

WHEAT'S END: FEEDING INDUSTRIALIZATION, FUELING LIFESTYLE
CHANGES, AND STARVING AGRICULTURE IN SOUTH KOREA

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WHEAT'S END: FEEDING INDUSTRIALIZATION, FUELING LIFESTYLE
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This dissertation explores the historical and social processes involved in the transformation of South Korea's agro-food system and dietary practices from 1945 to 2001. During industrialization (1960–80), the nation's staple diet was transformed from predominantly rice-based to rice- and wheat-based when its wheat production plummeted to virtual non-existence. This dissertation asks how Koreans came to embrace wheat as the second most important grain in their diet and what social and political forces brought about this radical transformation.

Situating these questions at the nexus of social transformations at a global and a national level, this study offers an answer in terms of multiple processes by which wheat consumption was increased to bring about dietary changes in Korea as well as the mechanisms by which the country was transformed from an agrarian to an industrial society. Furthermore, it explains changes in Korea's food production, processing, and consumption in the context of a global regime of food production and processing, and it shows how their transformation was intertwined with the production, reproduction, and transformation of the global regime. Engaging the literature on Korea's development and food regimes, this study makes the following four contributions. First, it shows how wheat played a vital role in Korea's modernization. Second, it argues that Korea's modernization can be better understood only within the context of the global food regime. Third, it complements the literature

on the food regime by demonstrating not only how the global regime shaped Korea's production and consumption but also how it was constituted by Korea's transformation. Finally, this study makes an extensive analysis of consumption as a critical component of the second food regime.

The significance of this dissertation goes beyond Korea. The reorganization of Korea's agro-food system and dietary changes is representative of a wider global phenomenon, in terms of not only food production under the global regime but also the diet and lifestyle changes in the Global South. The dissertation offers a close scrutiny of Korea as a case study that illustrates the local/global processes at work in the post-World War II world.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Chong Amy Yu (Chong-Ae) graduated with a MS degree from the Department of Development Sociology at Cornell University and a BS from the University of Connecticut, Storrs. Prior to her graduate program, Chong-Ae worked in international development and conflict resolution programs for 20 years in over 20 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Before returning to academia, Chong-Ae worked as the Coordinator for The Carter Center's North Korea Food Security Project, and as the Agricultural Coordinator for the U.S. Private Voluntary Organizations Consortium to manage the first U.S.–DPRK (North Korea) bilateral food assistance program from 1998 to 2001. In the 1990s, she helped establish the International Affairs Program focused on DPRK for the American Friends Service Committee, and she worked on projects involving the issues of DPRK nuclear non-proliferation as a fellow of, and consultant to, the Rockefeller Foundation and the W. Alton Jones Foundation.

Over the years Chong-Ae worked with various non-governmental organizations either as staff or as a board member, focusing on issues of peace and justice, poverty eradication, and humanitarian relief work. Her dedication to a just world begun at a relatively young age when she relocated to the U.S. and found herself a racial minority. In 1980, Chong-Ae became involved in activities in support of the Korean democracy movement and the U.S. peace movement. She realized that our world was intricately connected, yet how we lived varied and our experiences were uneven. After working on the ground for 20 years, Chong-Ae returned to Cornell to reflect on her years of field experience and the questions stemming from it, and to decipher the world that was in the vortex of a historical epoch.

This dissertation project is a continuation of her reflection and understanding of her time, and a way forward in a different phase of life; most of all, however, it is a

testimony to the resilience of a person who will continue to shout out, “But the Emperor has no clothes!”

To my mothers and sister, and to the women who endured the global food regime

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Last but not least, I am grateful to my family: my spouse, Jae-Jung Suh, and our son, Joon; my sister, Chongpun; my mother, Manye Lee; and my mother-in-law, Chonghee Lim. We have lost both mothers now, but mothers Lee and Lim live through our lives. They have stood by me through my ups and downs over the mountains of life of being a graduate student for so long. In particular I want to thank JJ for being who he is as a partner and as a wonderful human being. JJ’s patience and

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

The name change of the Ministry of Agriculture

1948–1973: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

1973–1986: the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

1987–1996: the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

1996–2008: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

2008–2013: the Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries

2013–Present: the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

The name change of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

1948–1955: the Ministry of Social Affairs, and Ministry of Health

1955–1994: the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

1994–2008: the Ministry of Health and Welfare

2008–2010: the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Family Affairs

2010–Present: the Ministry of Health and Welfare

Abbreviation/Acronyms (with a brief reference where needed)

Agriculture Statistics YBK: Statistical Yearbook of the Ministry of Agriculture and
Forestry

ANP: Applied Nutrition Program (*ũngyongyõngyang saõp*)

BOK: the Bank of Korea (formerly Bank of Chosun; the central bank of Korea)

BOK/ECONOMIC STATISTICS YBK: Economic Statistics Yearbook (prior to 1960,
Annual Economic Review; Annual economic statistics published by the BOK)

CRİK: Civil Relief in Korea (U.S. share 92 percent)

ECA: Economic Cooperation Administration (United States; Foreign Assistance Act
of 1948)

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FAOSTAT: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, database for statistical information <<http://faostat3.fao.org/home/E>>

FLC: Foreign Liquidation Committee of Surplus Materials

FOA: Foreign Operations Administration (U.S.)

FYEP: Five-Year Economic Plans

GARIOA: Government Appropriations for Relief in Occupied Areas (USAMGIK aid arm)

GATT: General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

GBK: GREENBOOK; USAID dataset

HCU: Campaign to Promote Barley and Wheat Consumption (*Honbunsik Changnyŏ Undong*)

ICA: International Cooperation Agency (later MSA, then USAID in 1961)

KNHNES: Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

KNSO: Korean National Statistics Office.

KOFMIA: Korea Flour Mills Industrial Association

KOSIS: Korean Statistical Information Service is statistical database portal of the National Statistics Office.

KOSTAT: A NSO website which provides statistical information.

KPL: Korean Peasants League

KPR: Korean People's Republic

MAF: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

MSA: Mutual Security Agency (U.S.)

MT: Metric ton(s)

NACF: National Agricultural Cooperative Federation

NAK: National Archives of Korea

NCM: New Community Movement (*Saemaül Undong*)

NFPU: National Federation of Peasant Unions

NLM: National Life Movement

NRM: National Reconstruction Movement (*Kukka chaekõn põmkungmin undong*)

OECD: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

PSD Online: United States Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service's
Production, Supply and Distribution Online

PL 480: Public Law 480, United States food aid program

PL 655: Public Law 655, Mutual Security Act (U.S.)

RDA: Rural Development Administration

SEC: Supplies Economic Cooperation

SUN: Supplies, United Nations

SKO: South Korean Organization

UNCACK: United Nations Civil Assistance Command in Korea

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UNKRA: United Nations Korean Relief Agency

USAID: United States Agency for International Development

USAMGIK: United States Army Military Government in Korea (GARIOA)

USDA: United States Department of Agriculture

USDA-FAS: United States Department of Agriculture, Foreign Agricultural Service

USOM/K: United States Operations Mission to Korea

WTO: World Trade Organization

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“The mere smell of cooking can evoke a whole civilization . . . However, not all the beauty of the world nor all the salt of the earth was contained in the civilizations.”

—Fernand Braudel (1992)¹

The need for nourishment is universal. Food choices are not. Different societies and groups make different choices about how and what to eat. While their choices may be limited by what is available, those choices are not determined by availability alone. People do not eat everything that is edible and available to them. In some cases, they want a type of food that is not readily available. Nor are they completely free to choose, for they have to make their decisions based on circumstances not entirely of their own making. People are more likely to eat what their family or friends do than what foreigners eat, and their choices are more likely a result of practices inherited from previous generations than an impromptu decision of the day. Food choices are not so much determined by biological needs or physical availability as they are shaped by social and historical processes.

How, then, do people make their food choices? What are the social and historical processes that shape their choices? And, in turn, what do their choices tell us about their society and history? This dissertation seeks to shed light on these questions by analyzing the processes by which Koreans have chosen wheat as the most important grain next to rice. South Korea (Republic of Korea; Korea hereafter) offers

¹ Fernand Braudel (1992), *Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Century: The Structures of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 64.

a fascinating story of food choices.² Korea is a rice-eating nation. Wheat, by contrast, was traditionally a minor crop prior to 1945 that Koreans would eat only as an insignificant supplement to rice, or as a gluten in certain foods. Although Koreans consumed very little wheat in their traditional diet, they now eat it as a second staple grain. Younger generations prefer bread and noodles to rice. The sudden rise of wheat in Korea offers a rare window through which to examine the processes by which people's food choices are affected by larger social forces—processes which are not so readily observable in the routine repetition of food consumption practices.

More specifically, this dissertation asks how Koreans came to embrace wheat as the second most important grain in their diet over the past sixty years and what social and political forces brought about this radical transformation to the national diet. The inquiry starts with an examination of Koreans' lunch boxes and dinner tables, and turns its analytical focus to larger forces that shape individuals' lives. Was it a coincidence, a historical accident, that the diet change came about simultaneously with Korea's transformation from a predominantly agrarian society to an industrial one? Or was there a more compelling connection between the two? Did the state—not only the powerful developmental state that directed and managed Korea's economic development during the period but also the omnipresent state that penetrated deep into society to mobilize it for the espoused purpose of economic growth—have any role in this transformation? What does wheat's growth tell us about the nature of the state and economic growth?

² I use three terminologies regarding Korea in this dissertation: (1) Korean: when referring to people, both in North and South Korea; (2) Korea: when referring to Korea prior to the division of the Korean peninsula in 1945; and (3) South Korea or Korea: when referring to South Korea after 1945. This definition and differentiation is to acknowledge the cultural and political situation of Korea, and the Korean people whose dietary paths have been radically altered since the division in 1945. North Korea has adopted maize as their replacement crop to lower the demands of rice consumption.

These questions become more perplexing when wheat consumption in Korea is juxtaposed with production. Wheat consumption has skyrocketed over the past sixty years, but production plummeted over the same period. The opposite movements of supply and demand defy conventional market economics and reveal the limits of a domestic analysis. While it is Koreans who have consumed wheat in ever-growing quantities, they have made their choice within a context that constrains choices. Koreans' wheat consumption in the absence of significant domestic production prompts the immediate question of where this wheat comes from, and a more fundamental question of whether and, if so, how the outside supply may be implicated in the very diet transformation itself? My inquiry into Koreans' food choices thus far focuses, in part, on the world food regime within which Korea's production and consumption are embedded.

Drawing on the literature on the sociology of food in general and the food regime in particular, this study probes how Korea was incorporated into the global capitalist system through food aid provided by the United States (U.S.). Situating Korea in the global agro-food system under the 'second food regime' (Friedmann and McMichael 1989), it analyzes the ways in which wheat served as a gluten that tied American producers and Korean consumers together in a transnational food chain that first addressed, and later perpetuated, both the former's overproduction and the latter's undersupply. With its focus on Korea, this study traces the processes by which wheat has nourished a global order that relies on industrial agriculture in the Global North and stimulates capitalist industrialization in the Global South.

This dissertation engages the second food regime literature, and examines the hierarchical relationship between Korea and the global food regime from the bottom up. Although Korea might have occupied a low rung of the global power hierarchy in the 1950s, it was not necessarily a passive, much less inactive, receiver of food aid.

This study highlights the importance of understanding the Korean state as an active agent that took advantage of the wheat provided by the U.S. to implement a state-led development strategy during industrialization, as well as to initiate changes in the nation's food choices. It seeks to investigate the ways in which wheat served as a source of fuel for the state to drive Korea's industrial transformation and mobilize the masses towards that goal. Through a focus on wheat, the study connects the literatures on the authoritarian developmental states and the sociology of food, and recalls the active roles played by the Korean state to produce and reproduce the second food regime.³

1. The Puzzle

This study begins with the following questions: Why has there been a steady, continuous rise in wheat consumption in the absence of significant production? Why has the consumption of wheat, not rice or traditional minor grains, increased? Why and how did this change come about in roughly three decades?

The Korean staple diet has traditionally been based on rice—comprising 60% of *all crops*—supplemented by minor crops such as barley and millet (Kuark 1963; Magner 2000; Seth 2006). However, it took Korea less than three decades in the postwar era to significantly change the staple diet. Wheat had been very limited in production and consumption (Magner 2000), and was an unfamiliar crop to the majority of the population throughout Korean history. Figure 1 reflects this curious situation of steadily rising wheat consumption and the simultaneous disappearance of wheat production in postwar Korea.

³ The food regime analysis is discussed later, in the section “Food Regime, Developmental State, and Korea.”

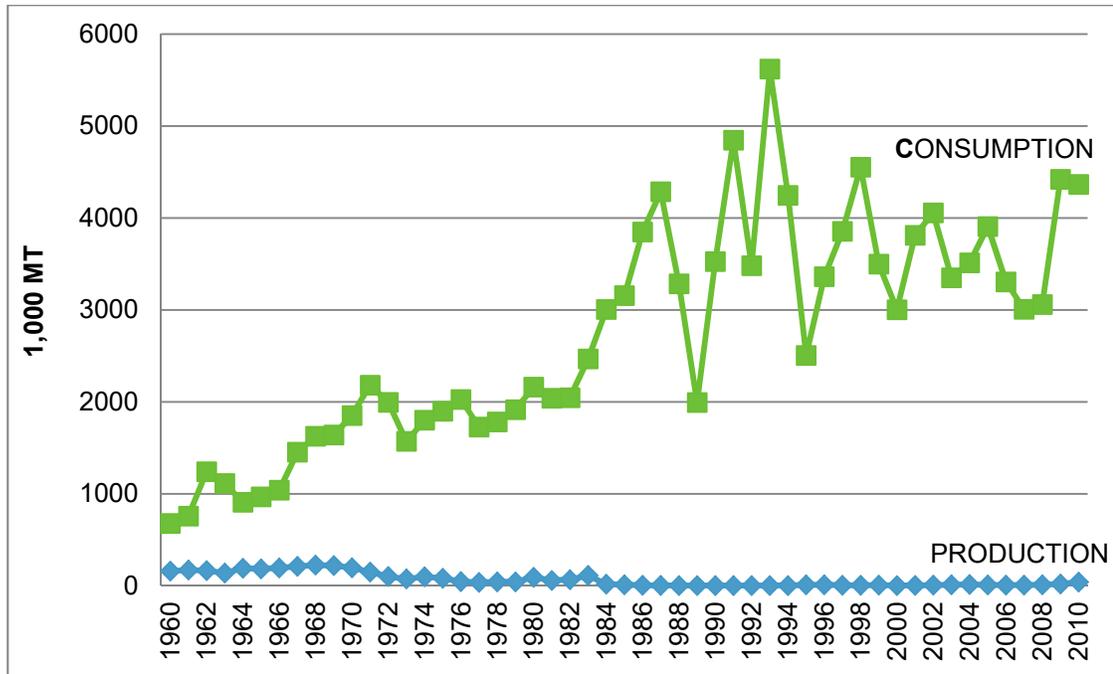


Figure 1. Wheat production and consumption in South Korea, 1960–2010.

Note: Trade year, e.g., 1960 = 1960/1961.

Source: USDA-Foreign Agricultural Service PSD Online, July 27, 2015.

Given that it usually takes a society many decades to adapt to a new form of diet, still, the astounding pace of transformation of the staple diet in Korea is remarkable. The conventional economic argument contends that when demand rises, the market will respond with increased supply. According to the market logic, an impoverished agricultural country, such as Korea in the 1960s and 1970s, might have responded to the rising consumption demand with increasing production. Instead, while wheat consumption skyrocketed, production increased incrementally to reach its peak at 224,000 MT in 1968 (production year 1968/69)—about 13 percent of the total supply of wheat (PSD Online July 2015).⁴ It then faltered before plummeting to a

⁴ The beginning year for the wheat production/consumption trend used in this research is 1960 for the most part. This for two reasons: one is the availability of reliable data, and the other is that the wheat consumption trend prior to 1960 reflects an emergency and food deficit situation connected to

negligible 0.3% of the total supply by 1986 (ibid.), the year Korea began negotiating with the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades (GATT) for full agricultural liberalization (OECD 1999; Park, Kim, and Kim 1999; Ahn and Lee 2011).

The increase in wheat consumption in the face of declining domestic supply can be explained once the scope of inquiry is broadened to include outside forces. The U.S. began providing wheat initially as postwar relief aid, then as PL 480 food aid in the 1950s (BOK 1958; USAID GBK 2013/CONG-R-0105), a time when Koreans were not familiar with the grain but had few alternative sources of nutrition (Lee, H-c 1999). The massive infusion of cheap American wheat continued into the 1970s, when Koreans were pulling themselves out of poverty, and when they were becoming used to consuming it. This raises a new set of questions. Why did the U.S. government choose to provide assistance to Korea at the time? Why did assistance take the form of food, particularly wheat? What happened to Koreans' wheat consumption after the U.S. government food aid program was terminated? How have global forces of wheat production—and global capitalism—reshaped Koreans' food choices and agro-food system, as well as their economy and society? This macro-analytical aspect of the study involves the issues of the transition from developmentalism to globalization in Korea, and ultimately connects the dots in the findings. In this context, findings from one question assist in the interpretation and contextualization of another.

The above macro-level questions raise more issues to be examined. American wheat did not arrive in Korea as a response to demand. It came, in abundance, when most Koreans did not know what to do with it or how to eat it. The abundance of wheat did not immediately or automatically lead to its consumption. Demand had to

decolonization (1945–49), the Korean War (1950–53), and the period of reconstruction (1954–59), which might distort a normal rate of change in consumption trends.

be created. What were the processes by which Koreans were taught to eat it, chose to eat it, and then started to enjoy eating it? Was there an agent that mediated between American supply and Korean consumption? Was there a local agent that linked Koreans' food choices to the global food regime and Korea's economy to the global capitalist order? These questions focus the inquiry on Korea and the Korean state, which played the roles of the planner, financier, and executor of economic development from the 1960s to the 1980s. The developmental state was a strong and overbearing one that penetrated many facets of the private space, including lunch boxes and dinner tables. Hence this study focuses on the roles played by the state in transforming not only the diet and agro-food system in Korea but also its relationship with the global food regime.

