income (OECD 2003:2). In spite of

continued high levels of support for domestic agriculture, the Korean farm household economy is unable to keep pace with economic growth trends in the wider society due to farm size and other constraints. The heavy reliance of Japanese farm households on off-farm income sources mitigates this problem.

As the Korean government dismantles trade-distorting domestic support measures to comply with WTO policy reform dictates, relative prices for strategic agricultural commodities like rice will likely fall further, exacerbating the farm household economic problems outlined above. In order to deal with this ongoing farm politics problem, the government has promulgated new direct payment programs to replace, at least partially, commodity support programs now being dismantled. In Japan, by contrast, a less severe farm income problem gives the Japanese government has more political and economic space to implement MF structural adjustment measures aimed at broader rural development goals. This broader development vision is reflected in the way the MF policy initiatives are framed conceptually. In the policy documents we reviewed, the term MF is associated with environment-centred themes such as the “natural cyclical function of agriculture,” defined as “the function of agriculture in stimulating the biological and physical cycle of nature [in order to realize environmental protection and landscape preservation benefits] ...” (Japanese Basic Law, Article 4). Hence, JMAFF insists that “from the future perspectives of the global environment and food supply, constructing cyclic [i.e., reusing or recycling of resources] societies has become a mandate for every country/region, so it is indispensable to develop agriculture in a sustainable way through fulfilment of the positive externalities of agriculture [such as envisioned by MF] while controlling negative impacts on the environment” (Japanese White Paper 2002). MF is one of the ideas underlying such government policy discourse as the “Coexistence and Convection [i.e., exchange] of Urban and Rural” and the “Construction of a Cyclical Society” (JCEFP 2001; JMAFF 2001), promoting the notion that there is a symbiotic connection between rural and urban regions and that stabilization of rural communities, both economically and demographically, will enhance these beneficial ecological and sociocultural connections.

Our analysis of JMAFF White Papers from 1989 through 2003 provides a clue to understanding how policymakers in JMAFF have constructed the MF concepts outlined above to signal a shift in societal development emphasis. The policy history embedded in these reports chronicles how rapid post-World War II economic growth coincided with alarming declines in the vigour of rural communities, threatening the loss of MF social amenities produced by the rural/agricultural sector. In more recent annual reports, the emergence of MF policy interventions to maintain rural communities and farming are linked to a shift in societal values represented by the phrase “from material wealth to spiritual wealth (*mono-no yutakasa kara kokoro no yutakasa*)” (Japanese White Paper 1997). This value shift is constructed as a popular reaction to rapid accumulation of material wealth tempered by the long-lasting economic recession in the 1990s, with the word “*yutori*” used in these documents to connote liberation or freedom from the pursuit of excessive economic materialism. Recent JMAFF documents that designate rural places as the “spiritual home (*kokoro no furusato*)” (JMAFF 2003:1, 2006:18, see also Science Council of Japan 2001:28) evoke a sense of connection between renewed spiritual values and sustainable development in rural areas. The Korean policy documents, by contrast, do not articulate a parallel post-materialist societal vision. Different development legacies and differences in economic development conditions (i.e., differences in per capita

income levels, economic structure, and social welfare attainment) in the two countries have produced different ideas among agricultural policymakers about what kind of political economy future beckons, contributing, we argue, to the production of different MF policy frames.

Differences in the structure of rural/agricultural sector policymaking, including the actors involved in policymaking networks, have also had important effects on the MF policy frame variations we have outlined. In Japan, the infrastructure of agricultural policymaking connects local-level organizations with long-established corporatist histories directly with provincial and central government agencies (see George Mulgan 2005 and Stearns and Almeida 2004 for discussion of these structure/process dynamics). This results in routinized information flows and political lobbying back and forth between the localities and the center. An exemplary case of how this organizational structure works to promote MF ideas at the grassroots is found in the activities of the National Federation of Land Improvement Associations (NFLIA known also as *Zendoren* or *Midori Net*: <http://www.inakajin.or.jp/index/html>), an umbrella organization representing the local land improvement districts (LIDs) established under the Land Improvement Law to manage irrigation facilities. NFLIA's appeals to the general public stress the importance of the LIDs' maintenance of irrigation systems and their contribution to agricultural MF performance, specifically the ecological preservation and flood control functions. This theme is evident in Japanese White Paper 2003, wherein the LIDs' vital contribution to sustainable development of agriculture and preservation of the national land and environment is described. There are other local-level government or quasi-governmental organizations actively promoting the realization of MF values as part of a local development strategy, and in the process, constructing positive images of development initiatives anchored in MF concepts. This articulation of local level support for MF concepts and programs strengthens the hand of JMAFF within ministerial policymaking venues where decisions are made about new directions for rural/agricultural sector policies and budget allocations to implement new programs.

In our view, the weaker MF policy emphasis in the Korean agricultural policy documents reflects, in part, attenuated relationships between corporatist rural/agricultural sector organizations and local-level actors who are potential supporters of MF policy initiatives. This is a legacy of post-World War II authoritarian state/society relationships that structured agricultural policymaking networks in exclusionary ways. Compared to Japan's post-World War II history of farmer organisation involvement in agricultural policy networks through close relationships with legislators and agri-bureaucrats, agrarian political relations in Korea were established in more explicit one-way, top down fashion. Peak sectoral organizations, such as the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF), have yet to develop routinized organizational channels that link grassroots farm and environmental group concerns, which often reflect MF policy ideas, to the agri-bureaucracy policymaking network (see Burmeister 2006; 1999).

Democratization has provided opportunities for Korean farmers and other interested groups in civil society to exercise political voice in noisy confrontations with the government over agricultural policy reform. MF ideas have been used in these protests as countervailing policy visions to the government's market-oriented restructuring initiatives. To the extent that MF discourse has been inserted into the Korean agricultural policy documents we have reviewed, there is some relief of this

political tension, as the government signals that alternative policies are on the table. But, to the extent that democratization and the revitalization of civil society in rural areas has brought local actors into agricultural policymaking processes, they may be more likely to advocate continuation of commodity-based agricultural sector restructuring policies than MF policy alternatives. Due to the selective subsidy targeting policies in place since the 1990s that have channeled resources to farm households judged to have competitive restructuring potential, the government has in effect created elite farmer segments that have recently mobilized through commodity-based interest group associations to influence policy decisions in productivist directions (see Choi 2004:77-86). Strong NACF support for MF policies at this point might alienate some of its most powerful farmer members. In contrast, in the post-World War II era, Japanese farm organizations based upon corporatist state/society relations routinized access to agri-policymaking to a more diversified membership (e.g., full-time and part-time farmers), facilitating negotiation among competing sectoral interests during periods of policy contestation.

This difference in the extent to which local actors are institutionally embedded in the policymaking apparatus is evident in the relative attention paid to regional/local development priorities in the texts of the Korean and Japanese agricultural policy documents. In the Korean documents, for example, the long-standing attention paid to enhancing national productivity in key agricultural commodities has minimized the articulation of distinctive regional agricultural and rural development concerns. It was not until 1994, with the enactment of the Agricultural and Rural Enhancement Law (a policy response to the unpopular provisions in the URAA that began to force market-oriented sectoral reform policies), that the term “local agriculture” (*ji-yeok nong-op*) entered KMAF agricultural policy terminology. Given that MF values for agriculture are rooted in ideas about how location-specific policy responses need to be tailored to regional and local diversity, the institutional legacy of nationwide commodity-based development strategies has dampened consideration of MF policy options in Korean agricultural policymaking circles. By contrast, the articulation of regional/local development agendas in the Japanese policy documents valorises the MF policy orientation.

As Coleman, Grant, and Josling (2004:Ch. 4) argue, agricultural policymaking, as well as the restructuring of agricultural production and consumption in the world political economy, is also a globalization process. The neoliberal WTO agricultural policy regime and the reactive policy responses to social dislocations caused by this regime, such as the emergence of the contesting MF policy paradigm, are the result of the global flow of ideas through institutional frameworks that support their production and distribution. Our findings, however, are a reminder that these globalizing processes are also mediated in important ways by national-level policymaking structures and processes. What happens at the national level, in turn, modifies globalizing processes in reflexive rounds of policy contestation played out in both WTO and national policymaking venues.

## Conclusion

In light of the potential reflexive impact of national policy initiatives on the global spread of ideas, what are we to make of the Korean and Japanese MF policy initiatives we have just analyzed? Are they strengthening the MF challenge to the global neoliberal agricultural policy regime? Hollander (2004) and Losch (2004) argue that a serious MF policy challenge will occur only if strong versions emerge

that go beyond national and/or regional interests to address the global socioeconomic dislocation effects of the WTO regime that currently afflict both rich and poor country rural regions. The “master frame” of a distinctive “European Model of Agriculture” (EMA) that is emphasized in much of the EU MF literature (see articles in Brouwer 2004; Huylenbroeck and Durand 2003) is decidedly problematic in this regard. According to Potter and Burney (2002), the EMA frame constructs an exceptionalist rationale for excluding vulnerable EU regions and subsectors from the WTO market liberalization disciplines and hence is regarded as another protectionist policy initiative by much of the rest of the world.