Finally, how sticky has the transformation been? Koreans had grown used to eating free American wheat, but have they continued to choose to eat wheat even when they have had to pay the market price for it? What does it mean for Koreans to eat wheat products such as noodles and bread in contemporary society? What are the consequences of the diet transition has brought about for society and cultural practices? How enduring is the new relationship likely to be between Korea and the global food regime? Is there another food and diet transformation underway? What are the sources, if any, of yet another dietary transition? These comprise the last set of questions raised in this dissertation.

My inquiry uses a combination of hermeneutics and dialectical analysis of primary and secondary historical material, buttressed by statistical analysis from annual nutritional surveys, to assess the dynamics of the transition process. Understanding the processes internal and external to Korea from different angles will help gauge what the transition means for the population, and to identify possible pattern of freedom and constraint among constituting elements, again inside and

outside the national boundary. Analysis of the cohort statistics for staple food consumption, of food preferences to see if there is or has been any significance in food consumption practices, and of health risks that may arise as a result of this transformation help complete the story told in this thesis.

The purpose of this study, in short, is to trace the modern trajectory of wheat production and consumption in Korea as a way to understand the processes by which the social relations of food production and consumption in Korea have been transformed hand-in-hand with the global food regime. In doing so, the aim is to contribute to the understanding of the political economy of development and globalization, and to demonstrate how food and agriculture is an integral part of social, economic, cultural and political life of human society that is shaped by historical contingencies and occurs in bounded space (nation-state or a particular site). The role of U.S. food aid in the reorganization of the agro-food system, with a particular focus on the sociology of food—transformation in production, consumption, diet and health implications—in Korea will be explored. Although the period under examination extends into a third food regime, the locus of the study lodges in the second food regime period.

2. Food Regime, Developmental State, and Korea

Sidney Mintz explores the history of capitalism by tracing it through a single commodity, sugar. In *Sweetness and Power* (1985), Mintz lays out not only the complex way in which sugar production was connected to the expansion of capitalism but also the connection between consumption and socio-cultural stratification of European society. Mintz examines the development of sugar production and consumption, as well as why and how patterns of consumption changed, and in doing so he explains “what sugar reveals about the wider world, entailing as it does a lengthy history of changing relationships among peoples, societies, and substances” (xxiv-

xxv). Inspired by his approach, this study traces wheat in order to understand the international political economy of the transformation of Korea and the global food regime.

More specifically, this study is shaped by two analytical approaches to understanding the development of global capitalism and its relation to food production and consumption. One is the sociological food regime analysis pioneered by Harriet Friedmann and Philip McMichael (1989) that lends a framework to contextualize the agro-food policy decisions by the Korean state in a global political economy of food. The other is the concept of the authoritarian developmental state that provides a way of thinking about the character and role of the state in Korea and its food policies (Gregor 1979; Lee, B-c 2006). The state privileged industrialization and economic growth over social and political development, while actively invoking Cold War ideology to justify its choices. But neither is sufficient to answer the questions articulated in the previous section, and both need to be modified in important ways to build a theoretical framework that can explain the transformation of Korea and the global food regime. Below, these two bodies of work are discussed to develop the analytical framework of the dissertation in the context of existing literature on food, agriculture, and society.

2.1. Food Regime Analysis

The sociological food regime analysis (hereafter refer to as the ‘food regime’), along with the commodity systems approach, is also sometimes labeled agri-food theory, for its research agenda reflects the beyond-the-farm-gate frameworks (McMichael 1994; Buttel 1996). It makes a not-so-subtle departure from the more farm-oriented agrarian political economy frameworks that commanded attention in the 1980s (Buttel 2001). It

helps illuminate the ‘Mann-Dickinson thesis’⁵ that the food system is sociologically significant, and has had an unmistakable impact on the study of food and agriculture. The original formulation of the food regime analysis articulated by Friedmann and McMichael (1989) was influenced by regulation theory in the work of Aglietta (1979), and Wallerstein’s world-systems analysis (1983),⁶ and is viewed as the foundational piece in the work of the food regime approach.

“A food regime” is a historical concept that helps analyze the role that food and agriculture played in the changing political economy of global capitalism from 1870 to the present (Friedmann and McMichael 1989), and it sees social change as the outcome of relations initially between capital and states, and then recently between social movements, capital, and states (Magnan 2012).⁷ There are three distinct food regimes from the late 19th century to present with multi-year transition period between each one: the first food regime extends from 1870 to 1914, the second food regime from 1945 to 1973, and the current third—possibly an emergent—food regime from the late 1980s to present. According to Friedmann and McMichael (1989), the establishment of a world market in wheat in the late 19th century enabled a global system of food provisioning that was radically different from the past; now an entire nation of people were dependent on distant supplies of food for survival, mediated by state and capital. This new development facilitated the emergence of the first food

⁵ Mann and Dickinson (1978) have argued that the persistence of family farms in advanced capitalist countries is attributed to the logic and nature of capitalism rather than to any social factor (e.g., family labor) or application of technology. According to Buttel and Newby (1980), the Mann and Dickinson thesis as it was labeled became a critical approach to rural sociology in the 1980s that helped to focus on the role of agriculture in advanced capitalist societies, and to study family farms in transition.

⁶ Henry Bernstein’s (2016) article, “Agrarian Political Economy and Modern World Capitalism,” page 612, footnote 2, details the works that influenced the formulation of the sociological food regime analysis of Harriet Friedmann and Philip McMichael’s 1989 work.

⁷ Social movements in the food regime analysis do not explicitly appear as an active participant in the first two food regimes; it appears in the third food regime by both Friedmann and McMichael in their individual work.

regime. This approach links the international relations of food production and consumption to forms of capitalist accumulation under the capital–state nexus. Raising such questions as where and how food is produced and who consumes what type of food, the food regime theory is ultimately concerned with the sociopolitical impacts of international relations of food production and consumption on nations and societies. “The food regime concept,” argues McMichael (2009a:281), “is not about food per se, but about the relations within which food is produced, and through which capitalism is produced and reproduced.”

Friedmann and McMichael (1989), in their original formulation of the food regime analysis, identified two food regimes: the first food regime (1870–1914)⁸ under British hegemony,⁹ and the second food regime (1945–73)¹⁰ under U.S. hegemony.¹¹ Unfortunately, this conception of the first food regime leaves out the dynamics of similar processes elsewhere in the world where the British-controlled first food regime had not reached, such as Japan-controlled area of East Asia in the first half of the 20th century (this topic is discussed later in this section). The first and second food regimes, each constituted by a specific set of institutions, rules, and practices for regulating food and agriculture, represent a relatively stable period of capital accumulation. Nevertheless, food regimes contain internal contradictions and resulting

⁸ Philip McMichael (2009:141) modified the first food regime date to extend from the 1870s to the 1930s.

⁹ Friedmann later termed the first food regime “the settler-colonial food regime” (Friedmann 2004) and “the colonial-diasporic food regime” (Friedmann 2005), while McMichael (2013) termed it “the British-centered imperial food regime.”

¹⁰ While some food regime scholars periodize the second food regime as 1945–73, Harriet Friedmann redefined the starting of the second food regime in 1947 when the defeat of the World Food Board occurred. Friedmann (2005) argues that the defeat of the World Food Board represented a significant shift under U.S. hegemony that set a new structure for the second food regime.

¹¹ Friedmann later termed the second food regime “the surplus regime, 1947–72” (Friedmann 1993) and “the mercantile-industrial food regime” (Friedmann 2004), and McMichael (2013) termed it the “U.S.-centered intensive food regime.”

tensions, which, during periods of systemic crisis, lead to breakdown of a regime. By the early 20th century, British hegemony was challenged by other leading capitalist states, and World War I marked the beginning of the crisis and transformation of the global capitalist system, a period that lasted until 1945 (Anheier et al. 2012).

Friedmann and McMichael (1989) argue that the first food regime was characterized by an extensive accumulation—cultivating more land and exploiting more labor to increase the global food output—that was achieved in settler states, and there were two main complexes: tropical food products and cereals. Europe’s colonies supplied cheap tropical products such as sugar, tobacco, coffee, tea, vegetable oils, and fruits, and the white settler states and societies provisioned cheap wheat (Friedmann 2005). This global agro-food system enabled Europe to continue with industrialization, and, in turn, it created a class of farmers who dependent on export markets, and who were becoming in the process a politically powerful group in the U.S. (ibid.). The first food regime collapsed in the Great Depression, and was followed by an ecological backlash from rampant soil mining in the case of the American Midwest in the 1930s (ibid.). With the crisis of the first food regime, U.S. government began supporting American exporters and farmers with various forms of subsidies (Rausser 1992). Friedmann (2005) observes that this U.S. domestic farm policy, which began during the Depression, continued into the postwar period and shaped the next food regime after the transition period between the two food regimes.

In the second food regime, capital accumulation shifted toward the intensification of farming and the expansion of world trade—an intensive accumulation that was facilitated by the provision of U.S. food aid and the incorporation of newly independent states in Asia and Africa. The U.S.-centered second food regime was characterized by a transition from the first food regime’s extensive farming to capital-intensive agriculture supported by state subsidies. In turn,

such subsidies gave rise to the industrial agriculture in the U.S. and subsequently spread internationally to spur the global Green Revolution, increasing production for decades but now resulting in high externalities such as ecological destruction, depletion of cultural and ecological knowledge, health risks, and unequal access and distribution, to list just a few. The second food regime had three complexes: wheat, livestock/feed, and durable foods. Under this program wheat in particular flowed to the Global South (Third World) at cheap prices to keep urban wages and food prices low, in turn, building agricultural markets for the future. As demonstrated in this dissertation, the effect of the U.S. food aid programs has not only crippled agriculture in a Third World country—in this case, Korea—but also changed people’s diets. This was the wheat complex of the second food regime (Friedmann 1982). The livestock/feed complex contributed to the industrial animal-raising system developed in the U.S. This complex was connected to the wheat complex through subsidized grains used as animal feeds. U.S. food aid also spread via this system into Korea and throughout much of the Global South. Lastly, durable foods are foods that have been processed and frozen or packaged in some way to last for a long period of time. Through the industrial processing of agricultural products, it is linked to the livestock/feed complex, particularly through corn and soybeans. Friedmann (1991) argues that this food processing industry and the fast-food industry that relied on durable inputs began to spread from the U.S. to the rest of the world, and the consumption of processed foods began to rise.

In the early 1970s, however, the crisis of the second food regime was triggered by the oil, food, and currency shocks,¹² that not only led to the restructuring of the

¹² There were two oil crises, and the currency shock in the 1970s. First oil shock (1973-74) was in response to American military aid to Israel during the Yom Kippur War. The Arab members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries imposed an embargo against the U.S. (U.S. Dept. of State/Office of Historian 2016). Second oil shock was in 1979 triggered by the Iranian Revolution that

global grain trade but eventually led to a structural change in the world economy by ushering in high inflation and economic recession (Anheier et al. 2012). Under these conditions, many countries in the Global South were forced to restructure their agricultural sectors under the auspices of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund; the Global North also struggled, but by the mid-1980s, the agro-exporting countries began calling for agricultural trade liberalization, soon joined by agribusinesses and transnational corporations (ibid). The crisis of the second food regime helped steer agricultural governance away from the rules and regulations of public institutions towards deregulated free trade.¹³ Although free trade and deregulation have been expanding and redefining the global agro-food sector, they have failed to bring stability to global food relations. Food regime scholars are engaged in a debate about whether a third regime is emerging and what its characteristics and effects might be (Friedmann 2005). For example, McMichael (2009c)¹⁴ argues that we have in the third food regime since the late 1980s. Friedmann (2005) posits that a third food regime is still emerging, which she has termed as the ‘corporate-environmental food regime,’ a regime that is defined by green capitalism as

interrupted the Middle East oil flow; The currency shock is also colloquially as the “Nixon shock,” which marked the beginning of the end for the Bretton Woods system of fixed exchange rates (Dept of State/Office of the Historian 2016); The food crisis was partly triggered by increase in global food demand in the context of crude oil shocks that affected production (FAO 2009). On one hand, there was a rapid increase in global demand for grains and oilseeds that pushed up in prices (USDA/Amber Waves, March 2009). On the other hand, there was a colossal grain deal between the U.S. and the former USSR that absorbed the world grain surplus in 1972. Global wheat exports increased nearly 29 percent between 1971 and 1972 (ibid).

¹³ The 1995 Agreement on Agriculture, reached under the World Trade Organization, the successor of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

¹⁴ There is ongoing debate on the characteristics of a third food regime. Friedmann (2005) advances the argument of an emerging corporate-environmental food regime, whereas McMichael articulates a corporate food regime since the late 1980s. For an excellent summarization of the difference between the two ideas, see Henry Bernstein’s “Food Regimes and Food Regime Analysis: A Selective Survey” (April 2015), a paper presented at the conference “Land grabbing, conflict and agrarian-environmental transformations: perspectives from East and Southeast Asia,” June 5–6, 2015, at Chiang Mai University, Thailand. In 2009, the journal *Agriculture and Human Values* devoted a special issue (vol. 26, no. 4) to the food regime debate.

a response to pressures from social movements. Friedmann's third food regime represents a 'convergence of environmental politics' and corporate repositioning aimed at 'increasingly transnational classes of rich and poor consumers' (ibid.); at the same time, corporate agribusiness is garnering more power toward supply chain regulation while national states are embroiled in negotiations in international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) without making headway. On the other hand, Friedmann argues that, as a result of this impasse international organizations are "being outflanked by private transformations of agri-food supply chains in response to social movements of consumers, environmentalists, and others" (2005: 253). McMichael, on the other hand, contends that a third food regime, which he defines as a 'corporate food regime,' has been consolidated since the late 1980s (2005, 2009c), and it is characterized by the rules set by the WTO, controlled by transnational agribusiness, driven by finance capital, and organized around supplying vertically integrated international supermarket chains within the period of neoliberal globalization (McMichael 2009c, 2013). Political ecology has shifted to privileging capital over state, and rules imposed by the market supplanting existing ones; the market liberalization and privatization of public goods and services are corporate food regime's salient points (2005).

Friedmann and McMichael, who have developed the food regime analysis, problematize linear representations of agricultural modernizations as they accentuate the central role of food and agriculture in the un-linear unfolding of capitalist development (1989). The analysis historicizes global and national agro-food systems as a series of crises, transformations, and transitions in the global economy, and it highlights the hegemonic role of a few countries in shaping the global agro-food system. As a component of the international political economy, the first two food regimes embodied two opposing movements: the first food regime was the

culmination of the colonial organization of pre-capitalist regions and the rise of the nation-state system; the second food regime in the postwar economy was the completion of the state system through decolonization and its simultaneous weakening through the transnational restructuring of agricultural sectors by agro-food capital (ibid. 95). The important feature of a third food regime—be it Friedmann’s tentative assessment of an emergent corporate-environmental food regime or McMichael’s corporate food regime—is the neoliberalization of the global food system that has made a qualitative shift to a new set of agro-food relations where transnational capital dominates states, and social and ecological dislocations occur across marginal communities globally. These, in turn, have generated a global counter-movements of popular resistance (Magnan 2012).

Some criticize food regimes approach. One concern has been the reliance on theories that were developed for analyzing manufacturing industries, and thus the problem of the periodization of food regimes (Goodman and Watts 1994; Goodman 1997). This criticism was raised early on in the development of the food regime theory. Another criticism came from a different direction. Farshad Araghi (2003) suggested that the food regime theory should be incorporated in ‘global value relations’ to investigate the history of global capitalism. Araghi’s historical framing of ‘global value relations’ proposes a different periodization than the one that food regime analysis suggests.¹⁵ Further, Friedmann and McMichael’s analysis understates the agency of the state because it is focused on identifying a particular regime of hegemony in the global food system transformations. Most of the recent debate on food regimes has been encapsulated by Henry Bernstein, and published in *The Journal*

¹⁵ For a detailed argument, see Farshad Araghi, 2009, “The Invisible Hand and the Visible Foot: Peasants, Dispossession and Globalization,” pp. 111–47 in *Peasants and Globalization, Political Economy, Rural Transformation and the Agrarian Question*, edited by A. H. Akram-Lodhi and C. Kay (London: Routledge).

of *Peasant Studies* as ‘Bernstein-McMichael-Friedmann dialogue on food regimes’ in 2016.¹⁶ The central question of the debate involves the role of food and agriculture in current capitalist dynamics today. While McMichael argues that the main contradictions of capitalism today to stem from agriculture, and that a way out of the current crisis will be found by farmers/peasants, Bernstein considers agriculture to be one of many sectors of capital that contribute to accumulation and sees farmers/peasants a source of surplus labor (Friedmann 2016). Friedmann posits that the food regime analysis needs to be located within a wider set of analyses of agrarian and capitalist transitions in order to be useful, and that the conceptions of agriculture and farming systems needs to be reconfigured in a changing world (ibid.).

While food regime analyses provides a useful analytical perspective for understanding the transformations of the Korean agro-food system and its connection to the global agro-food system, it needs some important modifications. First, the role of food and agriculture in the transformation of Korea over the last 100 years is different from that argued in food regime analysis. Although Friedmann and McMichael’s first food regime articulates an *international* political economy to connect the two poles of Europe and the ‘settler’ nations under British hegemony with wheat as the commodity grain, capitalist development is not unilinear,¹⁷ as the concept of “uneven and combined development” implies.¹⁸ In Northeast Asia, a doppelganger hegemony was at work: the Japanese imperium in lateral expansion. It had colonial Korea incorporated into a Japan-centered regional *yen*-bloc economy as a critical

¹⁶ This round of debate was initially presented at the international conference in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in April 2015.