The East Asian MF policy documents we analyze do not yet evoke an explicit master frame. However, MF policy frames in both Korea and Japan point to the same overriding rural/agricultural sector issue, namely the threat posed by unfettered market liberalization to their strategic rice subsectors. This theme, if articulated in sectoral phase out risk terms, has “universalizing” master frame potential in that it points to the ultimate outcome of comparative disadvantage in a world of agri-food system restructuring based upon competitive and/or global production paradigm principles. Korean and Japanese policymakers are in a good position to articulate such a draconian risk threat. The strategic position of riziculture in both countries is anchored in an unusually strong constellation of agro-ecological adaptation, village social organization (in both social ecological and social structural dimensions), and cultural meaning (see, for example, Hahm 2005 and Ohnuki-Tierney 1993) attributes. As a result, paddy rice agriculture is in many ways synonymous with agriculture-in-general, nature, and the countryside. If phase out scenarios are linked to the collapse of MF agricultural by-products that are valorized across societies (see Satuyama 2006 for a discussion of the FAO “roles of agriculture” project targeting developing country situations), the policy contestation power of the MF paradigm is extended in a “universalizing” direction.

It is possible to envision a further evolution of Korean and Japanese agricultural policies that enhance the MF challenge to the current neoliberal agricultural policy order. Unlike the EU situation, current efforts to restructure Korean and Japanese agriculture are unlikely to lead to significant competitive subsector, marginal subsector bi-polarization. In cross-national comparative terms, the Korean and Japanese agricultural sectors have quite homogeneous commodity production structures, with cropland acreage and infrastructure and farm household commodity portfolios heavily vested in paddy rice agriculture. Yet possibilities for a competitive world market profile in rice production remain remote due to high land and labor costs. Hence, the outcome of current rice restructuring programs in Korea and Japan is most likely to be increasing differentiation of “commercial” and “rural residential” subsectors. The former will consist of larger-scale, more economically viable rice producing farm households (or group farming enterprises), while the latter will consist of part-time and retiree farm households who own paddy land but are much less reliant on agriculture for their household income. Any rural development plan that prioritizes the preservation of paddy rice agro-ecology will need to target support programs for both subsectors. A possible policy scenario, then, is the deepening and extension of MF policies to target the performance of different MF roles by different types of farm households who own and/or farm paddy land, a more fundamental MF paradigm shift in the agricultural policy regime. Out of such policy evolution, it is possible to envision the emergence of an evocative “universalizing” MF frame that highlights effective MF policy measures to deal with phase out risks to

strategic agricultural subsectors that play essential functional roles in comprehensive rural development initiatives.

This study has encouraged us to continue to explore the unfolding of East Asian MF initiatives and their potential for global policy impact. Whether the rather weak Korean MF version we discover in our policy frame analysis becomes stronger depends upon several key internal and external political economy factors. Continued decentralization and devolution of policymaking to regional and local government jurisdictions and the emergence stronger civil society organizations in rural Korea will likely be critical catalysts for MF paradigm strengthening. We find Japan's MF policy version to be considerably stronger than Korea's, but local governance issues remain important for further MF policy development there, too. In addition, external factors such as looming free trade agreements (FTAs) pose opportunities and constraints for further MF policy development in both countries. Whether Korea and Japan sign FTAs with each other and/or with the United States or other agri-exporters is likely to have quite significant agricultural policy consequences. Whether ministries of agriculture in both countries aggressively export their MF policy knowledge in international policy forums and assistance programs will help determine the global impact of their MF policy initiatives. At this juncture, it is important to begin to build an empirical data base on MF policy initiatives at all levels of agricultural policymaking in Korea and Japan, from analyses of policymaker networking in international forums to national-level policy action to local-level program design and implementation processes. We hope other researchers will join us in taking up this challenge. Such a knowledge base will provide a stronger empirical foundation upon which to assess the impact of Korean and Japanese MF policy initiatives on domestic rural development outcomes and on regional and global agricultural policy regimes.

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# “WHO ARE EUROPE’S FARMERS?” ACCESSION TO THE EU AND ORGANIZED PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS EVIDENCE FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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## Introduction

During the past decade Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) have undergone dramatic changes. Two events are particularly important. First, with the collapse of state-socialism, most of these countries became committed to the liberalization of their political and economic systems. Another important event in the past decade was the accession of CEECs to the European Union (EU). It brought challenges in terms of conditionality and asymmetrical relationships between old and new member states (Grabbe 2003). As such, accession to the EU has been presented as an incremental process, a tool for reform and an objective for candidate countries (Agh 2004). In this context, the process of accession to the EU has greatly influenced not only the development of institutions and policies, but also the evolution of actors, including special interest or civil society groups. This was performed through the rapid adoption of new, Western type, institutions and the adoption of the common EU legislative body, the *acquis communautaire*. While there are many studies on the Europeanization of national policy systems, institutions and interest groups in old member states (Radaelli 2000, Green Cowles, Caporaso and Risse 2001, Börzel and Risse 2000, Falkner 1999), few studies have investigated how accession to the EU challenges interest groups in countries preparing for EU membership. Thus, the study of interest groups in EU former candidate countries (the current new members of the EU) is an important tool for understanding the mechanisms of Europeanization in non-governmental actors during the negotiations process and their role in the policy making process.

The main objective of this study is to explore the usage of ‘Europe’ by professional intermediators and what the mechanisms of this usage are. I will analyze the effect of the European factor (Olsen 2002) on domestic organized interests (Kohler-Koch 2002), as Radaelli describes it, in order to better understand changes and development of new structures and identification strategies of organized agricultural interest groups in Central Europe. The policy network approach, specifically the agricultural policy community as a relationship between organized interests and state actors, can be fruitful in finding research models (Börzel 1997, Kohler-Koch 2002) allowing us to understand professional intermediation in post communist Europe. In other words, I have tried to assess how external and internal factors have interacted in the *agricultural policy community* at the national level, and what the consequences are on interests, strategies and ideology. The policy

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community can be relatively flexible or closed. I analyze national, transnational and supranational strategies during three different time periods, i.e. before the official opening of negotiations in 1998, during accession negotiations until full EU membership of the Czech Republic in May 2004, and once the full membership had taken place.

I selected agricultural policy as the empirical context to examine the modalities of interest groups in EU candidate countries. Gorton, Lowe, and Zellei (2005) identify pre-accession Europeanization in different stages in the field of environmental policy, while Franz Gatzweiler (2005) argues that institutional change in the agri-environmental field was influenced by three major forces, namely, evolution, path dependence, and the rapid adoption of new Western institutions and EU models. Thus it would be useful to assess what the impact is of these other forces on agricultural interest groups during the three stages described above. The empirical evidence for this paper comes from data collected within the framework of my PhD thesis. My analyses have been based on research performed in the Czech Republic and in Brussels, Belgium. I was granted access to documentation and have been able to corroborate this material through interviews with different actors. I use qualitative methods to unveil the multi-faceted accession process of the EU (e.g. semi-structured in-depth interviews with farmers, NGO activists, regional officials, public and European administrators, researchers). These semi-structured interviews were conducted on three different levels of governance: local, national and European. The reasons for this empirical selection are as follows. Firstly, EU agricultural policy is characterized by deeply entrenched interests on the national and supranational levels, such as farmers' interests, consumers' or environmental concerns, WTO and external trade obligations. Key actors within the European agricultural policy community include professional mediators, administrative agencies, governments, EU actors, experts, NGOs and advocacy groups. Secondly, pressure for reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and WTO obligations have brought forward a new distribution of power and access not only in Brussels but at the domestic level as well. As such, the Common Agricultural Policy can be considered a 'moving target'. I will explore how the realities of the EU interact with legacies of the past in post-communist countries, thus creating new resources for professional mediators. My question deals with actors and their structures, strategies, and ideology. How does the EU impact organized interests in candidate countries? Is there a relationship between post-communist legacy and the influence of the EU in the organization of professional interests?

Domestic actors have used 'Europe' under EU pressure during the process of accession negotiations, but they have used it in the absence of adaptation pressure during a first period of establishment of new interests groups and of learning of Western models, which preceded the negotiations with the City Hall. During the negotiations period, competing mediators used the EU in order to strengthen their domestic identity, to mobilize resources and to diversify repertoires of action. Moreover, specific domestic structures present in the agricultural sector establish a specific path of development. There is a continuation of old patterns of elite participation, whereby privatization strengthens the hand of the old nomenclature and other legacies of the past.

The paper is organized as follows: section 1 presents concepts and definitions on interest groups in Central and Eastern Europe. Section 2 explains the empirical

outline, and finally section 3 deals with the EU's impact on path dependent institutions and new structure.

## Concepts and Definitions

As an analytical tool, I use the term 'Europeanization' to describe the impact of the European intervening factor at the domestic level in EU candidate countries thus adapting CEECs interest groups to a European model, logic or a constraint. C. Radaelli (2000) defines Europeanization as:

A process of construction, diffusion, and institutionalization of rules, procedure, paradigms, styles, ways of doing and shared beliefs and norms, formal and informal, defined and consolidated first in the decision-making process of the EU and then incorporated in the logic discourses, identities, political structure and policies at the domestic level.