¹⁷ Harriet Friedmann’s recent argument on the emergent corporate-environmental reflects a much more multilayered perspective on the potential for contingent outcome in this respect.

¹⁸ The concept originated from Leon Trotsky’s *History of the Russian Revolution* (New York: Pathfinder, 1932).

component that provided cheap food to fuel Japanese industrialization (Patrick and Meissner 1976; Ho 1984; Young 1998). Japan's industrialization reached stagnation in the 1920s and pursued free-trade policies. Japan initiated what is known as an early version of 'export-led development' by enacting the Export Association Law of 1925 to stimulate industrial reorganization and provide state subsidies to exporters (Cumings 2005).¹⁹ However, with the Great Depression the Japanese economy experienced a deep downturn, provoking spiraling prices, unemployment, falling exports, and social unrest. By 1930 Japan began to delink itself from the international system; it instead exercised a lateral imperialism that generated high industrial growth for Japan by exploiting its colonies, Korea and Taiwan (Cumings 1984). During this period a Japan-centered regional economy was created, and with it, a division of labor and set of responsibilities that had important consequences for postwar development in East Asia (Cumings 2005). In the vertical regional food regime, Korean rice was shipped to Japan while Manchurian millet was imported to feed Koreans (Song, K-j 2002a; Lim, C-s 2008), and Taiwanese sugar was shipped to Japan (Lee, E-h 2011). In terms of the industrial wage structure, for the same work, wages were set for Japanese settlers in Korea were set at the highest level, then Taiwanese workers in Taiwan, and Korean workers got the lowest. As Cumings (2016: 120) posits, "Rarely has the typically tripartite segmentation of global capitalism into core, middling, and peripheral economies been so clear." Understanding Korea's agro-food system in the last century requires situating it in the regional context, and the region in the global context at large.

Second, while Friedmann and McMichael argue that wheat was central to the emergence of the first food regime, it played only a negligible role in Northeast

¹⁹ Bruce Cumings (2005) cites both Chalmers Johnson and William Miles Fletcher III as dating the origins of Japan's national industrial strategy and administrative guidance from the mid-to-late 1920s.

Asia's—as well as in many other regions'—regional food regime. That role for Northeast Asia was instead assumed by rice in the region. It was only after the end of the Second World War that wheat became a staple food in the region and played a key role in transforming Korea's food and agro-system. Therefore, it is their argument about the second food regime that is more relevant to Korea. McMichael (2009a:285) argues that the second food regime utilized food aid as a strategic resource in an attempt to win the Cold War. Food aid helped secure the recipient's loyalty against communism while aiding in opening up markets to U.S. products. Food aid also helped keep food costs low, which in turn lowered labor costs in economically and politically strategic nations, while helping to pacify urban labor forces in the developed North. Wheat was thus a critical instrument with which to create and maintain the global capitalist order.

While most of McMichael's argument about the second food regime is useful for understanding the global context within which Korea's transformation has occurred, it lacks an analysis of the local itself. Wheat might have provided the fuel that drove the global food regime; however, the analysis omits the driver from its picture. The second food regime is seen from the perspective of the hegemonic state standing at the top of the global regime, but its argument is not supported with an analysis of the process of Korea's transformation at the bottom of the regime. This study complements the food regime analysis by analyzing the global regime from the vantage point of a non-hegemonic (colonial) state, not a settler nor a European state.

2.2. The Role of State and Developmental Dictatorship

The sociological food regime theory lacks an analysis of the driver that took advantage of the global structure to bring about changes to Koreans' food choices and agro-system as well as the country's relationship with the global regime. The concept of the 'developmental state' is particularly useful for filling the void because it was indeed

the state that played the key role in Korea's transformation, even if it has not been explicitly linked to the food regime analysis. At the same time, the food regime's global perspective helps shed light on the role played by the developmental state in contributing to the development of the global capitalist order, a role that is not well articulated by developmental state literature.

The concept of the developmental state, usually associated with the achievements of the 'catch-up' countries of East Asia, emphasizes effective state interventions in the market as the driving force behind the success of economic growth and industrialization in the 1960s and 1970s (Johnson 1982, 1995; Deyo, ed. 1987; Amsden 1989; Wade 1990; Castells 1992, 1998/2010; Evans 1995; Woo-Cumings, ed. 1999).²⁰ The core elements in this argument are the high autonomy and capacity of the state, the close state-market relations, and the selective integration of an economy into the global market (*ibid.*). The developmental state perspective contends that Korea's high economic growth may be attributed to the strong bureaucratic state under President Park Chung Hee. Park's administration remained autonomous from internal and external interest groups such that it could formulate and execute independent economic policies to bring about economic development. Earlier studies focused on identifying the elements of the East Asian model's success, and later—particularly after the financial crisis of 1997 all but shattered the myth of Asian economic miracles—the analytical focus shifted to the sociopolitical conditions necessary for the implementation of the developmental state approach beyond East Asia under changing global conditions (Woo-Cumings 1999; Weiss 2003; Chang 2006).

²⁰ The origin of the developmental state concept is attributed to Friedrich List, Max Weber, and Alexander Gerschenkron. Gerschenkron's work on "forced industrialization" in particular denotes the main argument that late developers (Germany and Russia) require strong state intervention in order to catch up with the early industrialized Britain. For details, see Gerschenkron 1962.

The concept of a ‘developmental dictatorship’ incorporates the contribution of the developmental state perspective and reflects an analytical shift. It is defined as “a model of nationalist modernization regime” that puts economic modernization and industrialization above all else and oppresses the development of democracy and civil society to achieve its goal (Lee, B-c 2006:45; Vu 2010). While the developmental state literature presents a state-centered interpretation of the late industrialization in East Asia, B-c Lee (2006) critiques its perspective on two counts. On one hand, it fetishizes the state and privileges the state as the sole representative of the public good. On the other hand, it tends to ignore the legitimacy of the political procedure as it overlooks the arbitrariness of a dictatorship’s decisions and implementations. Lee argues that a developmental dictatorship takes root in a non-hegemonic society, with no bourgeois or other social hegemony yet established in a transitional era of modernization. It usually follows a strategy of pursuing statist-nationalist modernization as well as national integration and mobilization, while suppressing political liberty and public participation in the name of national interests and development.

The development dictatorship in Korea was distinguished from other postcolonial East Asian countries in that it incorporated statist-nationalism with anti-communism and it was protected and supported by the U.S. hegemony. Since Park’s model of catch-up industrialization was accompanied by its magnified advantages and disadvantages as a latecomer, both of which were distinct from those experienced earlier by Japan and Germany, the state played a particularly active entrepreneurial role and forged a close alliance with big business. Finally, Korea’s industrialization was followed by rapid social change. The ‘miracle of the Han River’ enabled Korean society to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty and enjoy the many boons of industrialization, which had implications for the national diet and agro-system.

Bringing together the food regime literature and work on the developmental state, this study analyzes the roles played by the Korean state in both transforming the people's diets and contributing to the second food regime—from the perspective of a local site within the global system. It examines what happens within a national boundary to analyze the shape of the global production and consumption structures. By studying a building block of the global restructuring of food practices, it traces not only the processes by which a local (national) site participates in the global political economy but also the interactive process by which the local and the global constitute each other.²¹ By necessity it reframes the relationship between the global and national forces: a one-directional relationship where the former shapes the latter is replaced with one where the agency of the local (national), particularly the state, is acknowledged. The relationship is reconceptualized as a complex set of relational interactions that unfold globally over time.

While the Korean case has unique characteristics and geopolitical particularities, this dissertation develops the argument that Korea's current predicament in food and agriculture—the demise of local wheat production and the rise in consumption of imported wheat, and the transformation of the staple diet—is intimately linked to the international political economy of food and agriculture, led by processes internal to the U.S. as a hegemonic power. Tracing the story of wheat in Korea can, therefore, help reveal the global social order that underlies Korea's historical transformation. This transformation of the Korean agro-food system—from self-sufficiency to import-dependence,²² and from a system that privileges people's

²¹ This idea is similar to that of Giddens's theory of structuration that is based in the analysis of both structure and agency. However, mutually conditioning processes does not mean that the local and the global share commensurable power relations.

²² Korea's food self-sufficiency rate is low in staple grains (rice, barley, wheat, corn, soybean, potatoes and others) except rice, as well in oils and fats. For example, the ratio of overall grain self-sufficiency

cultural preferences to a model more convenient for global corporations—has been an integral part of the construction of the second food regime in the post–World War II period. The Korean experience as such represents the transformations of other local agro-food systems that have accompanied the rise of the global regime, as the concluding chapter elaborates. At the same time, a historical sociological study of Korea explores the openings that may exist for constructing a future different from the contemporary one, as Abrams (1982) posits that a fully historicized sociology explores the possibility of constructing futures out of pasts.

2.3. Korea and the Food Regimes

Postcolonial South Korea has experienced major social, economic, political, and cultural transformations. From decolonization to socioeconomic modernization and cultural change, these transformations have reshaped the life of Koreans and the very meaning of citizenship itself. Changes in food production and consumption in the postcolonial period in particular, have removed traditional farmers from their feudal and colonial relationships and integrated them into a new category of citizenship: modernized rice farmers who rely on petrochemical inputs; globalized agricultural workers who plant foreign seeds to sell to consumers the world over; westernized food consumers who prefer to eat wheat products over traditional rice; savvy urbanites who discern good restaurants and fine cuisines. For the most part, this study investigates and analyzes the ways in which colonial subjects have been transformed into a particular kind of postcolonial citizenry under the second food regime. If the first two substantive chapters highlight the various roles played by the global structure in shaping the meaning of citizenship in the postcolonial Korea, the last two chapters

was reported at 27.8 percent in 2008; if feed grains are excluded, the rate rises to 51.8 percent (Ministry for Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries 2011). Korea imports over 70 percent of its food consumption requirements (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2011).

complicate the structural account by bringing in the agency of the Korean state as a mediator of global power, and the agency of the people who as producers, consumers, and citizens have acted on structural pressure with their creativity and ingenuity.

Following World War II, the decolonization of Korea was accompanied by a national division as the former Japanese colony was bifurcated into the North and the South, and South Korea became integrated into a global food regime under the hegemony of the U.S. From the beginning of the three-year military occupation, and the U.S. government was primarily interested in establishing an anti-communist bulwark to ensure its strategic interests. Guided by this strategic orientation and whetted by U.S. agricultural interest to export excess wheat to postcolonial nations, U.S. food aid facilitated the process of transforming colonial peasants into wage-earning industrial workers who produced consumer goods for the U.S. market. Simultaneously, cheap U.S. food aid undercut Korean rice producers and laid the foundation for their transformation into industrial agricultural workers who shifted to the production of cash crops or petrochemical farming. This was complemented by U.S. military aid, which created an anti-communist garrison and helped enforce the production of a new postcolonial subjectivity.

Molding the postcolonial subjectivity into the categories of producers and consumers under the global food regime was not accomplished with U.S. aid alone. Nourished by this assistance, a string of repressive governments operated for forty years (1948–87) to implement measures that translated the structural pressures of the global food regime into a local reality. The Korean state was an active agent that defied the West's normative conception of 'modern' citizenship defined by the progressive, linear acquisition of civil (legal status and individual rights), political (equal rights of political participation), and social (access to social entitlements) rights, broadly assigned to the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries respectively, as citizenship

rights (Marshall 1950). As in most postcolonial states,²³ in Korea the state severely restricted civil, political, and social rights, while offering economic freedom to pursue profit and wealth. The Korean state encouraged its citizens to be productive, docile workers who could accumulate wealth incrementally and live better, although, in reality, it created a disparity between those who followed its dictates and those who resisted it. By conveying more citizenship rights to the former than the latter, the Korean state built not only what Moon (2005) describes as ‘military modernity’ for which the construction of an anti-communist national identity and obedient citizenship were the foundation. It also constructed what might be called postcolonial modernity where the postcolonial citizens produced and consumed food under the global food regime. The state actively intervened in the daily lives of its citizens to promote the consumption of wheat and wheat products and conversely discourage their consumption of rice. The second food regime grew out of the collusion of U.S. global power and the national state centered on people’s productive activities and everyday consumption practices to produce new markers of postcolonial citizenship.

Postcolonial South Korea has been a fierce battleground between the collusive power of the global regime and the state, on one hand, and the people on the ground, on the other, to reconfigure the ideal and practice of citizenship. A postcolonial agrarian revolution was robust in the early years following liberation from Japan, despite the repression of the U.S. military government. Peasants organized a series of strikes and rebellions demanding land reforms and new agrarian relations. They

²³ Subrata K. Mitra (2008:344) argues that the problem of citizenship in postcolonial states is that the “state, rather than following the successful formation of the nation, preceded it.” Postcolonial states are faced with two different issues: on one hand, these states are required to compete with stable, post-industrial states in national security, identity, and welfare on equal terms when their material and political conditions are different; on the other hand, these ‘new states’ need to transform “subjects and immigrants—marginal social groups—into citizens entitled to enjoy all of the political and social rights” (ibid. 343–44).

sought to delink Korea's food production and consumption from the colonial regime and re-embed their productive activities within their social relationships as a part of the construction of a new nation. For example, the National Federation of Peasant Unions (NFPU; *chŏnkuk nongmin chohap ch'ongyŏnmaeng*), a nationwide umbrella organization was organized following liberation from Japan in November 1945 with an initial membership of 2 million farmers, or about 16 percent of the total population of South Korea at the time (Kim, D-n 1998). The NFPU declared its organizational platform, which included not only the agrarian issues but also called for farmer participation among a wider national democratic front to rid Korea of the colonial legacies and characterized the NFPU as an organization of 'struggle' (*t'uchaeng*) to attain economic rights and people's sovereignty, not merely as an organization to support unions (NFPU secretariat cited in id: 129–130). One of the large-scale peasant protests in the postwar era,²⁴ the Autumn Uprising of 1946 (*Taeku 10.1 sakŏn*)²⁵ was led by the NFPU; it began in Daegu (*Taeku*) against the social and food policies of the U.S. military government and in favor of restoration of power to the people's committees of the Korean People's Republic (*chosŏninmin konghwakuk*),²⁶ it spread nationwide like a wildfire (Yoon, S-j 2012). Despite some early gains made, their efforts were frustrated by the oppressive policies of the U.S. and Korean authorities by

²⁴ By examining the USAMGIK report (G-2 Daily Reports and Weekly Reports) Hae-sook Lee (1988:231) reported that there were a total of 602 peasant protests during the American military government period; of the total, 104 were directly related to agrarian issues such as anti-mandatory rice collection, food demands, land reform, and landlord–tenant conflict, and 498 pertained to other sociopolitical issues.

²⁵ The Autumn Uprising of 1946 is also known as the Daegu Riot, Daegu Resistance Movement, or the Daegu October Incident, which is viewed as a more neutral coinage than the other names.

²⁶ The Korean People's Republic was a short-lived provisional government that was organized with the aim to take over control of Korea shortly after the surrender of Japan at the end of World War II. It functioned as a government from late August to early September 1945, and it was dissolved by the USAMGIK in January 1946.

1950 when the Korean War broke out.²⁷ The repression was so brutal and complete that peasant organizing of comparable intensity would not return until the 1980s.

The 1980s brought rapid socioeconomic and political changes to South Korea. From the outside, Korea was faced with pressures from the GATT to open its market to agricultural commodities, especially rice and meat. Internally, the 40-year authoritarian ruling elite was being challenged by a wave of protests and demands for democratization. In 1988 farmers' movements reached new heights as thousands poured into the streets of Seoul; in May, 30,000 had gathered around Seoul's outskirts in preparation for a large protest against imports, but police blockaded highway entries into Seoul to prevent the demonstration (Abelmann 1996). In response to the Uruguay Round negotiations and the subsequent creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and American pressure to open up the rice market ignited a transnational movement in Korea (Ibid.) The formation of the Korean Peasants League (KPL) in 1990, and its activities following throughout the decade and in 2000s represents the emergence of a counter-movement against the globalization project of the Korean state, as well as the transnationalized farmers' movement (KPL 2016). With South Korea's entry into the WTO and the Agreement on Agriculture in 1995, agricultural liberalization became a reality that hurt smallholder farmers; they have been paying more for inputs and receiving less for their output since 1997 (Charles, J. et al. 2001).

Owing to the government's agricultural support policy in the wake of the IMF crisis, the farmers' movement began gaining greater momentum in 2000, and farmers' struggles began to erupt once again. In 2000, farmers fought for the cancellation of farmer family debt, and in 2002, setting their sights on the presidential election, they

²⁷ The National Federation of Peasant Unions claimed 188 county unions, 1,745 district unions with the North and South Korea combined membership of 3.32 million (Yoon, S-j 2012:270); however, by the end of the American military rule, the organization was dismantled (Kim S-h 2000).

mobilized 130,000 people in Seoul to oppose the opening of the rice market. An extensive movement arose to protect farmers and Korean agriculture, increasingly imperiled by neoliberal globalization. The Korean farmers' movement became engaged in transnational farmers' movements against neoliberalism. From the streets of Cancun, Mexico, in 2003, to becoming active members of *via Campesina*, Korean farmers resisted the WTO negotiations (Wainwright and S-j Kim 2008). The well-publicized case of Lee, Kyung-hae took place during this period: Lee led a hunger strike at WTO headquarters in Geneva February and March 2003, but his actions were ignored by WTO and international media. Later in the year, on September 10, Lee protested near the WTO conference in Cancun, in front of international media, he stabbed himself (Watts 2003).