I define 'professional intermediators' as specialized mediators invested in a monopolistic representation of collective interests, who take part in a political decision making process as exclusive partners and have the power to influence their membership. Alan Cawson (1986) reminds us that interest intermediation is not equivalent to the notion of interest representation. The latter was used by Philippe Schmitter (1979) to explain the reciprocity of relations between corporatist organizations and state agencies. As such, representation is not the unique objective of the interest group; it can only be one part of its functions. By using the term 'interest intermediation', Schmitter also reiterates the fact that associations do not always translate their members' interests and that often they do not respond to grassroots preferences while playing an important role in educating their members about their political interests. Thus, an interest group is a self-interested entity that seeks to represent particular collective interests and to influence the political process in a specific domain. Interest groups are not political organizations even though they can take part in political activities, and they can have direct or indirect links with political parties. In the context of agriculture, political affiliation and links with political parties and parliamentary committees are crucial as they guarantee access and participation.

During state-socialism, the most frequently found type of organizations of professional interest were the corporatist organizations, i.e. groups of technocrats (*nomenklatura*), trade unions and old apparatchiks in the industrial sector. Over the years, their roles were transformed into those of negotiation agents, within the central planning framework. State-run associations held a monopoly position. Consequently, the intermediation of economic and social interests was not totally absent. During the transformation period, it was possible to build new institutions, but these too were influenced by the legacy of the previous system. They had implicit links with the State which had organized their structures and often determined their limited political access. In the case of professional associations after 1990, some of the structures already existed. Consequently, they also had to adapt to new rules and gain credibility in a new political system. The rapid changes that interest groups underwent in the past fifteen years of political and economic transformation not only showed to what extent they were dependent on the state, but also highlighted the weakness of their structures,



the lack of resources and capital. New and old associations often competed ideologically with each other on the basis of their link to the state-socialist regime.

### **Interest Intermediation: Empirical Outline**

Agriculture in the Czech Republic bears the legacy of a typical large collectivized sector. Czech interest groups in the field of agriculture have been chosen for this analysis because of a specific type of collectivized agriculture and privatization process. Czech agriculture, with its small share of GDP, dual farm structure and competing agricultural associations, is a typical case for analyzing the Europeanization of agricultural interest groups in new EU member states. The Czech agricultural sector is small, and the trends seen there are similar to current agricultural trends in Western Europe: The Czech economic indicators are similar to those in the EU 15 member states (see annex). Also, the Czech population mainly lives in rural areas but is primarily engaged in industry and the services sector.

Organizations of professional associations followed a path of duality according to specific patterns of agricultural transformation, i.e. big entrepreneurial companies versus small semi-subsistence farming. Other forms of ownership have emerged from the former co-operatives and state farms. Nowadays, farm land is distributed as follows: corporate farms - 44%, co-operatives - 26.3%; individual private farms - 27.4%. More than 80% of agricultural land is cultivated by big size farms (500 ha and more), representing only 7.5% of the total number of farmers. Representation of these economic entities has been organized though the Agrarian Chamber, the Agricultural Association and the Association of private farming.

I have observed the Czech Chamber of Agriculture and associations - partners from their creation until the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU. I will introduce here as well the two main professional associations: the Agricultural Association (AA), which represents mostly large scale agricultural enterprises (more than 500 ha), and the Association of Private Farming (APF), which represents smaller individual farms (approximately 100 ha).

**Table 1. Size of Farms and distribution of agricultural land in Czech Republic**

<i>Size of farms (ha)</i>	<i>% of farms</i>	<i>% of agricultural land</i>
- 50	81,3	6,9
50 - 100	5,1	2,6
101 - 500	6,1	10,3
501 - 1000	2,9	15,8
1001 - 2000	3,0	31,0
2000 -	1,6	33,4

Source: Czech Chamber of Agriculture 2001

#### ***The Agrarian Chamber***

In 1991, the Czech Parliament passed a law on professional chambers of commerce, industry and agriculture. Under this law, the new Chamber took over many tasks distributed among various government agencies: mainly registration, regulation, and training. While membership in the Agrarian Chamber (CAC:

<http://www.agrocr.cz>) today is voluntary, it was compulsory during the first two years after its establishment. The Chamber encompasses 71 district agrarian chambers and 59 professional organizations, which include approximately 77,000 physical entities (entrepreneurs) and 7,600 legal entities (farming companies). The Chamber was modelled after the Austrian/German system with compulsory membership and strong regional representation but it is also a successful model of an old pattern of elite participation on the regional level, and a recent socialist model of top-down control of authoritarian/ state-corporatism (Ingleby 1996). The CAC is the main actor involved in constant negotiations with government officials, research institutes, universities, parliamentary committees and the Ministry of Agriculture. The Chamber is interested in increasing agricultural production. It aims to negotiate better quota limits and to have equal rights to subsidies as other EU farmers. Its main interest is EU or national funding for the sector. It lobbies for an increase of direct payments, rather than rural development measures. The Chamber seeks to convey an image of a group which is a leader, a unifier and a representative of the whole agricultural community in the Czech Republic.

### *The Agricultural Association*

The Agricultural Association of the Czech Republic (AA: <http://www.zemsvazpraha.cz>) was officially founded under this name in 2001. It is the successor of the big and powerful Association of Co-operative Farming. The AA's success was guaranteed through the careful provision of domestic and external resources. The European influence was used in combination with social capital, and ex-communist elite networking. The association has been transformed several times since the 1990s. During state-socialism, the association promoted the state's policies and communicated state decisions to the farmers. It has close links with the Chamber of Agriculture at the local, national and EU level and as such, both organizations are often associated with one another. Even though in the first years after 1990 it did not succeed in influencing agricultural policy making, the election of the Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) in 1998 made it possible for the association to shape agricultural policies through the appointment of Jan Fencel, former chair of the Association, as Minister of Agriculture. The Association is also a member of the Tripartite body for social partnership, thus representing employers in the agricultural sector. As a lobby the AA defends employers, while it also functions as the voice of agriculturalists, and it is the most powerful association in terms of economic impact. In 2004, AA members cultivated 1,349,000 ha of agricultural area, which represented 37 % of the total agricultural area in the Czech Republic. The association has about 1,018 members; half of them are co-operatives, approximately one-third are joint-stock companies and around 15 % are limited liability companies (Bavorova, Curtiss and Jelinek 2005).

However, the Association, being the main partner of the Chamber of Agriculture, faces a crisis of legitimacy. The AA has very strong links at the ministry and parliament, but it faces a crisis of legitimacy as it is not specialized enough and often it does not have an added value to those farmers who are not directly involved as leaders. Its ideology and interests are often similar to those of the Agrarian Chamber but the AA is much less present in the countryside. Its members are very large agricultural companies and some of their executives and leaders live in big cities. They are the most influential politically, and yet they are absent from the social activities in the countryside.

### ***The Association of Private Farming***

The Association of Private Farming of the Czech Republic (APF: <http://www.asz.cz>) was established in 1998 as the successor of three small associations defending the interests of small restituted land owners and victims of land collectivization. The interests of the association are to promote family farming and to further the role of family farming in modern agriculture and the countryside. The APF has a conservative orientation and ties with the right-wing Civic Democratic Party and its Members of Parliament. The members of the APF owned a combined 300,000 ha of agricultural area in 2003, which corresponds to 7% of the total agricultural land. It represented approximately one third of the area cultivated by individual farmers. The association has about 3,100 members, which means that the average cultivated area per member farmer is approximately 100 ha. However, many small individual farmers are not even registered in the local "Agricultural Register" as food producers. The number of those individual farmers registered in the "Agricultural Register" and who can be counted as market-oriented farmers, exceeds tenfold the number of APF members (Bavorova, Curtiss and Jelinek; 2005). Thus, free-riding is a big problem for the association because members are few but a majority of Czech farmers can take advantages of the policy achievements. The APF is not a member of the Agrarian Chamber. This reduces its political and economic impact. Its members left the Chamber and adopted an outsider strategy because of ideological competition between the leaders and rival interests in the policy making process. The leader of the association is ideologically opposed to the president of the Chamber because he represents big agricultural structures and former cooperatives. Important disputes have arisen on issues regarding decollectivization, former links with the communist party, and debts of cooperatives. The APF also protested against the big farms, which are considered the winners of the privatization process. APF members are very active in local politics, but have difficulties being included in the national policy making process. Their main strategy consists of recalling the past, specifically by condemning the communist elite, through efficient media communication. The leaders of the APF see their role as a balancing power against the big farms, and cooperatives in general. They highlight their distinctiveness in relation to the controversial communist past:

"I am a member of the association since its very beginning. I know how it evolved. This association is different because it serves the needs of private farmers... in order to counteract cooperatives and to balance the influence of big cooperatives. I am not a member of any other association, I am not a member of the Chamber, and on the contrary I am against it [the Chamber]."

Throughout our observations, I conclude that the APF is based at the local level, and receives its legitimacy from its role as representative of small farms whose concerns are rural social issues. At the local level this agricultural association found a new role as a translator and mediator of European norms and legislation. This and its relatively large membership notwithstanding, the APF is less influential in the parliament and the ministry, due to the low economic impact of its members. This is also due to the various political and personal orientations of the leaders of the APF. Yet, even if members of the APF are often excluded from the policy making process

because of political agendas and alliances, they have gained a certain amount of legitimacy through their European activities and their readiness to implement EU programs locally (SAPARD in particular). Thus, municipalities engaged in cooperation projects were the main beneficiaries, together with big agricultural companies. Small farms however had difficulty in receiving funds.