An industrialized South Korea began importing larger quantities and greater varieties of foods from the U.S. and elsewhere in the world after the aid relations with the U.S. ended in 1980. Koreans now have more 'choices' of western-style foods through the expansion of super- and hypermarkets and fast-food chains. At the same time, there is a growing movement of people gravitating towards organic and natural foods, provisioned by smallholder farmers via consumer cooperatives, and a variant of community-supported agriculture. While limited in terms of geographical scale and the development of the delivery system, Koreans have managed to establish a growing constituency of direct producer–consumer linkage.

The food regime analysis seeks to shed light on what happens to the people of a nation that has been 'incorporated' into the global capitalist economy. This study also takes Korea as a specific national site in which the global political economy has unfolded. Its analysis of Korea's transformation is not about Korea per se but about the local social relations within which Korea has been transformed, and through which the global regime is produced and reproduced. Understanding the Korean situation

contributes to understanding the global capitalist accumulation strategy, for the former constitutes an integral part of the latter. To study the transformation of Korea's diet and agro-system is to highlight "the centrality of food relations (such as global divisions of labor, nutritional and dietary regimens, and differentiated consumption patterns) to understand ordering and cultural politics of the modern world" (Campbell and Dixon 2009: 261–62).

2.4. Methodology and Data

While the notion of a 'food regime' refers to a period of time with specific economic and institutional characteristics of a global system of food production and consumption, the term 'food regime analysis' refers to a particular research method. As a method of study, food regime analysis aims to explain the strategic role of food and agriculture in the 'development of the world capitalist economy and in the trajectory of the state system' (Friedmann and McMichael 1989:93; McMichael 2013). It adopts a "holistic, non-determinist historical interpretation of evolving social and ecological relations" (Magnan 2012:4).

This study presents an in-depth look at South Korea and aims to reveal the Korean experience in terms of social change during industrialization. Rather than a case study to "generalize across a larger set of units" (Gerring 2004), this study aims to provide a specific experience of a national site in the global food system. Despite the criticism of the case study method that it suffers from particularism and a lack of variation (Ragin 1987:82), a single case study proves useful in generating assumptions and refining existing observations, according to Smelser (1973). Although some scholars view the case study method with circumspection (Lieberson 1992, 1994; King, Keohane, and Verba 1994), a historically oriented case study allows the researcher to examine the rich texture of a case and dig deeply into it to yield a deeper

meaning from observed data and to possibly offer some historical conditions and regularities that produce specific sets of historical outcomes (Skocpol 1984).

This research is situated in the approach of historical sociology, with the expectation that it would make sense of how the transformation occurred, and what this change means for the people of Korea. A historical sociological approach makes possible an explanation of the historical trajectory that led to the current outcome. There are at least three ways to use historical data in sociology (Chirot 1976; Bonnell 1980; Skocpol and Somers 1980; Skocpol 1984). An interpretation of contrasting events allows different historical events to be analyzed in their particular composition. A parallel investigation of theory seeks to confirm a general law with historical cases, or to apply a theory to a number of different historical cases devoid of temporal and spatial contexts. Historical data can also be used for an analysis of causalities at the macro level, based on Mill's joint method.²⁸ This study makes use of the first strategy of comparative historical sociology to the extent that the research compares Korea's food choices across different time periods. In other words, it compares distinct forms of social relations of food production and consumption in two different periods within a single country. The study describes, interprets, and analyzes how the role of wheat was embedded in the social relations of Korea during the periods of developmentalism (1960–80) and globalization (1980–2000) in the context of a global general trend, and traces how its role and social relations have evolved between the two periods.²⁹

²⁸ A combination of the methods of agreement and difference. Compare a variety of situations in which a certain factor is present to similar situations in which that factor is absent. Then show that a certain effect is observed in all and only those instances in which that factor is present.

²⁹ This is an approximate, and yet arbitrary periodization of developmentalism and globalization in Korea. I have made the temporal division roughly correspond to the time the U.S. food aid regime was phased out of Korea, and to the rise of the neoliberal paradigm globally—but the division is for conceptual purposes only.

This study takes a historical-structural approach that assesses how the state's agro-food policy and development strategy during the process of industrialization emerged as a historical product through interactions of national and international factors. In these interactions, a variety of linkages between internal and external factors were established in ways that affected the entire process of the state's strategic decisions. I argue that some of those linkages were deemed to be closely associated with both Korea's unique sociohistorical conditions and its relations with a particular country, the U.S.

The research goal is to both broaden and deepen understanding of the global political economy of food and agriculture. The majority of the data come from historical sources and documentary evidence, that is, written and otherwise recorded sources (primary and secondary) that are available in English and Korean. Consequently, the research is predominantly archival, from governmental and non-governmental sources such as government records, statistical yearbooks, educational/propaganda material, and newspaper reports, among other things. The method of choice is a "dominant-less dominant mixed-method design"³⁰ in the qualitative research tradition. That is, it nests a quantitative component within predominantly qualitative research, so that, together, the two forms come together to strengthen the study.

This study is based on data drawn during archival research and individual interviews. The archival research was done in the U.S. and Korea, and is based on examinations of primary and secondary sources of print material, and compilation and analysis of statistical data. Two separate periods of field research were carried out between June and August 2007 and March and June 2010 in Korea. The foci of the

³⁰ Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie, 1998, *Mixed Methodology: Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, Applied Social Research Methods Series, vol. 46 (Thousand Oaks: Sage).

fieldwork were threefold. I aimed to understand (1) changes in the production and consumption of rice and wheat, (2) institutional interventions to disseminate wheat and wheat products among the population, and (3) consequences of the institutional interventions on social relations of food consumption and production. Data were collected on each area of research.

During the first fieldwork period (June–August 2007), I concentrated on conducting interviews and collecting primary source documents. The initial 4 weeks were spent conducting exploratory interviews with farmers, social movement activists, agro-food researchers, former school teachers and administrators, a farm newspaper publisher, wheat producers/farmers, and politicians representing rural communities that were unstructured and open-ended, mainly to determine the direction of query, and to assist in the designing of more in-depth and focused interviews. Subsequent in-depth interviews were structured interviews with individuals having direct experience of the HCU campaign, farmers involved in rice or wheat production, representatives of the Korean wheat movement (*Woorimil salligi undong ponpu*), and activists from farmer organizations. These interviews were conducted in Seoul, Buan in North Cholla Province, and Kwangju in South Cholla Province. During interviews in Kwangju, a site visit to a Woorimil processing factory (Woorimil Food Co., Ltd) took place. I have interviewed over twenty individuals, and on average each interviews took about two to three hours. Site visits – a farm visit to Buan, and a factory visit to Kwangju – were overnight visits. The interviews done while visiting the farm were done over a two-day period. The interviews at the Woorimil Food site involved a group of wheat farmers, and a rural organizer turned factory manager, separately. The Kwangju visit included the Woorimil Food factory floor, a trip to storage sites (two nearby), and interviews over meals with wheat farmers, and local farmer organization members.

For exploratory interviews, I identified potential interviewees and informants initially through personal contacts. I asked activist friends for recommendations and referrals; once an introduction was set with a prominent farmer activist, I made numerous extended visits to his organization. Through such visits, I met people who eventually became interviewees and others who referred me on to additional research participants. I also attended conferences and seminars on agricultural and food issues where I met other interviewees. I met former teachers and administrators, through a former head of a teacher's union, who introduced me to his former colleagues. Those selected for my in-depth interviews were identified based on their availability and their openness to discussing their current or past activities. Although the story I am able to tell based on these interviews incorporates a range of perspectives and experiences, it is clearly only a part of a larger picture, given the composition of the interview sample. The understanding I gained through the interviews was greatly enhanced through my archival work.

The second fieldwork period (March–June 2010) consisted primarily of archival research, focusing on collecting government documents as well as women's magazines and other secondary sources not readily available in the U.S. Additional personal interviews were conducted to record the interviewees' experiences and perceptions of the changing food conditions, although those interviews are not explicitly included as source data in this study. Rather, collectively, the second set of interviews inform the study, providing a sense of the rich context within which Koreans' food choices have been made and changed.

Women's magazines are an important body of data for the study, as they are for Stephen Mennell's *All Manners of Food* (1996). He cites six reasons for selecting women's magazines as a critical source from which to find out how cooking was disseminated in France and England in the twentieth century: (1) women's magazines

have large circulations, (2) the longer-running magazines have a common readership group that over time can reflect real changes in cookery trends, (3) the most popular magazines have a wide social spectrum of readership, making them a medium for “stimulating the processes of opinion-leadership and social emulation in matters of taste in food,” (4) they show the different types of advertisements related to food and cooking equipment, (5) people show confidence in magazine columns on domestic kitchens, and (6) there exists direct evidence about the use of cookery column recipes (Mennell 1996:233).

Women’s magazines in Korea share the same traits as those in France and England. Women’s magazines, many of which began publication in the 1950s in Korea, gained popularity initially among educated women and soon widened their readership to include women from different social strata and geographical areas (Kang, S-y 2006). They were different from their counterparts in France and England in that they served, under pressure from the government, as an instrument of disseminating propaganda on modernization and the industrialization campaign (Kim, H-s 1993; Seo, Y-j 2007; Kim, J-h and Kim, Y-c 2008). Nonetheless, these women’s magazines published predominantly about consumption practices, recipes (Korean and Western), and fashion trends and entertainment. Readers used the articles to learn about and emulate Western (American) lifestyle and culture. Among women’s magazines, *Yowon*, *Sin-yowon*, *Yosong Donga*, and *Jubu Sanghwal* were selected because of their popularity and relative longevity. Data collected from these magazines were used for an analysis of the Campaign to Promote Barley and Wheat Consumption (*Honbunsik Changnyŏ Undong*; HCU) as well as the Westernization of Korea’s food culture.

Major statistical information was collected on grain production, consumption, and imports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Agency for

International Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and various Korean government ministries. Often the FAO statistics reflected Korean government source material, which suggests they shared the same source.

Korean government statistics between 1948 and 1958 should be used with caution. While the statistics service was established by the USAMGIK in 1947 and reorganized in 1948 and 1950 after the establishment of the Republic of Korea, all agricultural statistics were administratively compiled without a field survey from 1948 to 1958, raising questions about their reliability. The statistics reported during the Korean War (1950–53) were unreliable, and because much of the data that the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) had compiled was lost during the war, it was reconstructed after the war (Korea Rural Economic Institute 1999). Actual field surveys (sampling) began in 1959 for rice and in 1965 for wheat and barley for production; and the grain consumption survey was first conducted in 1970. The Agricultural Yearbook has since been published consistently, but there were some problems of under- and over reporting through the mid-1970s. From the postcolonial transition through the mid-1960s, farmers underreported their harvest in order to acquire a lower quota for government collection (sale). From the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s, their harvests were over reported to satisfy the government policy to increase food production (ibid. 2287). By 1974, the national statistics office became relatively independent and less vulnerable to external pressures. The data sampling and collection became consistent, as well as more rigorous, as more people were trained and assigned to the Ministry and the statistics office.³¹

³¹ For example, in 1966, there were only 203 collecting field data. In 1968, an additional 1,667 field data collectors were hired and sent to districts and counties. By 1971, field data collectors became regular employees and no longer worked seasonally. Such changes not only increased the retention

In addition, reforms in 1950, 1953, and 1962 devalued Korea’s currency for political reasons rather than economic ones. These currency reforms have to be accounted for when comparing production and consumption values across time. Finally, Korea switched from its traditional measurement system to the metric system in 1962. This transition affected how a field survey was conducted and how agricultural statistics were recorded. Table 1 lists traditional units of measurement in Korea used in this dissertation.

Table 1. Measurements Used in This Dissertation

Korean traditional system	Modern metric system (Korea)	U.S. customary units
1 pyeong (p’yŏng)	3.31 square meters	35.6 square feet
1 chŏngbo	9,900 square meters	0.99 ha (approximately 1 ha)
1 sŏk	144 kg (polished rice)	5.12 bushels (dry measures)
	138 kg (barley)	48 lbs.
1 kama	80 kg (polished rice at market rate)	
	72 kg (polished rice at government conversion rate)	
	69 kg (barley at government conversion rate)	
	soybeans 70 kg	

Source: The conversion rates are from Agricultural Statistics Yearbook, 1956:322–24.

Conversion factors used:

- Barley: 48 lbs = 1 bushel; 1 bushel = 0.021772 MT; 1 MT = 45.93 bushels.
- Wheat: 60 lbs = 1 bushel; 1 bushel = 0.272155 MT; 1 MT = 36.74 bushels.

Notes on tons:

- American or short ton = 2,000 lbs = 1,000 kg.

Korean Statistical Information Service (KOSIS) data:

rate of data collectors and better performance; they contributed to improved accuracy and rigor (Korea Rural Economic Institute 1999).

- Chokok = wheat
- Chŏngkok = wheat flour

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (or Fisheries):³²

Data compiled by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (or Fisheries) used the following:

- Somaek = wheat
- Somaek chŏngkok = wheat flour

The conversion rate of chŏngkok (flour) used: barley (55%), naked barley (83%), and wheat (113%).

2.5. Terms

Korean terms are Romanized according to the McCune-Reischauer system, with the exception of widely used geographical names. In cases where a specific name Romanization is preferred by an organization or an individual, it is applied in the text. Korean names are given in the Western style except when notable names have already been established in English in the Korean style, such as Park Chung Hee. When I refer to the Republic of Korea, I use the terms South Korea, or simply ‘Korea’ in the text. When referring to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), North Korea is used.

2.6. Structure of the Study

After laying out the puzzle, theoretical framework, and methodological approach in the first chapter, the rest of the dissertation proceeds as follows.

³² The Ministry name has changed several times since its inception in 1949: The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (1949–72), the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (1973–86), the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (1987–95), the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (1996–2007), and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Food (2008–present).

Chapter 2 provides a historical background against which the development of the contemporary agro-food system is discussed in the following chapters. This chapter discusses Korea's agro-food system during the colonial and immediate postcolonial periods in order to situate its contemporary system in a longer historical context. It shows that Korea's integration with the global food system is not entirely new but began under Japan's colonial rule, which transformed Korea's agriculture into a component of a regional food system centered around Japan. Korea's independence delinked it from the colonial regional system but opened it up to the possibility of being linked to a global system centered on the U.S.

Chapter 3 examines the processes by which Korea's state-building and economic restructuring were facilitated by U.S. food aid, which bonded food production to the U.S.-centered system. By analyzing the impacts of U.S. food aid provided under Public Law 480,³³ it shows the roles that free wheat and wheat products played in the transformation of Korea's agricultural production and food consumption as well as in reconfiguring the Korean state and society. As it analyzes the relationship between food aid from the U.S. and food production/consumption in Korea, it turns its analytical focus on the Korean state as the locus of action and tension that betrays both the state's extensive and intensive control of society and its complex and numerous ties to big business. The period under examination is from 1955, when Korea signed the Surplus Agricultural Commodities Agreement with the U.S., to 1981, when the last shipment of aid wheat arrived in Korea, although the primary focus is on the period of industrialization (1961–81).

³³ Original authorizing legislation for food-for-peace program is the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (Public Law 480), and it has gone through major legislative changes since (Library of Congress/Congressional Research Service, 1979:1).

Chapter 4 examines the interplay of national social forces involved in the Campaign to Promote Barley and Wheat Consumption (*Honbunsik Changnyŏ Undong*; HCU) policy in a bid to understand the factors that precipitated the changes in food consumption practices in Korea. This chapter therefore addresses how this change in consumption came about. It identifies the mechanisms used to transform the national diet and traces the process of the transformation within the context of the state's grip on Korean society. To examine the increase in wheat consumption is to shed light on how the state intervened in people's daily lives to shape their food preferences under the pretext of modernizing the nation.

Chapter 5 critically examines the lasting impact of the HCU campaign on Korea's staple diet and food culture from 1961 to 2001. It analyzes the changes in the consumption structure of staple grains as a way of evaluating the transformation of the materiality of food choices. It also assesses some of the social, cultural, and economic consequences of the dietary changes to better understand the process by which wheat consumption became embedded in Korean society as a cultural and social index combining the semiotics of food tastes and status, together with the standards for nutrition and health. The transformation of dietary practices not only represents changes in the material substance of food but, more significantly, reflects the ideological and social impact on Korean food culture.

The concluding chapter (chapter 6) reflects upon the study's findings. Wheat has rapidly ascended in the makeup of the Korean diet in the postwar period, and this change was a constituent element of Korea's larger social transformation from an agrarian to an industrial society. This transformation was mediated, almost forced, by the developmental dictatorship for the most part of the 1960s and 1970s. The domestic transformation also constituted an integral part of the second food regime that Friedmann and McMichael have observed, and this study demonstrates that the

Korean state served as an active agent that contributed to the transformation of Korea's agro-system and the construction of the global regime. A study of the global regime, in other words, must be complemented by an analysis of the decisions and actions made by agents on the bottom rung of the regime. The study also reveals the forces unleashed by the local transformation that sustain the changed food choices and the global food regime, demonstrating that an understanding of the global would not be complete without an adequate explanation of the local.

CHAPTER 2:
SOWING THE SEED OF CHANGE: FOOD AID TO KOREA IN THE
GLOBAL FOOD REGIME

“Send me wheat or send me more troops.”

—General Douglas MacArthur (1946)³⁴

1. Introduction

Food consumption and production in Korea cannot be adequately understood in isolation. While the people in the peninsula have made their choices within environmental and cultural contexts about what to eat and what to grow for thousands of years, their choices are not always their own. Just as they have interacted and exchanged with other peoples outside, so they have made their choices in their interactions. Rice, their primary staple grain, is likely to have been introduced to Korea via the lower Yangtze area in the Bronze Age (Im, H-j 1992; Ahn, S-m 2010; National Institute of Crop Science 2014). Kimch'i, the spicy pickled cabbage now considered quintessential Korean, would lack its distinctive spicy taste if chili peppers had not reached them in the 16th century from South America via Europe (Cho, T-d 2011). Now, hamburgers, doughnuts, and cakes are as ubiquitous in Korean society as they are in the U.S. Koreans' food choices have to be placed in the context of their interactions with other peoples if we are to fully understand what they choose to eat and produce and why.

³⁴ Seeborg, Edward (1963). General Douglas MacArthur (Occupation Commander in Japan, 1945–51; United Nations Commander in South Korea, 1950–51) was quoted as having sent it in 1946 soon after landing in Japan, *Foreign Agriculture*, Vol. 1 (1): 10; also the same quote was reported by Seeborg in the “Proceedings of the Agricultural Export Promotion Workshop for Representatives of State Departments of Agriculture and Other State agencies,” published in 1966.

The nature of Koreans' interactions with outsiders was deeply affected in the 20th century when their country was forcibly colonized by Japan in 1910. Now only were the Koreans ruled by the Japanese but their food choices were also shaped by their integration into the Japan-centered regional system. They grew more rice, not because they consumed more rice but because they were forced to by their colonial masters, who suffered from rice shortages in the imperial homeland. Even if the Koreans grew more rice, they consumed less of it because what they harvested was shipped out to satisfy the needs across the Korean strait. They were instead fed with locally produced barley and with millet from Manchuria, which used to be part of the Ching dynasty and was now part of the Japanese empire. The Koreans' food choices—what they ate, grew, exported, and imported—were all shaped by a relationship of power that stretched from Japan into Korea and Taiwan and beyond.

Korea was forcibly integrated into a regional food regime where Japan occupied the position of the metropole, the locus of power that forced its decisions on all those on the periphery. Its position was similar to and yet different from the settler countries—the U.S. and Australia—that constituted a part of what Friedmann and McMichael call the first food regime. Korea and the settler countries were similar in that their “choices” were made not by themselves but by those who were in the metropole outside their countries. One of the main differences between them had to do with the choice of grain that tied the metropole to the periphery. Whereas rice was the main grain that flowed from Korea to Japan, wheat was what the U.S. and Australia shipped to Europe. The difference, which reflected the colonial master's preference and consumption practice, brought about other larger differences after 1945 when the U.S. defeated Japan and emerged as a new hegemon.

This chapter discusses Korea's agro-food system during the colonial and the immediate postcolonial periods in order to situate its contemporary system in a longer

historical context. It shows that Korea's integration with the global food system is not entirely new but began under Japan's colonial rule, which transformed its agriculture into an integral component of a regional food system centered around Japan. Korea's independence delinked it from the colonial regional system but opened the possibility of linking it to a global system centered around the U.S. Its state-building and economic restructuring were facilitated with U.S. food aid that bonded its food production to the U.S.-centered system.

2. Korea in the Japan-Centered Food Regime, 1910–45

Korea suffered from food crises in the years immediately following its independence from Japanese colonial rule. While the food shortages provided the economic rationale for U.S. aid, as well as the eventual integration of Korea's food production into the U.S.-led global system, the shortages themselves had ironically resulted from Korea's earlier integration into the Japan-centered food regime. History perhaps 'repeats' itself, the first time as a tragedy and the second time as a larger tragedy, to paraphrase Marx.

2.1. Production

During the occupation of Korea (1910–45),³⁵ Japan's colonial development strategy included boosting agricultural production, mainly of rice, to solve its rising domestic food consumption requirement problem and to keep industrial wages under control. Since Japan's Meiji Restoration in 1868, which initiated capitalist industrial development through Westernization and modernization and its associating technology, institutions, scientific knowledge, and values (Beasley 2000), Japan had experienced a burgeoning urban population that required ever-increasing amounts of

³⁵ Korea means both North and South Korea, since the division of Korea occurred in 1945.

food grains (Peattie 1989; Cwiertka 2012). By this time, Japanese agriculture had exhausted its potential for further growth, and so Japan turned to its colonies to solve its food problems just as European countries had done earlier. Korea's close proximity to Japan, and the common staple food grain, allowed Japan to integrate the Korean food production system directly into its own by restructuring land ownership and incorporating peasant production directly into the export sector, since rice was grown both for subsistence and as a cash crop (Ho, S. P-s 1984).

Immediately after the forced annexation of Korea, the colonial regime embarked on a major cadastral survey to restructure land ownership following the Western system from 1910 to 1918 (Cumings 1981:41). The main objective of the survey was to shift the land ownership to the colonial government by incorporating common and public lands (Shin, Y-h 1982; National Institute of Korean History 2003). Also, those who could not produce written documents to prove ownership—mostly poor peasants with traditional cultivator rights—lost their land in the land ownership restructuring (Shin, Y-h 2001; Wang, H-j 2003). Through the cadastral survey, the colonial regime was able to squeeze out additional farmland (KOSIS 2010),³⁶ and doubled rice paddies from 801,876 *chǒngbo* (c.1 *chǒngbo* = 0.99 ha) in 1910 to 1,548,170 *chǒngbo* in 1918 (KOSIS 2008).³⁷ Expropriated lands were given to Japanese settlers at a subsidized rate to encourage migration to Korea. The new landowners were Japanese individuals and corporations, including the Oriental Development Company (*Dongyang chǒksik chusik hoesa*), which was established to extract rice from Korea to Japan, employing former landholders who had become

³⁶ I am not asserting that the total increase of farmland is entirely due to a land survey. It is likely, however, that the majority stems from the land survey.

³⁷ The land survey also brought in a way to remove or confer the right of land ownership, and for cultivating landowners, the colonial regime could extract taxes directly from them.

agricultural workers and tenant farmers under this new system. The Oriental Development Company came to own more than 20 percent of Korea's arable land, and company officials fanned out to rural areas to tighten up agricultural production (Cumings 2005:148). This concentration of land ownership was evidenced by the rise in tenant households (as opposed to proprietors or part owners) from 39 percent in 1913–17 to 56 percent by 1938 (Kuznets 1977:16). This massive restructuring of the agricultural production system was supported by the colonial Bank of Chosun,³⁸ while colonial judicial bodies legalized a system of ethnic discrimination against Koreans on their own land (ibid. 148).

As these new agrarian relations took shape in Korea, Japan's participation in World War I (1914–18) deepened. Toward the end of the war, Japan was increasingly filling orders for needed war materials from its European allies, and the wartime boom helped expand Japanese industry and increase exports. Consequently, the industrial expansion fueled rapid inflation, while the country's rice production stagnated. When the food demands were not adequately addressed, a nationwide rice riot (*kome sōdō*) broke out in 1918 (Lewis, M 1990:xvii).³⁹ In response to the crisis, Japan implemented a series of rice production programs (*Sanmai Zōshoku Keikaku; 'Rice Production Increase Plan'*) in its colonies from 1920 to 1934 (Myers and Peattie 1984).⁴⁰ Korea,

³⁸ The colonial Bank of Chosun functioned as the de facto central bank by regulating interest rates, and providing credit to mostly Japanese businesses.

³⁹ The *Kome Sodo* (rice riot) of 1918 was prompted by the sharp rise in the price of rice in Japan due to the decreased rice production, which coincided with the increase in demand due to World War I. Anticipating the dispatch of troops to Siberia encouraged rice merchants to speculate, causing prices to skyrocket; this squeezed workers' livelihoods, and the *Kome Sodo* broke out in Toyama in July 1918 and spread quickly among communities, and in the following months similar riots rapidly erupted around the country (in *Modern Japan in Archives: Political history from the opening of the country to post-war* <<http://www.ndl.go.jp/modern/e/cha3/description06.html>>

⁴⁰ The launching of the Rice Production Increase Plan followed Japan's completion of the land survey program in Korea in 1918, which identified and measured all land and then determined land values upon which a new, standardized land tax was imposed. The same scheme was already instituted in Japan between 1873 and 1881, and in Taiwan between 1898 and 1903. Through this land reform, the

along with Taiwan, was forced to increase rice production to meet Japan's rising food demands, which showed a remarkable 3 percent growth per annum during the 1920–35 period (Haggard, Kang, and Moon 1997:869).

Under the Rice Production Increase Plan—Phase I from 1920–25, Phase II from 1925–34, and Phase III from 1940–45⁴¹—agricultural advances such as improved seeds, better irrigation techniques, and synthetic inputs were deployed to increase productivity in Korea. Rice production increased from 14.1 million *sök* (approximately 72 million bushels) during the period 1917–21, to 17 million *sök* (approximately 87 million bushels) during the period 1932–36.⁴² But Koreans themselves did not benefit from the production increase, because an even larger amount was extracted for Japan's consumption. The extraction of rice from Korea to Japan increased from 2.19 million *sök*, 16% of the production, to 8.75 million *sök*, 52% of the production, over the same period. As Table 2 illustrates, net rice exports from Korea to Japan rose far more rapidly than the rise in production over the same period. By the period 1932–36, production had risen 20.5 percent, while exports rose almost fourfold.

Under these new agrarian relations—Japanese landlords and Korean agricultural workers, and colonial bourgeoisie and Korean tenants—the deployment of industrial agriculture in Korea resulted in improved efficiency and higher rice

colonial regime was able to increase the cultivated area in Korea from 2.4 million hectare to nearly 4.5 million hectares (Myers et al. 1984:428).

⁴¹ Although the Rice Production Increase Plan entailed three phases, Phase III (1940–45) has mostly been excluded from discussions due to its insignificance in increasing rice production. After the Second Sino-Japan War (1937–45) broke out, the use of chemical resources was directed to war mobilization. Hence the production of fertilizer was severely curtailed during this time, which led to a insignificant increase in modern agriculture in Korea.

⁴² In this study, I use the following conversion rate from the MAF: 1 *sök* = 5.12 bushels; 1 bushel of unhulled rice = 45 pounds, and 1 bushel of hulled rice = 68 pounds; 1 bushel of wheat = 60 pounds; 1 bushel of barley = 48 pounds; 1 bushel of corn = 56 pounds, and 1 metric ton = 2,204.62 pounds. Also, 1 *sök* = 1 Japanese koku.

production. The Japanese also put down other industrial infrastructure such as railway lines and ports to facilitate the transport of rice and agricultural products to Japan. But while this modernization increased productivity and improved agricultural methods, it was also accompanied by a “ruthless squeezing of existing production at the expense of Korean consumption” (McCune, G. 1950:35), as the following section shows.

Table 2. Rice Production and Export to Japan during the Phase II of the Rice Production Increase Plan

Year (5-year average)	Production (unit: 1,000 <i>sŏk</i>)	Export to Japan (unit: 1,000 <i>sŏk</i>)
1917–1921	14,101	2,196
1922–1926	14,501	4,342
1927–1931	15,788	6,607
1932–1936	17,002	8,757

Source: The Statistical Yearbook of the Governor General of Korea, extracted from Y-h Shin (2002), *A History of Korean People in the Time of Japanese Occupation, 1910–1945* [ilchekangchŏmki hankukminchoksa], Volume 2. (Seoul: Seoul National University Press), p.65.

2.2. Consumption

Due to the massive exports of rice to Japan, the expansion of Korea’s agricultural production did not increase the amount available to the average Korean.⁴³ Annual per capita rice consumption in Korea declined overall throughout the colonial period except for the years 1938 to 1942, as Table 3 illustrates.⁴⁴ The total grain consumption was halved from 1915 to 1945. Furthermore, the total per capita grain consumption showed a steady decline, which implies that the decrease in rice consumption was not

⁴³ The situation in Taiwan was markedly different in that the Taiwanese export of rice to Japan did not affect the consumption level in the populace until the 1930s (Peattie 1989:256). This possibly was attributed to the fact that Taiwan’s primary agricultural industry in the colonial-metropole economic structure was sugar rather than rice.

⁴⁴ There is also a dispute as to exactly how much rice consumption declined during this period, ranging from Tohata and Ohkawa’s 19 percent (decrease from 106.5 kg in 1915–19 to 87 kg in 1934–36) to Song’s 39 percent.

adequately compensated for by substitute grains. In fact, studies show that per capita caloric intake from major staple foods—rice, barley, millet, and soybeans were the main source of Korean calories—fell at an annual rate of 0.43 percent between 1913 and 1940 (Suh, S-c 1978:87; Kimura 1993:639). The calorie deficiency caused by the reduction in grain consumption was not fully replenished by other foodstuffs, either, as studies on income elasticity of demand for basic foodstuffs show (Gill 1998:132).⁴⁵

As rice shipments to Japan increased, this not only reduced the total quantity of food available in Korea but also degraded the quality of available food. In the vertically integrated regional economic structure created by Japan, Korea exported its rice to Japan and replaced it by importing inferior coarse grains, such as millet and sorghum, from Manchuria,⁴⁶ forcing Koreans to consume lower-quality grain (Peattie 1989:257).^{47,48} In addition, Korean farmers were encouraged to grow barley, as its early harvest helped tide them through the lean spring and summer months, before the rice harvest in the fall. Because rice was the staple of both Korea and Japan, it was the colonial power that governed how much of it Koreans could consume, forcing the local population to turn to other grains to make up the deficit.

⁴⁵ Gill (1998:132) finds it curious why the consumption expenditure on basic foodstuffs did not increase with income in colonized Korea; rather, per capita calorie intake declined, and she calls this situation a “calorie puzzle.”

⁴⁶ I use the term ‘export’ loosely here to indicate rice extraction from Korea to Japan, since the colonial relationship prevented the normative trade relations between the two countries.

⁴⁷ Millet, sorghum, and barley were considered fodder for animals rather than food for human consumption in Korea.

⁴⁸ Similarly, in Taiwan, sweet potatoes substituted for rice (Hayami and Ruttan, 1970, “Korean Rice, Taiwan Rice, and Japanese Agricultural Stagnation: An Economic Consequence of Colonialism,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 84(4):562–89).

Table 3. Annual Per Capita Grain Consumption in Korea, 1915–45 (sök)⁽¹⁾

Year	Per capita grain consumption		
	Rice	Other grains	Total
1915–1919 ^(A)	0.71	1.32	2.03
1920–1924 ^(B)	0.64	1.34	1.98
1925–1929 ^(C)	0.51	1.30	1.81
1930–1936 ^(D)	0.43	1.21	1.64
1937	0.57	0.93	1.50
1938	0.70	0.85	1.55
1939	0.77	0.89	1.66
1940	0.61	0.82	1.43
1941	0.72	0.72	1.44
1942	0.74	0.78	1.52
1943	0.58	0.49	1.07
1944	0.55	0.68	1.23
1945	0.55	0.50	1.05

Note: (A) Annual average of 5 years; (B) Annual average of 5 years; (C) Annual average of 5 years; (D) Annual average of 7 years.

(1) One sök equals 5.12 bushels.

Source: (A)–(D) are from Hishimoto, Choji (1938). *Chosen-mai no Kenkyu*. Tokyo: Chikura Shobo. Pp. 701–703; 1937–1945 are from Chosŏn ūnhaeng chosabu (the Bank of Chosun Research Department) 1948, Chosŏn Kyŏngche Yeŏnpo (Korea Economic Yearbook). III, p. 28. Both are cited in Song, K-j (2002). “Colonial Capitalism and Korean Trade under the Rule of Japanese Imperialism—With a Focus on the Colonial Rice Trade Structure.” *The Journal for the Studies of Korean History*, vol. 12: 135–139.

Two thirds of Koreans’ total caloric intake on average came from barley, millet, and soybeans, not rice, during most of the colonial period, as illustrated in Figure 2. Per capita caloric intake of the four staple foods peaked in the late 1910s. It was followed by a steady decline until 1936 to a much lower level than that of the 1910s. The nutritional decline in terms of both quantity and quality is corroborated by the declining trend in the average height of Koreans beginning in the late 1920s.⁴⁹ The

⁴⁹ Economically inferior grain does not mean it is inferior in nutrients. However, economic historians commonly use stature data to examine the long-term trends of the biological standard of living because

colonial food production policy was quite successful to the extent that it helped feed Japan's imperial projects, but it had the effect of reducing Korean per capita food grains consumption, particularly when compared with Japanese consumption.

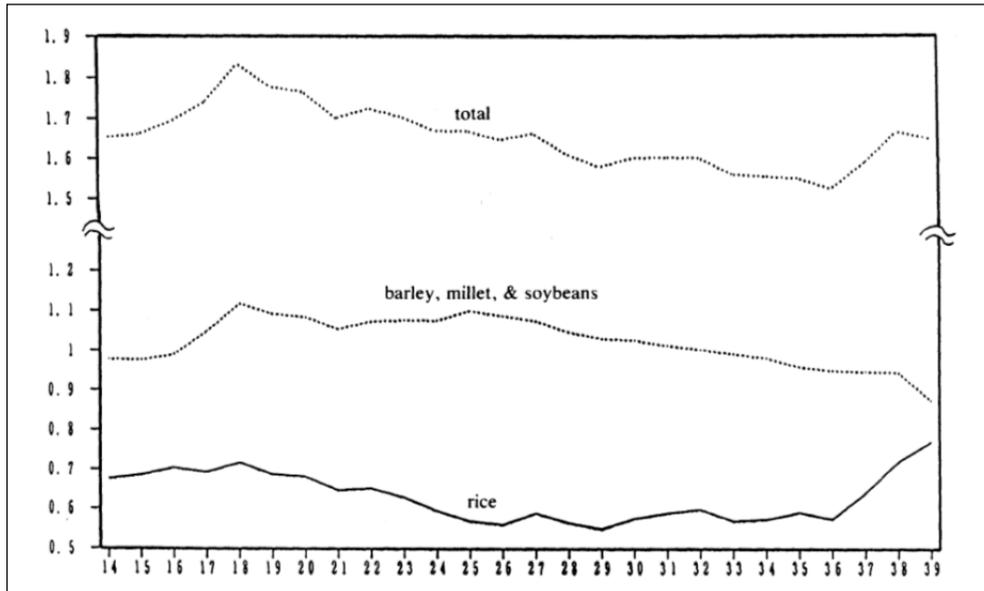


Figure 2. Daily per capita intakes from rice, barley, millet, and soybeans, 1914–39 (unit: thousand)

Notes: Figures are three-year moving averages. Consumption of rice in year $i = (\text{domestic production in year } (i - 1) - \text{net export in year } i - \text{seeds} - \text{material for brewing}) \times (1 - \text{loss ration})$. Consumption of barley in year $i = (\text{domestic production in year } i - \text{net export in year } i - \text{seeds}) \times (1 - \text{loss ratio})$. Consumption of millet in year $i = (\text{domestic production in year } [i - 1] - \text{net export in year } i - \text{seeds} - \text{material for brewing}) \times (1 - \text{loss ratio})$. Consumption of soybeans in year $i = (\text{domestic production in year } [i - 1] - \text{net export in year } i - \text{seeds}) \times (1 - \text{loss ratio})$.