### **Path dependent institutions and new associations**

During the period of the economic transformation when agricultural groups were established, some new Western types of structures were copied and some were based on old patterns of elite participation and legacies of the past. During the EU negotiations, coercion mechanisms widely contributed to the inclusion of associations within the agricultural policy community in the domestic context, thus transforming their collective strategies, directing their interest towards EU policy making and guaranteeing their role as legitimized mediators. After 2004, accession to the EU triggered another role for professional associations, allowing them, through the diffusion of EU norms, to participate in the policy making process, at the domestic and EU levels. However, local interests and regional rural development remain problematic. This will be shown through an analysis of the evolution of structures, interests and strategies of the main associations.

#### ***1990: Preparations for Europe?***

Building new interest groups in a new economic system is a learning experience. During international meetings, conferences and seminars, agricultural associations copied models, exchanged knowledge and experiences with their Western counterparts, mainly neighbouring countries such as Austria and Germany.

During the first years of social and economic change, collectivized Czech agriculture struggled for survival under dire economic conditions. Competing rural and agricultural associations represented the different interests involved in restitution of collectivized land and property, privatization, and transformation of cooperatives or state farms. Hence, agricultural interests were articulated around the issue of land and property, or the issues of losers and winners of the agricultural reforms after decollectivization. The struggles over land property in the post-Socialist countryside are not only about material resources but also about social and moral values (Sikor 2005: 189). Actors motivate their claims by asserting primacy over historical justice, symbolic compensation for victims or the efficiency of “the market” and their role as “entrepreneurs”. Throughout the period of decollectivization, privatization and consolidation of land rights, a dual structure of farms was put into place (Doucha 2004). Even if big companies or cooperative farms were not competitive enough, they managed to restructure successfully though copying. The most popular models were those of the Austrians and the Germans.

For instance, the Czechs adopted an Austrian model for their Chamber of Agriculture and for the Institute for Research in Agrarian Economics. The Austrians had been interested in presenting their model of agricultural intermediation and had suggested it for implementation in the CEECs at several transnational conferences. Not only did this reflect the conviction that corporatist structures better respond to the needs of these new free market societies, but it also indicated a desire to introduce small scale family farming into CEECs. This was influenced, among other things, by

a growing concern about rural development, values of family farming and the social role of farmers.

The establishment of Agrarian Chambers in some CEECs was also influenced by the German neighbours: a regional structure was created and local representatives were put in place where they never existed before. However, the first model did not correspond to the situation of agricultural entities in Czechoslovakia, and in the Czech Republic in particular. This type of model was eventually chosen by the Czechs during the creation of the Chamber in 1991. So, compulsory membership was quickly replaced by voluntary membership. There were no elections based on the local distribution of farmers, but the Chamber works through its local offices (similar to the situation in Hungary). In fact, the experts who came to Prague were also Germans. In the second tour of the EU twinning programs, Czech associations chose to have Irish experts as partners. One of the reasons given for this was that they wanted to learn from another new member state (as opposed to the Germans, who are founding members of the EU) how to use EU funding. Moreover, the other European experts had shown a preference to establishing links with Polish and Hungarian partners, relishing the prospect of tighter trade relations. They were less interested in Czech farming.

Representing large entrepreneurial entities, the Agricultural Association and its members are nowadays the winners of the agricultural privatization and consolidation. The association managed to restructure successfully, it changed its name and removed the words “cooperative” and “collectivized”. It is now a modern EU type lobby based on an organizational structure copied from the National Farmers’ Union in the UK and Northern Ireland. The only association which was created from the bottom up and that is based in local initiatives, with the help of political interests, is the Association of Private Farming.

### ***1998: The pre-accession process: asymmetric relations***

The period of EU negotiations was mainly asymmetrical and imposed hierarchically. I argue that the relation of Eastern and Western associations through a common model of behaviour was asymmetrical during the first years of transformation (copying of structures, procedures and behaviour) but later on, the relationship became more balanced and mutually beneficial. I argue that PHARE (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies) program has been used for the transfer of informal norms from EU member states representing their sectoral and professional domestic cultures.

The PHARE program mainly recruited teams of private consultants in order to organize the transmission of know-how. Its goal was to help candidate countries in their preparation for accession, according to their need for consolidating institutions and implementing the *acquis*. Contacts with agricultural associations were organized through COPA-COGECA (the Committee of Professional Agricultural Organizations in the European Union, the General Confederation of Agricultural Co-operatives in the European Union), and it was implemented almost exclusively within the framework of twinning programs between different partners, national administrations and experts in neighbouring countries. COPA-COGECA had a privileged position that it sought to keep after the fifth enlargement. Indeed, since 1995 COPA anticipated the enlargement and aimed to consolidate agricultural associations in Central and Eastern

Europe in order to better integrate them afterwards. The above-mentioned associations were in a crisis situation, threatened by the enlargement of the EU, while the Eastern Europeans also faced a crisis of representation and reconstruction.

The Europeanization of associations in CEECs was not only vertical, i.e. coming from a higher EU authority, but was also horizontal, created through a common learning process in terms of lobbying techniques, access to information, influence and repertoires of action. Social learning (Checkel 1999) is possible in groups where individuals shared a common professional background: they were all farmers. It is made possible when the group feels it is in a crisis or is faced with clear evidence of policy failure (challenges of COPA and transformations in CEECs). It is more likely to occur when a group meets repeatedly and where there is a high level of interaction among participants (for instance through twinning initiatives or conferences, workshops and exchanges). Priority has been given to bilateral exchanges between two partners. The change is visible in terms of access to power, the creation of alliances (e.g.: the new Visegrad initiatives, and alliances of small farmers across the EU), learning of a specific behaviour in Brussels, a better knowledge of the specificities of each partner, and also challenging the monopoly of COPA-COGECA. A reciprocal relationship was thus imposed. “COPA cannot accept to lose us. This is a political question of representativity. [...] COPA would not speak on behalf of 25 EU members anymore.”.

This was considered a pedagogical lesson towards organizations in CEECs: how to work together and cooperate at the EU level. However, these organizations were not willing to simply unite into national alliances, as distinctions between old and new types of organizations persisted and were even accentuated.

#### ***2004: Accession to the EU: usage of ‘Europe’***

Accession to the EU did not halt the trend of development of agricultural associations; on the contrary, it only strengthened it. The Chamber of Agriculture and the Agricultural Association are the main groups representing major interests in the Czech agricultural sector. The AA does support a competitive liberalized agricultural sector coupled with financial support measures to farmers, equivalent to the one given to their West European counterparts. In economic terms, AA represents the biggest part of Czech agriculture, and it is interested in economic incentives for large production. The Association of Private Farming still has recognition and is accepted at the negotiations table because of the high symbolic social value of its members, and because of the importance of small semi-subsistence farming in Czech Republic. What is even more important is that the APF has managed to remain effectively involved at the local level and is an intermediary with local officials and leaders. Have these evolutions contributed to a different representation of the associations? A leader of the APF argues on 2005 that they did not have an alternative, they had to deal with Europe. The APF recommends a type of agriculture more related to rural life, protection of the environment and the social role of farmers in the countryside. Because of the magnitude of the free-rider effect, it does not represent the majority of individual and family farming, but the organization gives an important voice to rural concerns.

## **Concluding remarks**

This paper studied domestic change and the influence of the EU integration process in the field of interest intermediation in CEECs. Domestic actors have used 'Europe' even in the absence of direct EU pressure. Associations who had links with the previous regime (in terms of the communist legacy) have proven to be very successful. In the EU context these actors are embedded in and affected by the social institutions with which they interact. They have inherited the old patterns of elite participation and have managed to transfer them into other, more reliable, EU-pragmatic resources. At the local level small associations involved in rural activities would seek to promote a 'rural' role of the profession related to recent reforms of CAP, while bigger farmers would seek to promote an image of entrepreneurs, thus taking advantage of the export schemes of CAP. Among the two main professional groups in Czech Agriculture, both were able to become mediators. One combines issues of local development with vertical EU lobbying; the other interest group is interested in domestic lobbying and in international markets.

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## BOOK REVIEW:

*RESEARCHING THE CULTURE IN AGRI-CULTURE: SOCIAL RESEARCH FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT*, BY MICHAEL M. CERNEA AND AMIR H. KASSAM, EDITORS. PUBLISHED IN 2005 BY CABI PUBLISHING, CAMBRIDGE, MA. ISBN: 9780851990033 (HARDBACK), 480 PAGES

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In the past two decades there has been an awakening centred on the importance of locating, understanding, and synthesizing the role of culture in conventional biological and technical agricultural research. We know that agricultural economists have had a seat at the agricultural development table for some time, but increasingly the research findings of rural sociologists, anthropologists, and geographers are penetrating work that historically has maintained a 'hard' science veneer. Scholars in the field of agricultural development increasingly realize that many of the obstacles we continue to face in the advancement of a sustainable agri-food system are relational in nature, that is, they are tied to the context of people and places. The realization of the value of social or 'relational' variables in agriculture can be seen not only in the vibrant streams of research conducted by sociologists and anthropologists, but also in the rise of sociological and cultural issues in the work coming out of other disciplines. How many of us have scratched our heads in wonder as we read of animal scientists' attempts to flesh out humans relationship to animals or horticulturalists' efforts at correlating human behaviour and vegetable consumption? One could argue that disciplines such as horticulture or soil science are poaching on social science turf when they cross disciplinary boundaries to probe social phenomenon. On the other hand, perhaps it is the inability of rural sociologists and cultural anthropologists to satisfactorily answer these pressing questions – or to disseminate our findings sufficiently. Cernea and Kassam marshal compelling evidence for a structural interpretational of this practice.