Source: cited in M. Kimura, 1993, "Standards of Living in Colonial Korea,"⁵⁰ *The Journal of Economic History* 53(3):629–52.

an individual's height reflects his/her cumulative net nutritional status (Gill 1998; Steckel 2008; Kim and Park 2011).

⁵⁰ Kimura (1993) extracted information from a variety of sources for Figure 2, stating that "Data on domestic production and net export of rice are drawn from Chosen Sotokufu, *Chosen Beikoku Yoran*, 1940, pp. 2–3; figures on domestic production have been revised . . . The domestic production and net export of barley, millet, and soybeans are from Chosen Sotokufu, *Nogyo Tokeihyo*, 1940, pp. 11, 21, 80, 91. Seeds of rice per *cho* (about one hectare) are assumed to have decreased, in terms of brown rice, from 0.53 *koku* in 1913 to 0.25 *koku* in 1940 at a constant rate; these figures are from Hishimoto, *Chosen-mai no Kenkyu*, pp. 184, 234. Seeds of barley, millet, and soybeans per *cho* are assumed to have been constant throughout the period covered: barley at 0.5 *koku*, millet at 0.07 *koku*, and soybeans at 0.5 *koku*. These figures are from Norinsho, *Kyuchosen ni okeru Nihon no Nogyo Shiken*, pp. 418, 516;

Bolstered by imports of colonial rice and industrial raw materials, Japan was able to continue its own economic and political modernization and to push its imperial aspirations deep into the Asian continent,⁵¹ following in the footsteps of the imperialist West. Korea's economic structure was incorporated to serve the needs of Japan: its agricultural practices were modernized to maximize rice production for Japan's imperial expansion, and its industrial base was created to support Japan's military adventures, not for the purpose of Korea's economic development.

Korea's food production and consumption had been profoundly reconfigured by its integration into the Japan-centered food regime in a way that boosted rice outputs yet decreased rice consumption. When Korea became liberated from Japan's colonial rule in 1945, it gained political independence but suffered many disastrous consequences from the lasting legacies of its integration into the Japan-centered food

Minami Manshu Tetsudo, *Manshu no Awa*, p. 193; and Kimura, "Shokuminchi-ka Chosen no Mensake," pp. 66–67. Quantities of rice and millet used for brewing from 1929 to 1939 are from Chosen Sotokufu, *Chosen Beikoku Yoran*, 1935, p. 185; 1936, p. 5; and 1940, pp. 6–7, 131. I assumed that the same quantity was used in 1940 as in 1939. Quantities of rice used for brewing before 1928 are assumed to have changed in proportion to the output of *sake*, which is estimated on the basis of Mizoguchi and Nojima, *Kyu-shokuminchi Keizai Tokei Data Base*. Quantities of millet used for brewing before 1928 are extrapolated from the average change rate between 1929 and 1932. The loss ratio for each crop is assumed to have fallen from 10 percent in 1913 to 5 percent in 1940 at a constant rate. In the calculation here I do not subtract inventory changes, due to lack of data. This will not produce a substantial bias, because I am computing moving-average figures. At any rate, fragmentary evidence shows that changes in the inventory of rice after 1930 were very small compared with the total amount of domestic production (Chosen Sotokufu, *Chosen Beikoku Yoran*, 1940, pp. 2–3). Population data are from Ishi, *Kankoku no Jinko Zoka*, p.99. The rates of conversion from physical quantities to calories are taken from Sato, "Chosen no Nomin no Shokumotsu," p. 8."

⁵¹ Japan's imperial aspirations date back to the 16th century, led by Toyotomi Hideyoshi, which ended without concrete result when Hedeyoshi died during his continental expedition in 1598. More recently, Japan resurfaced its ambition with the Meiji Restoration and the rise of military adventurism. To embark on such aspiration, Japan first encroached upon Korea in 1876 with the Treaty of Kanghai that set a trajectory toward official colonization in 1910. Japan also used Korea as a site for two wars, the First Sino-Japan War (1894–95) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905). In the first half of the twentieth century, Japan invaded and colonized its East Asian neighbors beginning with Taiwan in 1899 and Korea, then proceeded to China, and to the countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands. Although many reasons have been cited for Japanese imperialism, about which there are disagreements among scholars, economic factors to fuel its industrialization are convincing. Colonizing Taiwan and Korea had brought Japan primarily agricultural resources; Japan's invasion of China for other resources (the Manchurian region for iron and coal, and other areas for vast raw materials of all types), and Southeast Asia for rubber.

regime. The food shortages that followed Korea's decolonization in particular were at least partially a byproduct of the very process that supported the modernization of Japan.

3. Korea Delinked from the Regional Food Regime, 1945–48

With the defeat of Japan by the Allied Forces in World War II, Korea regained its freedom from the brutal colonial regime, but not the independence it so craved. Korea's hopes for reconstructing a national state on its own terms had been crushed by the centrifugal force of the emerging Cold War power-politics. This great power struggle delayed Korea's independence and resulted in the division of the nation along the 38th parallel. The division left each part of Korea occupied by foreign troops for the next three years (1945–48)—the northern half by the former Soviet Union ('the Soviet zone') and the southern half by the U.S. ('the American zone').⁵²

The 1945 division left the two parts of Korea in economic disarray and with a food deficit, while each zone began constructing a national state mirroring its occupying power. To appreciate the extent of the economic dislocation and its impact on agricultural production and food consumption in the postwar period, it is necessary to understand the agro-food conditions in Korea at the time of decolonization.

3.1. Production

During Korea's colonization, the mountainous region in the north became an industrial zone and the southern plains became an agricultural base, though the two were not necessarily integrated to reinforce each other's development. The southern part

⁵² Korea was divided into north and south along the 38th parallel in August 1945, and each zone was under foreign occupation for the following three years. Since neither part of Korea was officially established as a state, it is accurate to refer to each zone as "northern" or "southern" zone. However, for the purposes of the project, I simply refer to 'North Korea' and 'South Korea.' No political meanings are intended by referring to them as such.

(hereafter refer to as the South) was predominantly agricultural and had a larger population and more paddy fields, while the northern part (hereafter refer to as the North) was endowed with mineral deposits and hydroelectric facilities and had the industrial base. The South accounted for 71 percent of rice and 85 percent of barley production in Korea during the period 1940–44 (BOK/AER 1949). However, such production levels were predicated upon the availability of industrial inputs, particularly fertilizer and pesticides from the North.

After Korea was freed from colonial rule and came under occupation by foreign forces, only power lines and shipping lanes—no industrial goods—remained intact between the two zones. Without access to synthetic agricultural inputs from the North, the South’s agricultural production plunged, and recovered only when the U.S. began shipping in large quantities of chemical fertilizer in 1947 (McCune, G. 1950).⁵³ The average annual rice production for 1946–47 in the South dropped by 13.3 percent from the 1940–44 average, while the average annual barley production dropped by a whopping 47.4 percent for the same period (calculated from Table 4).⁵⁴

⁵³ Ammonium nitrate, potassium sulphate, ammonium sulphate, and superphosphate.

⁵⁴ The calculations are based on the Bank of Chosun’s production estimate for South Korea in 1940–44: 71 percent of rice and 85 percent of barley production for the total grain production in Korea prior to the division came from the south (BOK/Annual Economic Review 1949); I used 71 percent of rice production in 1941–44 as 100, and 85 percent of barley production in the corresponding period as 100, and compared the amount to the average production of rice and barley in 1946–47 to extract the drop in percentages.

Table 4. Food Balance (in thousand sŏk) and Population (in 1,000 persons) Before and After Independence, 1941–49^a

	Grain type	Production	Export	Import	Total supply	Population
1941	Rice	21,527	4,232	0	17,295	23,913
	Other grain	16,745	599	1,107	17,253	
	Total	38,273	4,831	1,107	34,548	
1942	Rice	24,886	6,273	0	18,613	25,525
	Other grain	14,647	759	768	14,656	
	Total	39,533	7,032	768	33,269	
1943	Rice	15,688	1,303	922	15,307	25,827
	Other grain	12,224	273	1,126	13,077	
	Total	27,911	1,576	2,409	28,384	
1944	Rice	18,719	4,121	0	14,598	25,120
	Other grain	16,285	356	1,927	17,856	
	Total	35,004	4,486	1,927	32,454	
1945	Rice	16,052	1,756	0	14,296	n/a
	Other grain	10,984	0	1,874	12,858	
	Total	27,036	1,756	1,874	27,154	
1946	Rice	12,836	0	0	12,836	19,369
	Other grain	7,042	0	1,193	8,235	
	Total	19,878	0	1,193	21,070	
1947	Rice	12,050	0	273	12,324	19,886
	Other grain	6,351	0	2,711	9,061	
	Total	18,401	0	2,984	21,385	
1948	Rice	13,850	0	485	14,335	20,027
	Other grain	6,309	0	1,569	7,879	
	Total	20,519	0	2,054	22,214	
1949	Rice	15,486	0	0	15,486	20,289
	Other grain	8,122	0	468	8,588	
	Total	23,608	0	468	24,074	

Notes: Food: Based on the Grain Year (From November 1, to the end of October the following year); Years prior to decolonization in 1945 reflects production from entire Korea (both the North and South), whereas the years after 1945 reflects production from the South only; The total production in 1945 reflects the use of agricultural inputs from the North since the division occurred in August 1945, and the occupying force in South Korea (the U.S. military) did not arrive until that September.

Population: 1941, 1942, 1943, and 1944 figures represent combined population of North and South; 1946, 1947, 1948 and 1949 figures represent only the South; Data for 1944 are from census data from the colonial government, and data for 1949 are census data from the South Korean government; 1941, 1942 and 1943 are based on the population as of the end of each year; 1945 figure is not available; 1946, 1947 and 1948 figures are estimates by the USAMGIK.

Source: Food: Chosŏn Kyŏngjesa 1949:26–27; Nongsusanpu 1978:200, cited in Chŏn Gang-su 1995. “Korea rice control policy in the 1940s” [1940nyŏndae han’gukŭi mikokt’ongjehŏngch’aek], *Review of Economic History*, Vol 19(1): 224.

Population: 1941–1944 are from the Bureau of Statistics, Economic Planning Board, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry’s Agriculture Statistics Yearbook 1969:19; 1946–1949 are from Economic Statistics Yearbook 1969, the Bank of Korea.

^a I have cautioned the use of statistics generated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry from 1948–1958 due to historical circumstances (see chapter 1 for details). For 1948 and 1949 in this table has been compiled from multiple sources to minimize data error.

Table 4 shows the food balance and population change between 1941 and 1949 spanning the colonial and postcolonial years to illustrate the stress placed on the food condition: 1941–44 (shaded area) represents the colonial food balance for the whole of Korea (both the North and South), while 1945–1949 represents the postcolonial food balance for the South only.⁵⁵ Although the South had the lion’s share of rice-growing land, the territorial division reduced the production area nonetheless, decreasing the total grain production further.⁵⁶ Also, the South suffered a disastrous decrease of grain production from 38,000 sŏk in 1941 to 18,000 sŏk in 1947. Because it was only part of a vertically integrated system—the North producing fertilizers and other industrial inputs, the South using them to produce rice, and Japan connecting the two and consuming the rice—that the imperial Japan had established, the South’s agricultural production system, delinked from the other two parts, could not function properly.

3.2. Consumption

As both North and South Korea suffered from a reduction in the food supply after 1945, their consumption also had to decrease. The reduction in consumption was exacerbated by the division, for the South withheld its rice from the North, and the North deprived the South of upland foods such as beans and millet. Korea’s annual per capita grain consumption deteriorated slightly during the postcolonial period even from its level during the height of the Pacific War (1941–45), as Table 5 illustrates. Even though official rice exports to Japan were halted, the total food intake during this

⁵⁵ The decolonization occurred on August 15, 1945, but I have classified 1945 to after the independence because rice is harvested in October. Barley is harvested in early summer, but in this table, production figures come from grain year, which is November 1 to October 31 of the following year.

⁵⁶ The total arable land was 4,219,790 chŏngbo in 1943, of which rice paddy in North Korea was 511,882 chŏngbo while rice paddy in South Korea was 1,192,375 chŏngbo (based on statistical yearbook by Japanese Governor-General, www.kosis.kr) as opposed to 2,070,577 chŏngbo in 1949, of which rice paddy was 1,236,559 chŏngbo (Bank of Korea (1955), Annual Economic Review, statistics p. 111).

period remained far below the required level of consumption for most people due to the combination of a number of factors that converged on the postcolonial Korea.

Table 5. Annual Per Capita Grain Consumption, 1941–49 (sŏk)

	Year									
	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	
Per capita grain consumption	1,487	1,303	1,099	1,292	n/a	1,088	1,068	1,109	1,187	

Note: Constructed based on Table 3 by taking the total supply divided by population to determine per capita grain consumption.

South Korea was bound to have a food problem first because it experienced a sudden increase of demand caused by a significant population growth in the immediate postcolonial period. In 1944, prior to national division, the total population of Korea was 25 million. After the division, over three quarters of the Korean population remained in the South. The South’s population grew further due to the repatriation from abroad (approximately 1.2 million) and migration from the North (Moon and Ryu 1977). In 1949, the South’s population was recorded at 20.2 million, much larger than the population in the same area during the colonial period (KOSIS 2015). The combination of the production decrease and the population increase resulted in a serious food imbalance in the immediate postcolonial period.

The food imbalance was further exacerbated by a hyperinflation in the postcolonial economy. The average monthly food price per person increased 100-fold—from 8 *yen* to 800 *yen*—in a year after Korea’s liberation, while an unskilled worker’s daily wage remained 3 to 5 *yen* (Henderson 1968:138; Conde 1988:167). This inflation was set off by both an uncontrolled expansion of the money supply and the mismanagement of the economy by the U.S. military government (Kim and Roemer 1979:27).

Given that the food question was an important matter for the U.S. occupation forces to address if they hoped to install a friendly regime in South Korea, why did

they fail to improve the food supply and consumption? Why was it that the U.S. government let its forces in Korea implement policies that worsened food conditions at the risk of alienating Koreans from itself and its forces? What were the consequences that its failures left for Korea's food production and consumption?

4. Reorganizing Korea's Agro-food System

Food played a critical role in constructing the Korean state under U.S. hegemonic order after Japan's defeat, just as it provided the glue that integrated Korea, Taiwan, and Manchuria into the Japan-centered regime of food production and consumption in the earlier period. While there are differing views assessing early postwar U.S. policies toward Korea, evidence corroborates the argument that U.S. food policy was shaped chiefly by the political concerns that the U.S. had to maintain its hegemony. There are different views regarding U.S. policy toward Korea during the occupation period: those who argue that despite the major role the U.S. played in dividing Korea, until the Korean War the U.S. did not have a clear policy toward Korea. In fact, there was no long-term U.S. strategic planning, and that Korea was a footnote to American interests (Lauterbach 1947:223; Cumings 1981:201, 2005:185; Kim, D-h 1981). In contrast, those who repudiate the claim of "American innocence theory" or a "fumbling theory" contend that the U.S. had been preparing the policy toward Korea since 1944, and the occupation forces were knowledgeable about the directions of the policy (Bernstein 1970; Kang J-g 1989: 41–42, 156–57). Food control is one of the fundamental aspects of state-building, as Tilly notes (1975:393, 454–55), and the U.S. used food to build a state in South Korea as a forward base against communist expansion in East Asia. One of the critical aspects of the state-building process was that the U.S. occupation forces reorganized Korea's rice economy through its food aid policy in a way that would firmly place the Korean state within the U.S. hegemonic order.