In *Researching the Culture in Agri-Culture: Social Research for International Development*, the editors have tried to bring the fruits of this social science integration and collaboration to light and showcase the emerging role of social science scholarship and knowledge in agriculture. The editors themselves reflect this trans-disciplinary partnership; one is an anthropologist and the other an agro-ecologist. Their objective is to recount the role of social and behavioral research in the scientific agenda of Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). CGIAR is an educational and outreach group comprised of "15 autonomous international research centres with over 8500 scientists and staff – co-sponsored by major development agencies, by some 50 countries of the North and the South and by other international and regional organizations and foundations" (pg. xix). The primary focus of the scientific research coming out of CGIAR centres has traditionally been bio-ecological, although sociologists and anthropologists began to be brought on board CGIAR projects in the early 1980s to communicate the social and cultural attributes of agricultural development. No doubt, the integration of social science theories and methods into biologically based agricultural research has

assuaged the asocial nature of this research and constructed a more empirically grounded conception of agricultural development. The fact that this has not been an easy marriage is revealed in almost every chapter of the book; it has clearly been a painful process for both the newcomer social scientists and old-time bio-physical scholars. The editors write in the preface that bringing social science into the biological and technical research agenda of CGIAR has been an “incessant struggle to affirm its potential and contributions against institutional obstacles, intellectual narrowness, and under-financing, and prejudices of various sorts. Indeed, the book reads at times as if this volume were comprised, in good part, to make a case for the survival of this stream of research due to a recent erosion of institutional support (see page 6).

*Researching the Culture in Agri-Culture* is an ambitious volume of nearly 500 pages comprising 22 chapters many of which are organized as case studies to collectively explicate the role of culture in agriculture. The authors embrace the familiar working definition, “culture is one’s total way of life” – including beliefs, values, norms, structures, etc. More precisely, culture includes “diverse patterns and forms of social organization” which are the primary building blocks of agricultural systems (page 6). Beyond this initial definition in Chapter 1, the construct of culture is used to develop technical assessments that describe research collaborations between biological and social scientists operating in the CGIAR centres and demonstrate the usefulness of social science. The first section of the edited volume consists of three chapters each devoted to communicating the value of social science in CGIAR’s research program and highlighting the process by which this integration unfolded, including institutional receptivity to the newcomers and a demographic profile of the social scientists themselves.

In the second and third sections of the book, the editors adopt Merton’s “insiders” and “outsiders” dialectical framework to organize these sections. Section II is devoted to the “insiders”; those social science scholars inside CGIAR centres who provide a lens into the evolution of the social science research thrust by exploring accomplishments, obstacles, and future prospects. The strength of the 12 chapters that make up Section II lies in the utility of the cases to provide a micro look into the internal workings of the organization. They do a fine job of highlighting social-biological science collaborations, but more importantly, they reveal patterned conflict and resistance embedded in the institution.

Having begun my career in a U.S. agricultural university experiment station filled with biological scientists and one agricultural economist, as the lone sociologist many of the experiences recounted in Section II were painful reminders of intellectual isolation and alienation. Many of the accounts told in this volume will be shocking to social scientists. They communicate episodes of bias and discrimination directed toward early social science pioneers in CGIAR centres. For instance, one chapter discusses the efforts of gender analysts to sensitize biological scientists to participatory action research with women. Cited in this chapter is an illustration of male scientists laughing, ignoring, and, in general, not listening to gender specialists. Their primary concern being, “Will it make a difference to what I am working on?” (page 90). This chilly climate succeeded in pushing social scientists out of CGIAR and justifying reduced investments in this research stream. I do not want to suggest that these acts of bias are individual shortcomings. They are a product of knowledge structures that privilege certain epistemological and ontological assumptions over

others and, as such, foster an inability to entertain new paradigms or to engage in the critical reflection needed to question assumptions for the purpose of broadening the horizon of possibility in agricultural development. The most illuminating aspect of this book is its ability to begin a dialogue around the diversity of the scientific community allowing us to question who we are as scientists, and probe our values, assumptions, and world views.

Section three showcases the work of “outsiders”, those who are not members of the CGIAR centres, but are part of a much broader scholarly community. The seven chapters in this section raise pressing research questions in need of a social science lens and offer up fruitful lines of inquiry and sustained partnership. Other chapters take the ‘outsiders’ perspective to comment on the value of CGIAR scholarship in the past or offer up prescriptions for future research and policy directions. A few chapters give a first person account of previous employment in CGIAR centres.

The shortcoming of this volume, in my mind, is that it frequently reads as an appeal for social science variables and methods that will seem obvious to social scientists. Thus, I assume the primary readership is natural scientists, and perhaps administrators who control purse strings. It is heavy on institutional introspection and as such the heavy focus on CGIAR can alienate some readers who are simply looking to learn more about the role of culture in agriculture. This is not so much a book for exploring the conceptual role of culture in agriculture, as it is an ontological exercise, probing the nature of agricultural research and providing useful correctives in the form of trans-disciplinary partnerships. The intellectual and disciplinary cultural barriers for cross-disciplinary collaboration are high and straddling these hurdles is often unrewarded. It becomes easy to maintain the status quo. Cernea and Kassam have done a service to agricultural development specialists and, hopefully, in these useful illustrations and honest appraisals of the challenges to overcome, have started to chip away at the intellectual silos in which most of us work. The strength of this collection is that we have concrete illustrations of cross-disciplinary collaboration in action and for this we are much better equipped to confront the resistance and bias of naysayers and to dismantle structural barriers. Rhoades chapter (20), for example, offers a welcome perspective in his endeavor to explain the marginality of social and human sciences as a function of differential status and rewards among scholars.

In support of *Researching the Culture in Agri-Culture: Social Research for International Development*, I see the book’s utility as twofold. It belongs in a graduate social science theory or methods course where students can benefit from pairing theory with these concrete case studies. In a similar view, I think it would also be useful to pair chapters with more theoretical readings on the sociology of culture. Most importantly, however, I think any social or biological scientist considering trans-disciplinary partnerships would do well to review this book for useful instruction on the intellectual foundations and work cultures of each group.

## BOOK REVIEW:

*HEARTLAND: THE REGENERATION OF RURAL PLACE, BY GEORGE MAIN. PUBLISHED IN 2005 BY UNSW PRESS, SYDNEY. ISBN: 9780868408736 (PAPERBACK), 304 PAGES*

**Lynda Cheshire**

The University of Queensland

In *Heartland*, George Main presents a beautifully written and highly personal account of the ecological destruction of rural places, induced, in large part, by the application of an export-oriented model of agriculture. His exposition – part scholarly critique, part essay – is empirically grounded in the Cootamundra district on the south-west slopes of New South Wales: the place of Main's birth and the traditional site of the Wiradjuri people whose forced dispossession from the land is intricately connected to its present state of ecological disorder. What was once an area of grassy woodlands and swamps, carefully tended by the Wiradjuri and teeming with small animals, birds and native plants, has now been transformed into a well-groomed landscape of crops and pastures, littered only by a few remnant trees and the occasional patch of land left for regeneration. For many, such changes are a sign of progress; the ascendancy of science over nature; of human beings over a harsh and untamed landscape; of order where once there was disorder. Yet, the consequences are both profound and troubling. Like many parts of rural Australia, Cootamundra is now beset by a range of ecological challenges, including species loss, soil acidification, salinity, erosion, insects that have become chemical-resistant, and an overall instability and vulnerability of farm land.

Now working as a curator at the National Museum of Australia, Main's background as an environmental historian comes through clearly in his analysis of the ecological disorder facing the Cootamundra region. While he is not alone in his environmental critique of modern agriculture – as he himself acknowledges – he goes beyond those who seek solutions within policy frameworks of 'sustainable development' or 'natural resource management', insisting that these terms merely cast people as 'outside' nature, in relations of domination and control over natural resources. The effect of this position, he argues, is that it limits opportunities for dialogue between people and rural places, and prevents the integration of agricultural lands into the complex living systems of which they were once part. This, he suggests, is a stark contrast to the ways of the Wiradjuri who, far from seeing themselves as divorced from the land, operate within a holistic cultural framework that ties them inextricably to biological communities.

In his critique of the dominant discourses of natural resource management, Main reveals how they remain embedded within the same cultural paradigm of modern agricultural production that lead to the ecological destruction of rural landscapes in the first place. To trace how this broad cultural framework of productivism came into being, he takes an historical perspective by asking: 'what dynamics of imagination

and history transformed the grassy woodlands and swamps of Wiradjuri country into a modern agricultural region? What particular habits of thought and perception delivered dryland salinisation, soil erosion, dying paddock trees, local extinctions? What cultural processes maintain the dominant model of industrial agriculture?' By showing how these models are historically and culturally contingent, it becomes possible to imagine alternative forms of engagement with rural places in ways that might 'return ecological wellbeing and natural productivity to the agricultural heartlands of Australia' (pp.8-9).