4.1. U.S. Army Military Government in Korea and Food Policy

When the U.S. occupation forces arrived in Korea in early September 1945, less than a month after Japan surrendered, they were confronted with the potential for a socialist revolution. The country was bubbling with revolutionary turmoil, buttressed by the economic and political deprivation experienced during the colonial period. Added to this, the people were demanding land and rice, as well as the right of self-determination in the rebuilding of an independent national state. The colonial authority had collapsed, and no new pro-U.S. regime had replaced it in the South, whereas a socialist regime was rapidly being built in the North with Soviet support. There were well-functioning, left-leaning people's committees in every village and town preparing for an independent national state (Sarafan 1946:350), as well as national political movements that vied for significant roles in a newly emerging state. One of the national political organizations, the Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence (CPKI; *Chosŏn kŏn'guk chunbi wiwŏnhoe*), had already begun assuming an interim administrative authority by negotiating on the day of Japan's surrender an agreement with the defeated colonial regime that guaranteed, among other things, food provisions for the following three months in exchange for the safe passage of Japanese nationals returning home (Conde 1988; Rist 1997).⁵⁷

The U.S. Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK; *chaechosŏn miyukkunsalyŏngpu kunchŏngch'ŏng*), established to administer the U.S. zone south of

⁵⁷ From the time the Japanese surrendered to Allied Forces on August 15, 1945, prior to the arrival of the U.S. military on September 8, 1945, the South Koreans organized a self-governing body, the Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence (CPKI; *Chosŏn kŏn'guk chunbi wiwŏnhoe*) to prepare for establishing an independent state in the Korean peninsula. Later some of the leadership from the CPKI established the Korean People's Republic (KPR; *Chosŏn inmin konghwa'guk*). However, the U.S. refused to recognize the CPKI, and soon the CPKI was dissolved by the U.S. occupation forces. In North Korea, a similar effort was on the way, and ultimately it became the government of North Korea. Volume 1 of Bruce Cumings's (1981) *The Origins of the Korean War: Liberation and the Emergence of Separate Regimes 1945–1947* is an excellent source for this topic.

the 38th parallel that divided the Korean peninsula, was wary of the possibility that ‘rice communists’—people who turned to communism because they were desperately hungry for rice—would emerge and grow in number. It therefore had to find a way to feed the people and stave off the socialist tides among the populace while it took control of the state-building process. Playing from the position of strength as the occupying force, it found food policy an effective tool with which to support those Korean political organizations that agreed with its stance and to close down those that did not (Hoag 1970:104–105; Tilly 1975:96). Rather than working with the CPKI and the people’s committees to formulate an appropriate food policy, the USAMGIK banned the planned November meeting of the people’s committees where food was the main topic (Conde 1988:101) and began instituting a policy that would reorganize South Korea’s rice economy, only to bring the people to the brink of starvation months later, however unintended this might have been.⁵⁸

In early October 1945, the USAMGIK instituted a free-market system by abolishing the existing laws and regulations governing the grain market (Cumings 1981:202). Its hasty move to create a free market reflected both U.S. officials’ faith in free markets and the USAMGIK’s optimistic—and unrealistic—expectations. The U.S. military governor, Major General Archibald V. Arnold, firmly believed that “in a democracy the free play of supply and demand must be allowed to operate unhampered, that any control imposed on that free play would operate against the democratic system of government” (Robinson 1947: 78). With the rice extractions to Japan halted and with a bumper crop year, the USAMGIK expected a million-bag surplus of rice in South Korea (US Army Forces in Korea, as cited in Kim, J. footnote

⁵⁸ Bruce Cumings (1981:201–13) posits that the USAMGIK policies on food and land reform stemmed from a combination of the “warm-spirited good will, benevolent naiveté, and arrogant ethnocentrism” of the Americans rather than from calculated action.

13; Conde 1988:101), but did so without having a full grasp of food conditions in the South at the time.

However, because Korea lacked adequate institutions to support a market economy, the USAMGIK policy resulted in hoarding and speculation as well as a thriving black market. Much of the rice channeled to black markets was shipped to Japan for profit by landlords, police, and other government officials, not the subsistence farmers that constituted the majority of the Korean peasantry. Richard D. Robinson,⁵⁹ an official of the USAMGIK, alleged that a quarter of the 1945 rice harvest was smuggled out of South Korea to Japan, traded there for luxury items to be sold back in Korea for enormous profits (Robinson 1947:77), but the black market activities took place without much interference from the USAMGIK and the government of Japan. Rather, the USAMGIK blamed the situation on the Korean people's overconsumption. The price of rice as a result skyrocketed: a bushel of rice that sold for 9.4 yen in September 1945 cost 2,800 yen one year later (Cumings 1981:204).⁶⁰

The USAMGIK food policy not only affected lives in the South but also reverberated at the core of Cold War relations in East Asia. The U.S. and the Soviet Union, each occupying a part of the divided Korea, met to negotiate administrative and economic matters in January and February 1946.⁶¹ When the Soviets sought to

⁵⁹ Richard D. Robinson was Chief of the Public Opinion Section of the Department of Information of the USAMGIK, and later a historian attached to the G-2 Intelligence Headquarters of the XXIV Corps, the highest echelon of command in American-held South Korea (Robinson 1947:4). Robinson wrote the original copy of his unpublished book, "Betrayal of a Nation" while he was stationed in Korea; however, the volume was "burned" to avoid imprisonment. He left Korea in 1947, and reconstructed the manuscript, which was much shorter than the original one (ibid.).

⁶⁰ *History of U.S. Armed Forces in Korea*, vol. 3, chap. 6, p. 5, cited in Cumings (1981).

⁶¹ On December 16, 1945, the foreign ministers of the U.S., Great Britain, and the Soviet Union convened in Moscow to discuss postwar issues, and agreed to an accord pertaining to Korea stipulating that there would be a joint conference to discuss mutual agreements on limited economic and administrative matters, and to establish a Soviet–American Joint Commission, which lasted until 1947.

secure rice for the North in exchange for fertilizer and electricity (Robinson 1947:75),⁶² the U.S. replied that there was no available rice. Having heard U.S. pronouncements of a bumper harvest and surplus rice only a few months earlier, the Soviets were reluctant to believe this and interpreted it as an attempt to undermine their administration in the North by doing nothing to help alleviate the food crisis (Robinson 1947:79–80; Cumings 1981:204, 240). They cut off the provision of fertilizer and electricity in retaliation. The food situation in the South deteriorated swiftly, and the specter of widespread starvation brought about resistance and hostility toward the USAMGIK in both the rural areas and urban centers. Food riots were reported to Washington by USAMGIK intelligence as “communist-inspired” incitements (Robinson 1947:79).

In order to stop the deterioration of the food situation, the USAMGIK completely rescinded the free rice market policy by February 1946 and introduced a control system much more rigid than the Japanese colonial one.⁶³ The system included not only price controls of rice but also the urban rationing of grain and a coercive collection of rice and barley from farmers in the spring of that year.⁶⁴ Provincial Food Services, a branch of the Korean Commodity Company, controlled food products and supervised rice collection.⁶⁵ But farmers resisted the compulsory collection at the government-determined prices, which were much lower than even the production cost,

⁶² Needless to say, North Korea was suffering from a severe food shortage following the national division. At the joint conference (January 16–February 5, 1946), the Soviets cited a “catastrophic” food situation in three northern provinces and asked the Americans to supply surplus rice in exchange for coal, which South Korea needed urgently (Cumings 1971:240).

⁶³ Grain control law was revived by November 1945 (Public Notice #6), but a full compulsory grain collection system was restored by January 1946 (Decree #45), and the free rice market was abolished by February 1946.

⁶⁴ The rice rationing was at a rate of half the amount the Japanese allowed during the Pacific War (Cumings (1988:204).

⁶⁵ The Provincial Food Service was under the Food Section of the National Food Administration, and grain inspection stations functioned as local administrative units (Meade 1951:196).

and workers and urban residents protested the food shortage and demanded increased supply.⁶⁶ The USAMGIK offered goods including American fertilizer to barter with farmers to increase the grain collection, but after the agreements were made the USAMGIK goods were never delivered (ibid.). In terms of grain collection, each rural family was allowed to keep 67.5 kg per person, and the rest was to be taken below market price. The collection program turned into a “rice seizure program” as the USAMGIK used the force of both American troops and the Korean National Police to implement the program (ibid. 149, 284).⁶⁷ Anyone transgressing the grain collection decree was arrested (Robinson 1947:77; Conde 1988, vol. I: 100, vol. II: 26).⁶⁸

In summary, the USAMGIK food policy was one of teetering from a free market to a government-controlled system, negatively affecting both the food balance and Korea’s agricultural production and distribution. For example, in a span of two years, the USAMGIK changed its food policy 12 times, as Table 6 shows. With such frequent changes of its policy, the USAMGIK managed to wreak havoc on the rice-based economy in a very short period of time.

⁶⁶ Bruce Cumings’s *The Origins of the Korean War* (1981) details the fierce response of the Korean people regarding food shortages.

⁶⁷ The Korean National Police was under the control of the U.S. occupation forces, and many of the top brass were recruited from the former colonial police force.

⁶⁸ The U.S. occupation forces cited seven reasons for the food shortages that shifted the blame onto the Koreans without mentioning the U.S. free-market policy that set the economy into a downward spiral (Conde 1988: 1:100); the U.S. occupation forces also claimed that the ‘overeating’ Koreans contributed to the food shortages (Conde 1988: 2:26); Robinson (1947:77) stated that “the people went hog wild. Per capita consumption of rice went up by leaps and bounds.”

Table 6. Changes in USAMGIK Food Policy, 1945–48

Date	Law	Content	Misc
October 5, 1945	General Notice No. 1 “Free Market in Rice”	Free rice market	Free
December 19, 1945	General Notice No. 6	Grain control law	Control
January 25, 1946	Ordinance No 45 “National Rice Collection”	Compulsory grain collection law to collect 1945 harvest	Control
April 24, 1946	Ordinance No. 77 “Special Rice Provisions for City of Seoul”	Allowing grain in Seoul	Free
May 20, 1946	Ordinance No. 87 “Special Rice Provisions for City of Pusan”	Allowing grain in Busan	Free
May 28, 1946	Ordinance No. 90 “Economic Controls”	Economic Control Law	Control
May 29, 1946	National Food Regulation No. 1 “Collection of Summer Grains”	1946 harvest, summer grain collection	Control
August 12, 1946	National Food Regulation No. 2 “Rice collection”	1946 harvest, rice collection	Control
August 31, 1946	Ordinance No.105 “Repeal of Rice Collection Ordinance: Revocation of Rice Transportation Licenses”	1945 harvest, abolition of rice collection law	Free
May 8, 1947	National Food Regulation No. 5. “Collection of Summer Grains”	1947 harvest, summer grain collection	Control
August 18, 1947	National Food Regulation No. 6. “Collection of Rice”	1947 harvest, rice collection proposal	Control
September 27, 1947	Public Act No. 6 “Collection of Rice”	1947 harvest, rice collection law	Control

Source: Compiled from the USAMGIK, Office of the Military Governor, *Official Gazette*. Various dates. USAMGIK Official Gazettes are downloaded from the National Archives of Korea, Daejeon, Korea. <http://theme.archives.go.kr/next/gazette/listDateSearch.do>

The failure of the USAMGIK’s food policy made the military government unpopular among Koreans. By mid-February 1946, public polls, taken in mid-February 1946, showed that 53 percent of the respondents had a negative opinion of Americans and that 49 percent preferred the Japanese rule to the USAMGIK

(Robinson 1947:82; Spector 2005:1134).⁶⁹ Considering how Koreans reviled Japanese colonial occupation, this public poll did not bode well for the USAMGIK and its policies in South Korea.⁷⁰

The USAMGIK sought to refurbish its image with food aid. When it projected a shortage of 139,000 metric tons of rice between April and June 1946, it requested that the U.S. government provide 150,000 metric tons of food grains (Bunce 1946, *op cit.* Hö, footnote 37). The U.S. government responded by sending 4.2 million bushels of wheat, 15,000 tons of corn, and 8,000 tons of flour and other grains to Korea by November 1946 (History of U.S. Armed Forces in Korea, volume 3, *op cited in* Cumings 1981:517, footnote114).

The arrival of this food aid, brought in to alleviate the postcolonial food crisis created at least partially by the U.S., heralded a new direction for Korea's agro-food system which is still going strong after almost 70 years. When its initial projection to secure food through the local production without any long-term planning or investment failed, the USAMGIK's responded by importing wheat from home to rectify the food imbalance. The U.S. thus began importing surplus American wheat and other agricultural goods, sowing the seeds of a long-term transformation of the Korean agro-food system—the integration of Korea's food production with the U.S.-centered global food regime and the Westernization of Koreans' food tastes that will be addressed in chapter 5. The foundations for this transformation were laid during the three-year rule by the U.S. occupation forces.

⁶⁹ Richard D. Robinson was a member of the survey team, and he was ordered by the U.S. occupation forces to undertake no further public polls of the kind (Robinson 1947:82).

⁷⁰ The unpopularity of the U.S. occupation forces was not solely due to the free rice market policy. There were a bundle of other issues that Koreans did not like, such as the prolonged trusteeship, the dissolution of the CPKI, and so forth.

5. Conclusion

Korea's path to becoming part of the global economy has been a tumultuous one. While European and settler nations were busy building nation-states under the first food regime (1870–1914) in the Western hemisphere and Oceania, Japan built a *yen* bloc to exploit its colonies to underwrite modernization in East Asia. As one of these colonies, Korea was exploited to produce the common staple rice for Japan, and in return its people endured hunger and destitution. Food was central to the management of an empire, as it was the metropole who decided what is grown where and who eats what. Korea was designated a producer of the rice that fed Japanese, and Koreans were fed inferior grains. Postcolonial Korea, divided and delinked from the Japanese empire, struggled to keep its head above water in the initial period after decolonization. It lacked a national institution that could facilitate grain production and distribution to meet the needs of its people. The situation was exacerbated by U.S. intervention, which jumped from one failed policy to another. Throughout the chaos and failures, food aid was used to bring the Korean state into the anti-communist league led by the U.S., as well as to lay the foundations for integrating Korean grain production and consumption into the global food regime under the U.S. hegemony, a topic addressed in the next chapter.

The period of the USAMGIK rule represents the critical turning point at which South Korea underwent the dissolution of the existing colonial agriculture and food system—production, consumption, and trade—and the foundation for a new agro-food system under the hegemony of the U.S. was laid. In the midst of restructuring its sociopolitical and productive system, the food balance was thrown into chaos and low agricultural productivity ensued, leading to a food crisis.⁷¹ The USAMGIK first

⁷¹ While the USAMGIK failed to improve the food situation, it implemented other policies that had devastating impact on Korean society, and reorganized social relations. The USAMGIK took control of

needed to dissolve the existing rice-based economy to incorporate South Korea into the capitalist world economy under the rubric of the second food regime. Not only did the food crisis help dissolve the old system but it also created an opening for food aid that reorganized Korea's food production and consumption. Furthermore, the USAMGIK food policy proved critical to the state-building process that culminated in the establishment of an anti-communist regime in Korea, as the next chapter discusses.

After Korea's agro-food system was delinked from the Japan-centered regional regime and thrown into a crisis by the USAMGIK, it underwent a transformation for the next three decades with the assistance of the wheat provided by the U.S. government, as the next chapter shows. Korea's food production and consumption were gradually transformed in the process in a way that integrated it into the U.S.-centered global food regime. Koreans became addicted to U.S. wheat, and would no longer have to be coerced with side-payments or threats, a topic addressed in the following chapters. Chapter 3 examines an earlier phase of the long process by analyzing how U.S. food aid transformed Korea's food production and consumption in the 1960s and 1970s. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss how food aid trained Koreans' palette

over 80 percent of the total assets previously held by the Japanese colonial bureaucracy (Lee, Dae-kuen 1984:132), including land of about 230,000–300,000 *chŏngbo*, 10–14% of the total cultivable land that was concentrated in the rice bowl area of Cholla Province—42.2 percent of the total cultivable land in the province—which is a significant amount in the Korean rice economy (ibid. 119). It took the USAMGIK two years to assess vested properties, and the land reform did not begin until March 1948, and carried over to Administration of the Republic of Korea (South Korea). The land reform was partly in response to the swift land reform in North Korea in 1946 rather than to increase food production as it has been argued elsewhere (Lyon 1961:12). The USAMGIK's handle of the vested properties was suspect. The vested properties should have been the material foundation for constructing an independent state; instead, the USAMGIK authorized the resale of the assets and issued an outrageous amount of paper money (partly due to giving bonds to landowners), causing inflation, devaluation, and the paralysis of banking and exchange. More significant, the USAMGIK made a decision to retain most of the colonial institutions in order to maintain effective control over Korea, and relied on Korean civil servants and police who had served under the Japanese. The USAMGIK stepped in to replace the Japanese colonizers, old wine in a new bottle; as a direct result, Korean society still battles the legacy of colonial and neocolonial impacts. In fact, the decision to retain a *de facto* colonial structure in postwar Korea stripped the Koreans of an opportunity to construct a 'new society.'

for wheat and how their food consumption was transformed so that they would increase their wheat consumption even without food aid.

CHAPTER 3:
FEEDING TO STARVE:
FOOD AID AND CHANGING FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

“[Foreign aid] is a method by which the U.S. maintains a position of influence and control around the world, and sustains a good many countries which would definitely collapse or pass into the Communist bloc.”

—President John F. Kennedy (1962)⁷²

1. Introduction

Following World War II, the U.S. emerged as the hegemonic power in the capitalist world economy, advocating the free market and Western democracy. The postwar bipolarity in international relations divided nations along the ideological lines of the capitalist West and socialist East, and newly independent postcolonial countries were forced to choose between the two. As the hegemonic power in the West, the U.S. wielded unprecedented influence over the process of state-building and economic restructuring in many postcolonial nations. A critical component of the U.S.’s overwhelming influence was rooted in its enormous wealth, particularly its ability to produce an abundance of food much needed in emerging postcolonial states. For many postcolonial nations suffering food shortages caused by the disruption of agricultural production and the dissolution of the colonial trading blocs, the U.S. stepped in as the primary food aid donor—a status it maintains even today.⁷³ The postwar international food order—that scholars (Friedmann 1982; Friedmann and McMichael 1989) refer to

⁷² President John F. Kennedy’s address delivered to the Economic Club of New York on December 14, 1962, at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel, New York, NY. The speech and the highlights of the discussion were reported by the *Wall Street Journal* on December 17, 1962 (P. 18).

⁷³ In 2012, the U.S. funded 44 percent of global food aid deliveries by the World Food Program (WFP). Fifty percent of the global food aid in 2012 was provided through the WFP (WFP, “2012 Food Aid Flows,” 2013).

as a second food regime—began to take shape under these historical circumstances, and soon production and consumption relations in postcolonial nations were profoundly reconfigured.