Main addresses these questions in chapters appropriately entitled *Mastery, Elsewhere, Progress, Division, Silence, Revolt* and *Regeneration*, and identifies the underlying beliefs and practices of modern agriculture that have brought about the destruction of the once richly productive and ecologically diverse slopes of the Cootamundra district.

He begins by documenting how European settlers sought to 'master' the land, both in terms of attempts to secure grazing land through the violent dispossession of traditional owners, and in a desire to 'tame' the landscape and render it suitable for agricultural production via practices of tree-clearing and chemical fertilisation. Underpinning such practices, he argues, are representations of the Australian rural landscape as, on the one hand, an inhospitable and harsh place that needs to be controlled, and, on the other, as a resource that only gains its value through export-based relationships of production and consumption with distant spaces. While farmers must respond to externally driven economic forces, these globalised market structures are unresponsive to the ecological needs of particular agricultural regions, which undermines the potential for what Main calls 'relationships of intimacy and care' between people and the land (p.48).

Moreover, if we insist on viewing such processes in terms of a linear narrative of 'progress', Main argues, ecological destruction becomes merely an inevitable, if unfortunate, outcome of human advancement, which can be fixed with the further application of scientific knowledge. Stories of progress and colonisation also silence other narratives of change in Cootamundra – the decline of local ecologies, the dispossession of the Wiradjuri and the displacement of rural families by global competition and mechanisation – and allows the ethical obligation to accept responsibility for past injustices against indigenous people and nature to be evaded. *Heartland* brings these alternative narratives to the fore, and begins an important process of de-legitimising presently dominant ways of knowing and engaging with the land.

Main presents his argument through a combination of personal narrative and scholarly prose, drawing on a disparate range of intellectual sources from a broad suite of disciplines – Max Horkheimer, Neil Murray, Vandana Shiva, Wendell Berry, Val Plumwood and Geoffrey Blainey. His approach is strongly historical, infused with elements of ecology, anthropology, sociology, and literary studies, and he combines scholarly texts with historical data (letters, diaries, oral histories), personal reflections, anecdotal tales and conversations with local people living in the region. The academic critique is powerful and compelling but the personal dominates as Main tells the story in first person voice of his family's settlement of, and subsequent departure from, the land, and of his more recent visits to the area as an adult. This practice of combining scholarly writing with literary prose does not always sit comfortably with the

academic reader but the book is certainly a pleasure to read, due in no small part to Main's obvious talents as a writer. He is clearly knowledgeable about the local ecology of the region and describes, in rich detail, his encounters with the place during his return journeys. In this sense, the account is a very personal one. On occasions, it risks becoming self-indulgent but never quite to the extent that it alienates the reader.

Nevertheless, the academic parts of Main's argument are often buried among the personal stories and the flow from the personal to the scholarly, and back again, is occasionally clumsy. This is most noticeable in the early chapters of book where even the smallest piece of information gleaned from historical sources is inserted into the text. For those local to the area, this inclusion of family genealogies is bound to please, but the overall effect is slightly distracting. Intentionally or otherwise, the easy flow between personal anecdote and scholarly critique also creates confusion as to the nature of Main's scholarly claims and the evidence provided to support his argument. Is he suggesting, for example, that Alex Hansen's debilitating headaches disappear when he visits the forested hills of Pioneer Park because he has a 'physical connection to the land' that creates a mutual sense of healing? Perhaps Main never intended for such conclusions to be drawn but the inclusion of this sort of detail leaves one wondering how far he wishes to go with his spiritual assertions.

book is not a standard academic text and will surely not appeal to those seeking straightforward answers to environmental problems. Indeed, the alternatives put forward by Main require a fundamental reassessment of what have become fairly deep-rooted cultural assumptions and practices in Australian farming, and change becomes even more inconceivable as rural landscapes are increasingly bound up in global power networks of production and consumption. Nevertheless, the message of *Heartland* is an inspiring one, and it will appeal to a far wider audience than conventional academic writings. I encourage you all to read it.



Papers appearing as ‘Works in Progress’ are non-refereed and unedited and are aimed at presenting results from work not yet ready for publication while stimulating discussion and debate on current topics of interest to agri-food researchers.

## W o r k I n P r o g r e s s

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### AGRARIAN ECONOMY OF ORISSA AND POVERTY: REFLEXIVE OBSERVATION

Bishnu C. BARIK\*  
Dr. Anita DASH\*\*

#### I

Orissa is one of the most backward Eastern States of developing India. As a part of ‘divide and rule’ policy of the British, it was scattered into various provinces. Accordingly, it had three broad types of land tenure system: the Zamindari in five districts, the Ryotwari in one part of a district; and Subsidiary Alliance in a number of princely States covering as many as seven districts of the present day Orissa<sup>1</sup>.

In the main land of Orissa the Zamindari system was enforced. Both the local and outside Zamindars<sup>2</sup> were very harsh in collecting rent to meet the British demand for revenue. The land revenue was so high and the evictions from land so frequent that the peasant uprisings occurred several times. The sporadic movements of 1817, 1833 and 1847 were some of the most powerful uprisings. Following the movements, the authority enacted different laws, such as the Rent Act of Bengal 1859, the Orissa Tenancy Act of 1913 and the like. But these acts remained ineffective due to the absence of any sustained peasant struggle<sup>3</sup>.

As Prof. Mukherji has remarked, all these reforms could not check “ the abuse of irresponsible and absentee landlordism which has received the sanction of British Government”<sup>4</sup>.

Several princely states remained under the control of British called as Subsidiary Alliance. According to this arrangement, the princes were given absolute freedom of internal administration as long as they continued to pay tribute to the colonial authority. The terms were rather liberal compared to what the smaller units had to pay. This was because the British wanted the bigger powers as allies to their domination. Thus the tributary landlordism were under pressure to collect higher rents from the peasantry under them as they had to keep

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the petty princelings above, going, supporting their henchmen as well as social obligations like the temple<sup>5</sup>. The feudatory states witnessed several cases of peasant and tribal discontent. The 'Prajamandal' movement ultimately led to their merger in the State of Orissa in 1948<sup>6</sup>.

The ryotwari settlement was in operation in the part of a district. In course of time a class of rentiers emerged among those, who were in charge of collection of revenue and to look after law and order. The condition of peasants in the ryotwari tract deteriorated terribly due to rising frequency of indebtedness, loss of land and vagaries of nature. Since 1934, a co-ordinated movement continued under the leadership of communists through the Kisan Sabha<sup>7</sup>.

The system of land revenue administration of the British rule demonstrates that it was directed towards protecting and encouraging the interest of the Zamindars and the princes. As the figures show, at the time of independence, 18 per cent of the privately owned land was under the Zamindari system<sup>8</sup>.

## II

Following independence, the Orissa Government emphasized the land reform measures with the intention of abolishing the system of intermediary tenure that existed between the tiller and the State; the tenancy reforms; the fixation of ceiling in agricultural holding; and the Debt Bondage Act to free the bonded agricultural laborers from the clutches of money lenders and feudal lords<sup>9</sup>. Further, it was observed that, behind such an enactment, the intention of the government was to liberate the peasants from the feudal burn, to ameliorate agricultural growth and to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor. However, such legislation did not really lead to any concrete achievements. As Prof. Joshi rightly remarked " Basically these were elite sponsored reforms, i.e., measures introduced the ruling elite that took over the rein of power from the British"<sup>10</sup>. The performance of the Orissa government on the distribution of surplus land recovered under Ceiling Act has been revealed in a research project. It estimates that a meagre 0.6 per cent of the State's total farm land—45,706 hectares out of the total 761 lakh hectares—has been made available so far for distribution among the 86,161 people under the Land Reforms Act<sup>11</sup>. However, most of the land 'allotted' of doubtful quality is still with the erstwhile landowners and the 'allotments' have been hardly more than mere paper achievements for publicity purpose or for ministerial ceremony. Thus it is beyond doubt that, till to date many of the land lords and feudal lords continue to possess many acres of landed property with them either in their names or in their relative's name. Many studies covering this aspect in different states of India reinforces these findings<sup>12</sup>. Ladejinsky, who toured the Punjab and Kosi area of Bihar had a conversation with a landlord of Bihar: " He first informed us that he owned 16 acres of land but corrected himself under the good humour prodding of a crowd of farmers that he had failed to mention another 484 acres. The lapse of memory might have had something to do with the ceiling on land holdings and its maximum permissible limits of 60 acres, but, on the other hand, no owner bows his head in shame on account of ceiling evasion".

In sum, the feudal and semi-feudal relations of production continue to dominate the agrarian structure of Orissa.

Orissa economy is predominantly agricultural. Nearly 85 per cent of her population lives in rural areas and 74 per cent of the working force directly or indirectly depend upon agriculture<sup>13</sup>. The concentration of working force has been constantly pumped up from 70 per cent in 1951 to 76 per cent in 1971.<sup>14</sup> By the year 2001 the figure has come down to 61 per cent<sup>15</sup>. Agriculture alone which contributed 62 per cent of the total state income in the year 1971,<sup>16</sup> now it forms only 48.35 per cent.<sup>17</sup> It shows that other sectors like industry, trade and tourism have gained importance over the years.

Ironically only 38 per cent of the total land is available for cultivation. Out of this 30 per cent of the land is cultivated more than once<sup>18</sup>. Irrigation potential, which was only 16 per cent in the year 1980, has now increased to 23 per cent<sup>19</sup> as against 75 per cent in Punjab and 25 per cent in the country as a whole. Paddy, the predominant crop covers only 50 per cent of the cropped area (no change in the figure during the last three decades) with an average yield of 10.14 quintals per hectare (Punjab 35.06 quintals and Andhra Pradesh 29.36 quintals) the lowest among the major rice growing states of India<sup>20</sup> (see Table – A). Although wheat, Jute and Sugarcane are considered as major cash crops, it has been observed over the years that these crops are not receiving appreciative response among the Orissa peasantry. Area under principal crops in Table – A clearly shows that around 1980s the peasantries of Orissa have shifted their keen interest in growing vegetables and pulses. This could be possibly as the result of demands coming from the emerging small and medium townships in the various parts of the state. Speaking absolutely there is no change in figure on productivity of food grains over the last three decades. The productivity figure of the state remains around 958 kgs per hectare against 4088 kgs per hectare for Punjab and 3088 kgs for hectare for Haryana state<sup>21</sup>. Altogether, it has seriously affected the gross per capita production. The per capita food grain production of the state stands at 156 kgs against 1067 kgs of the Punjab, 656 kgs for Haryana and 208 kgs of the country<sup>22</sup>. As a result the state only contribute only 2.54 per cent to the total food grain production of the country where as the contribution of Punjab stands at 12.92 per cent<sup>23</sup>. In addition, the agricultural saving accounts for 50 per cent, the third lowest in the country.<sup>24</sup> As stated earlier, the area and production of cash crops like Jute, wheat, Sugarcane and Groundnut are still low (see Table – B ). The low irrigation potentiality has restricted the growth of intensive cash crop production and use of chemical fertilizers. The per hectare consumption of fertilizer is as low as 40 kgs in Orissa as against 166 kgs in Punjab, 159 kgs. Andhra Pradesh; 147 kgs in Haryana and 95 kgs in the country as a whole<sup>25</sup>.

According to 1971 census, there were only 2000 tractors and 600 pump sets energized in the agriculture. By 1977-79, the number of tractors and pump sets had increased to 2837 and 9266 respectively.<sup>26</sup> By 2000-2001, the figure of tractors with trolleys has increased to 44404. The figure of pump sets has gone upto 73000. The pump sets energized in the state constitutes only 0.59 per cent of the country.<sup>27</sup> Although the number of tractors and trolleys have increased during the last decade, it is because of Supper Cyclone in Orissa and a large chunk of these instruments are used in construction of concrete houses rather than in agriculture. In Orissa, the average size of land holding was 1.6 hectare which has now come down to 1.34 hectare (as per 1990-91 figure). The small size of landholding prevents the use of tractors and energisation of pump sets. As a result, it indirectly affects agricultural modernization. Even today the farmers of Orissa use largely plough of various types locally made and the number stands at 15180<sup>28\*</sup>. Thus it clearly discernible that Orissa agriculture is still backward and hardly there is any scope for its modernization.

Since major means of production is land, its unequal distribution maintains structural inequality and acts as a hindrance to rural poverty, adversely affecting the state economy. The distribution of means of production is highly skewed. Seventy six per cent of households (marginal and small) have possessed only 39 per cent of the total cultivated area, while another 11 per cent of households control 40 per cent (see Table – C ). No wonder, after three decades the percentages have changed across marginally causing no effect on ownership pattern. The rich sections of peasantry have retained their lands without losing a portion of it.

Thus according to someone estimate 1.73 million cultivators of Orissa own less than 0.5 hectares and the number of landless agricultural labourers have hardly benefited either from land reforms or from different rural development schemes like Integrated Rural Development (IRD) and Economic Rehabilitation of Rural Poor (ERRP)<sup>29</sup>.

In Orissa, agricultural tenancy is common and widespread. The percentage is very high in coastal region (50 %), where 43 per cent of the landowners owning between 15-19 acres and 59.9 owning between 20.24 acres lease out their land<sup>30</sup>. Several other studies highlight on the continued magnitude of tenancy in various forms<sup>31</sup>. The threat of eviction is quite frequent and the share of tenant varies between 40 to 50 per cent of the produce depending upon the nature of agreement. As Appu rightly observed "... so long as class of land owners who are reluctant to engage in manual labour and a vast army of landless agricultural labourer co-exist, any legal ban on tenancy in the Indian rural society will remain a dead letter".<sup>32</sup>

Likewise 7 per cent of the total population is composed of agricultural labourers whose wage appears to be relatively much better in the country. Thanks to Mr. Biju Pattanaik who at his last stint of chief ministership in Orissa increased the wage rates of agricultural labourers. The wage rate varies within the regions in Orissa. In the coastal belt of Orissa always it is found that the wage rate is always higher. The super cyclone also increased the wage rate of labourers as crores of rupees were pumped in and massive construction of cement houses started. The demand for labour increased so high that it was difficult to get labourer to do agricultural operations. Agriculture in the state provides employment around 120 days in a year.<sup>33</sup> Table – D speaks about the wage structure of agricultural labourers today. Lack of employment in agriculture throughout the year severely affects their living conditions. No doubt, the state of affairs has adversely affected the per-capita expenditure which figures at only Rs. 698/- . The staggering army of surplus labour commits themselves to the overlords and become victims of severe exploitation. By 1982-83, nearly 12,841 bonded labourers have been rehabilitated by the government of Orissa.<sup>34</sup> The real situation prevailing in the interior parts of Northern, Southern and Western Orissa is not known. The present government of Mr. Nabin Pattanaik claims that the state is free from bonded labourers. Authentication of this statement needs to be examined by conducting a study by a reputed professional research organization in the country and to know the prevailing real situation in the context of the state's backward economy.

Industrially, Orissa has remained backward in spite of its abundance of natural resources. Industry only accounts for 19 per cent of the state income.<sup>35</sup> The state is able to add only 4 per cent income during the last three decades. The lack of skill, lack of investment in the infrastructure and the poor voice of the government at the Centre are some of the main reasons for such backwardness. In the present Dr. Manmohan Singh's

governments at the center, not a single fellow from the state could find a berth in the central cabinet. In the last reshuffling of ministry at the centre held in the month of February, a single fellow from Orissa was nominated to the ministry with a state rank ministry having redundant portfolio. As Prof. Mohanty rightly remarked, "the vast natural resources of Orissa are utilized for national economic development while the condition of stagnation continues in the state. The ruling strata of Orissa is a subservient partner of the ruling forces at the national level and has not proved its leadership by effective intervening in the existing process."<sup>36</sup> The number of industries including small, medium and big accounted 957 in the state in year 1971 had gone up only to 1456 by 1998<sup>37</sup>.

The industrial scenario of the state is found to be much worse as compared to many other states. Its per capita gross output and value added by manufacturing during 1998-99 were Rs. 3068 and Rs. 812 respectively as against the corresponding figures of Rs. 8072 and Rs. 1789 at the all India level (Govt. of Orissa 2002: ANX62). It is further found that the share of registered factories in the state declined from 1.71 per cent in 1948-49 to 1.30 per cent in 1992-93 notwithstanding an increase in its share of factory employment from 0.47 per cent to 2.08 per cent and that of fixed capital investment from 0.62 per cent to 3.60 over the period. Even though the states share of value added in the country has increased during the period 1960-61 to 1992-93, a share of only 1.98 per cent in 1992-93 is very negligible<sup>38</sup>. In the early 1990s the employment figures of industrial work force in the developed states like Gujarat, Maharashtra were 18 and 17 respectively for every 1000 persons, whereas in Orissa it was found to be only 5 as compared to 10 at the all India level.

The poor performance of Orissa's Industrial sector is mainly due to increasing sickness, external and internal factors such as lack of working capital, use of obsolete technology, poor entrepreneurial quality, lack of market, supply constraints of raw material and above all the state's political economy and narrow policy vision of the government responsible for industrial debacle of the state<sup>39</sup>. Even the exploitation of minerals continue to increase, but the condition of miners and the people of the region remain unabated. In such a paradoxical situation the slow and negligible expansion of industries, petty production, which does not generate surplus, the lack of employment generation, further aggravates the socio-economic condition of peasantry. Mr. Nabin Pattanaik's government policy to invite multinationals for industrializing Orissa economy without proper Planning has invited several protest movements in different parts of Orissa. The recent incident took place at Kalinga Nagar in which around twenty tribals lost their lives in the movement. Since neither the industry nor agricultural situation in Orissa is able to accommodate its surplus population by providing gainful employment, exodus out migration of peasants and agricultural labourers to far of places is a day-to-day phenomenon in Orissa.<sup>40</sup>

So it is no wonder to see that a large number of its population lives in absolute poverty (around 70 % in 1977 and now 47 % in the year 2000).<sup>41</sup> The per capita income of NSDP at current price stands at Rs. 9273 the lowest in the country. For Punjab it stands at Rs. 25048; for Maharashtra Rs. 23726, for Andhra Pradesh Rs. 16373 and for the country Rs. 16487.<sup>42</sup> Thus it proves the utter failure of the successive governments to eradicate poverty.

Given such a vicious circle of highly un-equal land control, widespread tenurial system, high wage rate and paucity of employment opportunities, parcelization of land followed by slow agricultural modernization, low investment in industrial infrastructure, one need not wonder about the existing state of agricultural stagnation and poverty.

Despite this sorry state of affairs, the achievements made by the modern credit institutions like the Banks or the Agricultural Credit Societies have hardly add any thing cognisance for appreciation beyond pious enunciation of their normative principles. There are around 2753 co-operatives function in the state with 413000 members and have advanced loan worth Rs. 51852 lakhs, and the average amount per member turned out to be Rs. 1264 only. Likewise the Commercial Banks have brought very limited impact on rural areas. The fact reveals that the population per Bank in Orissa stands at 16.6 (in thousands) with a credit deposit ratio of 45.6 against credit deposit ratio 61.6 for Andhra Pradesh, 107.1 for Maharashtra, and 62.3 for the country.<sup>43</sup> Thus the poor growth and poor performance of modern credit system leave the needy and poor peasantry at the mercy of the private money lenders . Nearly 90 per cent rural credit comes from money lenders,<sup>44</sup> Who have been popularly recognized in the rural areas as “ poor man’s Bank”. The interest rate normally varies between 25 per cent and 50 per cent and even sometimes higher depending upon the nature, time and terms of repayment. Most of the loans are meant for family consumption, to meet the expenses on rituals and ceremonies and very rarely for agriculture. Many of the defaulters have to submit themselves to the moneylenders as domestic servants. Further, this usurious capital helps in parcelization and alienation of land causing serious agricultural stagnation, poverty, malnutrition and hunger among the vast majority of rural population.

The slow growth of agriculture is further, severely affected by the unprecedented climatic conditions and vagaries of nature. The frequent occurrence of cyclones, floods and droughts completely washout the standing crops, leaving the peasantry at the borderline of survival. The incident of Super Cyclone is still in the fresh memory of the affected population of the state and let alone in the country and whole world. Thus it adversely affects to their purchasing power, expansion of home market and let alone national and international market.

In Orissa, the rich peasants hardly invest 2 per cent of their surplus in agriculture. Thus the rack renting usurious money lending and speculative trade have been their principal methods of appropriation of agricultural surplus, which they largely spent on conspicuous consumption and luxury livings.<sup>45</sup> The availability of cheap labour in abundance due to non availability of secondary employment resources, the acute and chronic indebtedness of peasantry and accumulation of quick profit through trade, further strengthen their counter productive roles.

### III

This description of the agrarian structure of Orissa clearly demonstrates the continued domination of feudal/semi-feudal relations of production.. The upper caste absentee landlords enjoy absolute privileges, generate economic and political influence. Utter failure of land reform measures; forever strengthen the hands of this class. The highly unequal distribution of means of production and land-man ratio, inadequate investment in agricultural infrastructure and industry, slow agricultural modernization followed by near stagnation of agriculture, has resulted in slow economic growth, abject poverty and starvation. The capitalist relation of production has not been able to penetrate the Orissan agrarian structure. In such a dwindling economy, any progressive patchwork like 20-point economic programme on rural development could neither bring any desired change nor could it liberate the large masses of work force from the feudal and semi-feudal exploitation. The so-called progress

both in agricultural and industrial front claimed by the successive governments during the last three decades has been nothing but ‘myth’ and “Eye Wash” and the reality yet remains to be properly appreciated. The only alternative to the present agrarian structure is some radical agrarian reform, which can be only possible by the awareness of exploited masses of rural poor. And if this does not happen in near future, the protest movement occurred in Kalinga Nagar will be repeated now and then in the state in a large scale. The rural peasantry will not tolerate the continuous ruthless exploitation. The naxalite cadre had its presence only in a few interior pockets of Southern Orissa. Now the cadre is spreading and has shown its tentacles in many parts of the Coastal and Western Orissa. Around thirteen districts are now infected with naxalite problem. Naxalite problem is not merely a Law and Order issue as emphasized by the State Government. The issue is much deep in socio-economic in nature and needs to be addressed with serious thinking with meticulous planning for overall development of the state to eradicate poverty.

**Table A: Area under Principal Crops in Orissa in (Area in 000 hectares)**

Sr. No.	Crops	Year				
		1970-71 *	1974-75 *	1978-79 *	1994-95 **	2000-01 *
01	Rice	4471	4432	4372	4455	4434
02	Jowar	17	24	33	29	13
03	Maize	72	97	131	46.79	54.37
04	Wheat	13	5	62	4.94	8.82
05	Ragi	156	191	277	80.95	83.98
06	Mung				230.53	147.44
07	Biri				160.67	109.10
08	Kulthe				120.79	76.00
09	Tur/Ahar	51	56	70	-	-
10	Ground hut	70	104	144	87.36	72.36
11	Seramum				71.96	50.50
12	Palato				9.66	8.25
13	Onion				47.81	26.77
14	Sugar Cane	30	44	46	-	-
15	Chillies				99.97	69.65
16	Turmeric				25.23	25.31
17	Jute	44	47	49	7.36	3.90
18	Tutalpulses				933.97	554.69
19	Toral vegetable				887.40	356.19

Source : (I)\* Statistical Outline of Orissa 1979, Bureau of Statistics and Economics, Govt. of Orissa, pp. 63,70

(II)\*\* Statistical Abstract of Orissa 2002, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Orissa, pp. 45,51

**Table B: Changes in Agricultural Productivity in Orissa (in average kgs per hectare)**

S. No.	Crop	Year					
		1970-71*	1974-75*	1978-79*	1994-95*	1997-1998**	2000-2001**
1	Rice	917	714	981	1426	1395	1041
2	Jowar	610	580	654	622	525	575
3	Maize	820	750	857	977	1222	1266
4	Wheat	1423	1573	1886	1350	996	1462
5	Rigi	901	672	706	590	375	554
6	Mung	-	-	-	1373	202	198
7	Biri	-	-	-	354	311	249
8	Kulthi	-	-	-	352	382	191
9	Tur/Arhar	630	490	53	-	-	-
10	Groundnut	1240	1370	1216	1123	1079	794
11	Sesamum	-	-	-	222	194	133
12	Putato	-	-	-	11168	9832	10407
13	Orion	-	-	-	7562	3674	8570
14	Sugarcane	5389	6250	6047	58987	61214	57444
15	Chillies	-	-	-	769	813	846
16	Turmeric	-	-	-	1964	2373	2395
17	Jute	750	710	863	6290	7440	9364

Source: (I) \* Statistical outline of Orissa 1979, Govt. of Orissa, pp. 79-81.

(II) \* Statistical Abstract of Orissa 2002, Govt. of Orissa, pp. 45-63.

**Table C: Percentage of Operational Holdings and Area Operated by Size of Operational Holdings**

Size class in hectare	Total Holdings 1970-71		Total Holdings ** 1990 – 91 census		Total Holdings ** 1995 – 96 census	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Below 1.00	43.30	11.94	53.58	19.72	54.08	20.68
1.00 – 1.99	32.89	20.89	26.29	27.00	27.89	29.59
2.00 – 3.99	13.28	21.13	15.06	29.55	13.72	28.21
4.00 – 9.99	9.09	27.83	4.68	19.09	3.93	16.80
10.00 -	1.44	12.52	0.39	4.64	0.38	4.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source : \* Statistical Outline of Orissa 1979, Bureau of Statistics and Economics, Govt. of Orissa, pp. 62.

\*\*State Economy in Figures, Orissa, 2002, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Orissa. p.11.



**Table D: Rural Daily Wages of Male/Female Labourers in Orissa**

Sr. No.	Year	Money Wages in Rs.		
		Male	Female	Children
1	1960-1961*	1.22	-	-
2	1967-1968	2.18	-	-
3	1971-1972	2.16	-	-
4	1977-1978	4.09	-	-
5	1996-1997**	29.02	23.13	21.47
6	1997-1998	31.07	25.33	22.69
7	1998-1999	33.66	27.69	25.08
8	1999-2000	37.33	30.82	27.53
9	2000-2001	40.44	33.09	29.97

**Source :** \* N.K. Panda, “Agricultural Growth and Rural Poverty in Orissa”, *Vision*, II (4), p.28.

\*\* Statistical Abstract of Orissa, 2002, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Orissa, p.137.

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### Notes and References

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3. Pathy, J.N. 1981 *Ibid.*
4. Mukherji, R.K. 1933, *Land Problems in India. Calcutta*, p.314.
5. Pathy, J.N. 1981, *op. cit.*
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8. *Ibid.*
9. The Orissa Government Enacted and Amended the following Acts :-
  - (1) Orissa Tenancy Act – 1936
  - (2) Orissa Estate Abolition Act – 1951
  - (3) Orissa Tenant Protection Act – 1948
  - (4) Orissa Land Reforms Act – 1965
  - (5) Orissa Debt Bondage Act – 1948
  - (6) Orissa Land Reforms Act – 1973

- According to Land Reforms Act of 1973, the ceiling was fixed at 10,15,30 and 45 acres per family of five members for various categories of land.
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  27. State Economy in Figures, 2002, Govt. of Orissa, p.12
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