Given its unique status as the global food power, the U.S. instituted food aid as a constituent part of the aid regime by adopting Public Law (PL) 480 food aid programs (“Food for Peace”) in 1954. It used food aid initially as an economic outlet to solve its agricultural overproduction problem, and later increasingly as an instrument of diplomatic and strategic leverage in international relations (Wallerstein, M. 1980; Friedmann 1982) as it attempted to tackle a multitude of objectives simultaneously as the postwar global hegemon. During the Cold War, food aid was a powerful means of securing the support of newly emerging nations and to support the friendly governments in the Global South (‘Third World’ in the Cold War terminology). U.S. Senator Hubert Humphrey, the main architect of the food aid programs, declared that one way of combating communism in Asia, and preventing “the breakdown of the capitalistic system under the load of its own wealth,” was to establish the food aid program (Humphrey 1954:5).

South Korea, as a postcolonial state suffering chronic food shortages and standing at the border of the Cold War, was designated by the U.S. as one of the key recipient states of its food aid. Not only did Korea need food aid because its agricultural system was made dysfunctional by its delinking from the Japanese colonial system when it gained independence. But it was also force-fed with food aid because the U.S. needed both an outlet for its surplus grains and an outpost for its anti-communist struggle. The convergence of Korea’s and the U.S.’s needs made Korea an ideal site on which to grow a U.S.-centered global food regime, and Korea’s agro-food system was consequently reorganized and incorporated into the capitalist world

economy. Korea's postcolonial development, particularly of its food production and consumption, was profoundly affected by the geopolitics of the U.S. project.

From 1961 to 1981, Korea went from being one of the world's poorest countries to one of the four original Newly Industrialized Countries (NICs), and its per capita income rose from US\$85 to US\$1,842 (KOSIS 2015). Its spectacular economic growth was accompanied by the emergence of the developmental dictatorship that reoriented the economy from import-substitution to export-led industrialization under guided capitalism. Following the 1961 military coup d'état, General Park Chung Hee sought to legitimize its power by developing the national economy, and the state's relationship with society was fundamentally changed as a result. In other words, the development model of Korea was a combination of an authoritarian state and economic growth that repressed its own people to enrich them, so that the repression might be justified in the eyes of the repressed (Lee, B-c 2006). To achieve economic growth, the Park government constructed a highly centralized state capable not only of direct economic planning and implementation but also of exercising extensive and intensive control over the socioeconomic and political lives of its people. The state kept tight control over industrial workers while allocating credits and direct subsidies to large industrial businesses at its discretion.

The state's capacity to accomplish this was built on the economic assistance provided by the U.S. government. Food aid in particular played a pivotal role in incorporating Korea into the global economy under the U.S. hegemony. Just as McMichael (2009c:141) described the U.S. practice of sending its surplus food to postcolonial states under its umbrella within strategic Cold War parameters as food aid "subsidized wages, encouraging selective Third World industrialization, and securing loyalty against communism and to imperial markets," the U.S. food aid indeed helped establish an anti-communist developmental state in Korea and supplied indispensable

inputs to Korea's industrialization. The cheap grain provided under the aid programs subsidized wages and helped feed the burgeoning urban working class.

However, the food aid had disastrous consequences for Korean farmers and rural communities. It flooded the market with grain much cheaper than the rice grown domestically, pushing farmers deep into debt or out of their rural homes and into urban areas (Kim, Y-h 1990; Koo, H-g 1990; Lee, H-c 1999; Lee, H-k 1999).⁷⁴ According to Sung-whan Ban (1984), approximately 11 million Koreans migrated from urban to rural areas between 1957 and 1980. By the time the food aid programs came to an end in the mid-1970s, Korea was no longer a predominantly agricultural society.⁷⁵ It could no longer feed itself with domestically produced food and had to rely on imports. The national diet changed from one consisting of rice and vegetables to a rice-, wheat-, and meat-centered one, as chapter 5 illustrates. The food aid, which helped bring about Korea's great transformation by feeding urban workers, starved farmers at the same time.

This chapter examines the impact that PL 480 imports, particularly wheat and wheat products, had on Korea's agricultural production and food consumption, as well as the role that food aid played in reconfiguring the Korean state and society. As it analyzes the relationship between food aid from the U.S. and food production/consumption in Korea, the chapter turns its analytical focus on the Korean state as the locus of action and tension that betrays both the state's extensive and intensive control of society and its complex and numerous ties with big business. It

⁷⁴ There are many drivers of urbanization such as industrialization, economic growth, and land conversion. Urbanization is caused by migration; however, there are many other drivers such as reclassification of rural areas to urban as communities shift out of agriculture into other economic activities and as urban areas expand and absorb rural communities, and by comparatively faster rates of natural increase in urban areas (L. Williams 2016, personal communication to C-a Yu).

⁷⁵ The primary sector, which accounted for as much as 40 percent of total economic activity in the period 1962–64, declined to 18.3 percent by the period 1977–81 (Kim, K-s 1991).

starts with a discussion of the ways in which the food aid was implicated in creating an anti-communist state from 1948 to 1961. It then turns its focus on the roles played by the aid wheat in transforming Korea's agricultural production and consumption from 1955, when Korea signed the Surplus Agricultural Commodities Agreement with the U.S., to 1981, when the last shipment of aid wheat arrived in Korea. This period coincides with the second food regime and the U.S.'s attempts to build Korea as one of the visible capitalist showcases of the Cold War.

2. Food Aid in the Making of an Anti-Communist State, 1948–61

Following the three years of U.S. military occupation, the Republic of Korea was established in the southern half of the Korean Peninsula on August 15, 1948. The U.S.-backed autocratic regime of Syngman Rhee (1948–60) was installed, and the new state received large amounts of American economic and military aid,⁷⁶ of which food aid was an annual average of 23.2 percent between 1948 and 1961.^{77,78} The food aid was critical to the establishment of the new state. It helped the Korean state address the food problem, and the state's power grew with its ability to discipline the population through its control and distribution of the food aid.

⁷⁶ South Korea received a total of 4.96 billion dollars (current) during the period 1948–61, of which 1.8 billion dollars was in military aid.

⁷⁷ Estimated percentage for each year is as follows: 1948 (38%), 1949 (5%), 1950 (32%), 1951 (32%), 1952 (58%), 1953 (61%), 1954 (0.4%), 1955 (0.5%), 1956 (15%), 1957 (12%), 1958 (22%), 1959 (16%), 1960 (7%), and 1961 (26%). Note that there is a discrepancy in the total amount of economic assistance (food aid included) between the Bank of Chosun (Korea) Yearbook and the USAID Greenbook in terms of how much food aid actually had been provided. I used a conservative figure (the USAID Greenbook).

⁷⁸ Syngman Rhee was overthrown by popular revolt in 1960, and John Chang (Chang Myon) took over as the Prime Minister of the Second Republic of Korea from August 1960 to May 18, 1961. I have used the figure for the duration of the two to reflect this period.

U.S. assistance to Korea underwent a number of visible changes in nature since 1948.⁷⁹ Aid was offered to help keep Korea afloat until 1953, when the Korean War ended (U.S. Department of State 1950).⁸⁰ The aid from 1953 to 1961 was mainly for post-Korean War reconstruction and rehabilitation,⁸¹ but after 1961 the nature of American food aid would change to underwrite Korean industrialization. The changes in the nature of its aid belies the fact that one of the overriding drivers of American food aid to Korea had been U.S. political interests, as discussed in chapter 2.⁸² Its interests were particularly fueled by the intensification of Cold War tensions, and its competition with the (former) Soviet Union for spheres of political and economic influence in East Asia raised Korea's importance to the U.S. (Henderson 1968, Baldwin 1974).

Reflecting its political significance, Korea became one of the top U.S. aid recipient countries, receiving some \$14 billion (current dollars)⁸³ between 1946 and 1981, of which \$6.1 billion was economic and \$7.8 billion was military assistance (USAID GBK 2010).⁸⁴ Table 7 shows the breakdown of the economic assistance; of the total \$6.1 billion, food aid constituted approximately \$2.1 billion, or 34 percent.

⁷⁹ The U.S. provided relief aid to Korea from the Government and Relief in Occupied Area (GARIOA) funds from 1945 to 1948 (Sakong and Koh 2010).

⁸⁰ The U.S. Department of State, RG 59, box#2882, United States Policy Regarding Korea, Part III, December 1945–1950, 611.95/12–151).

⁸¹ The period 1948–61 spans two governments in South Korea: the First Republic, led by Syngman Rhee (1948–60), and the Second Republic, led by John Chang (1960–61). The Second Republic was short-lived, as it came through a student-led popular revolution and was overthrown by a military coup led by Park Chung Hee.

⁸² This was evident not only during the relief and reconstruction period (1945–60) but also in the 1960s, when South Korea began industrializing. Large amounts of PL 480 commodities were transferred to South Korea to support the military assistance program (GAO, “U.S. Assistance for the Economic Development of the Republic of Korea,” July 12, 1973, 48).

⁸³ \$70.7 billion in constant 2008 dollars.

⁸⁴ The total military assistance for the period 1945–93 comes to approximately \$8.8 billion in historical dollars.

Table 7. Summary of U.S. Economic Assistance to South Korea, 1946–81 (in millions, historical \$US)

Program or account	Postwar Relief (1946–48)	Marshall Plan (1949–52)	Mutual Security Act (1953–61)	Foreign Assistance Act (1962–81)	TOTAL (1946–81)
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, TOTAL	181.2	485.6	2,579.0	2,857.2	6,103.0
LOANS	24.9		27.4	1,427.2	1,479.5
GRANTS	156.3	485.6	2,551.6	1,430.0	4,623.5
A. USAID & Predecessor, Total		10.0	2,062.4	1,080.1	3,152.5
Economic Support Fund/ Security Support Assistance			1,861.9	501.1	2,363.0
Other USAID Assistance		10.0	200.5	579.0	789.5
USAID Loans			25.3	501.9	527.2
USAID Grants		10.0	2,037.1	578.2	2,625.3
B. Department of Agriculture, Total		0.3	313.8	1,738.0	2,052.1
Food Aid, Total		0.3	313.8	1,738.0	2,052.1
Title I [PL 480 Loans]			176.5	1,359.5	1,536.0
Title II [PL 480 Grants]		0.3	137.3	378.5	516.1
C. Other Economic Assistance, Total	181.2	475.3	202.8	39.1	898.4
Peace Corps				30.6	30.6
Inactive Programs	181.2	475.3	202.8	8.5	867.8
US Surplus Property	24.9			8.5	33.4
Government Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA)	155.7	136.3			292.0
Civilian Relief in Korea (CRIK)		206.5	213.7		420.2
UNRRA (post) Interim Aid	0.6	132.5	(10.9)		122.2

Source: Extracted from United States Overseas Loans & Grants [Greenbook] < <http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/>>, December 2010.

Roughly half the total economic aid to South Korea, \$3.2 billion, was received between 1948 and 1961. Although the U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants' Greenbook (2010) suggests that food aid constituted only \$314.1 million, or 10 percent of the economic aid, a closer look at the composition of American economic aid, particularly in the period 1946–52 prior to PL 480, points to a much higher percentage. For example, foodstuffs constituted 42 percent of GARIOA and 32 percent of ECA/SEC imports during this period (BOK 1955, 1957–58). Additionally, food aid from two international relief agencies⁸⁵—Civilian Relief in Korea (CRIK 1951–54) and United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA 1952–57)—during the Korean War and the postwar reconstruction period were for the most part funded by the U.S.⁸⁶ Figure 3 shows the adjusted food aid amount that includes CRIK and UNKRA food aid. The food aid portion of CRIK aid makes up 41 percent of the total (BOK/Economic Statistics YBK 1957: I, 197–98), and UNKRA's food aid 34 percent and 1.7 percent of the total in 1953 and 1955, respectively (Korean Agricultural Bank 1959).⁸⁷

The large amount of food aid helped feed the Korean population and forestalled great instability stemming from the food deficit after the Korean War. The food aid—first given as grants and later as concessional sales—also helped restructure Korean society in the 1950s when it was at its most vulnerable, because it was used not just for emergency assistance but also for supporting government operations (Ahn,

⁸⁵ United Nations Korean Relief Agency in particular provided a façade to internationalize the U.S. involvement in the Korean War, as did the United Nations Command in the military.

⁸⁶ For example, total CRIK assistance between 1951 and 1954 was \$457.4 million, of which the U.S. contributed \$422.8 million.

⁸⁷ See Appendix for food and agricultural commodity composition of all U.S. agricultural assistance to South Korea from 1945 to 1981.

Y 1992). The aid was a useful instrument with which to control the food market and consolidate the ruling party's political base, as the following shows.

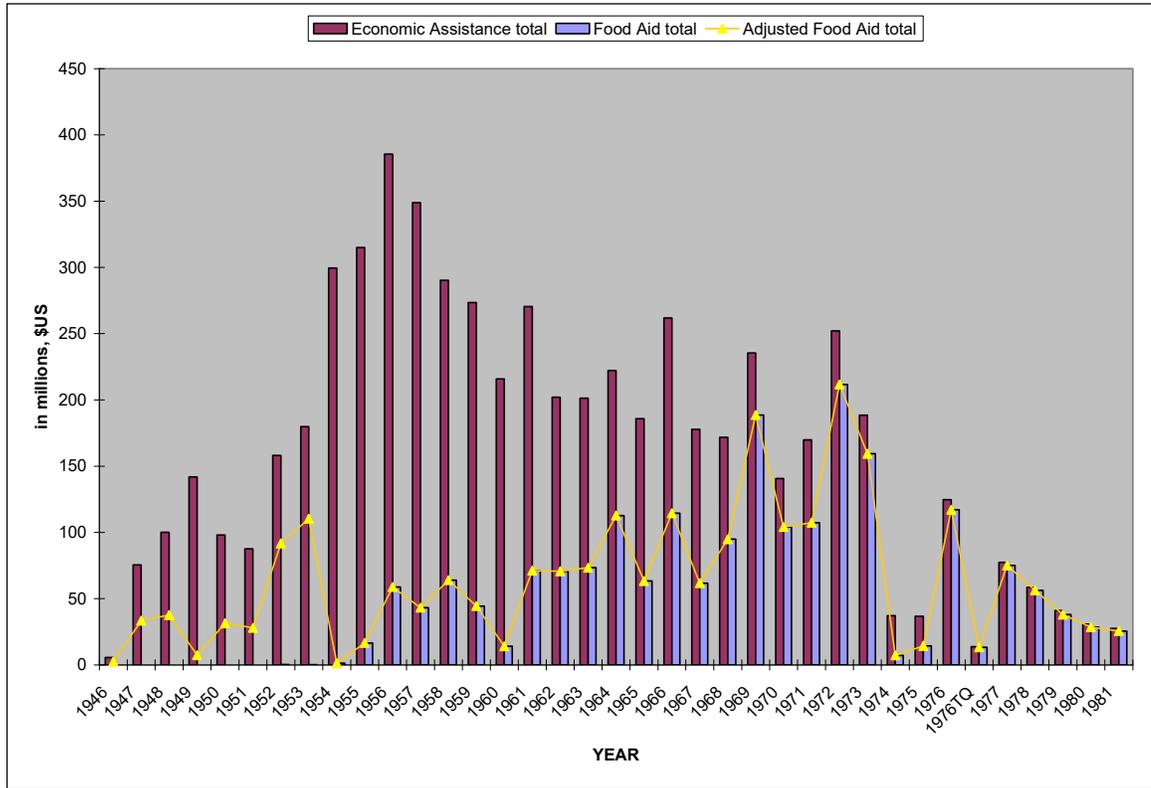


Figure 3. Estimated U.S. food aid trend (in millions of U.S. current dollars) with CRIK and UNKRA adjusted amount in South Korea, 1946–81.

Source: Extracted and formulated from the Bank of Chosŏn (Korea) Yearbook in corresponding years, and USAID Greenbook 2010.

Food rationing and the mandatory rice collection system under the U.S. Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK) continued under the Rhee government in 1950 when the Grain Management Law was instituted (Kim, S-b 2000; Lee, S-s 2008). The coercive rice collection system became a government-purchase system at set prices where the farmers had no choice but to sell their entire harvest, except that for direct consumption and for seeds, to the government (Moon, P-y 1980). Food aid was used to control the grain price and also supplied to military, police, and public institutions (ibid. 117). Large amounts of food aid commodities were given to a few

political cronies who monopolized the so-called Three White Industry (*Sambaek sanop*) of wheat flour, sugar, and cotton to accumulate wealth (Kong, J-w 1993; Ryoo, K-d 1997). Some of those corporations grew large conglomerates during Korea's industrialization (Kim, M-s 1990), and their close relationship with the state and the ruling party (Ahn, Y 1992; Kuk, M 2011), germinated through the food aid during this period (Cathie, J 1989; Ryoo, K-d 1997), lasted through decades of the developmental dictatorship (Kong, J-w 1990; Lee, B-c 2006).

The proceeds from the domestic sales of food aid commodities were put into an account in the Bank of *Chosŏn* (later the *Han'guk ūnhaeng*; the Bank of Korea) jointly held by the Korean and U.S. governments. From 1953 to 1972, the counterpart funds, the funds in the joint account, accounted for a significant portion of the Korean government's expenditure. From 1954 to 1960, the funds' contributions to the government expenditure averaged over 34 percent (35% if including defense), peaking at 48.82 percent in 1957, as can be seen from Table 8. Korea, as an East Asia forward base against communism in the Cold War, maintained a much larger military than its economy could afford, and it was able to do so thanks to the high contribution of the counterpart funds to the government budget, as discussed in section 4.2 ("Feeding the Military").

Table 8. Counterpart Funds Contribution to the Government Expenditure, 1953–75 (in million *won* at current prices)

Year	Including defense			Excluding defense		
	Total gov't exp.	Counterpart fund exp.	As % of total gov't exp.	Total gov't exp.	Counterpart fund exp.	As % of total gov't exp.
1953	5,680	197	2.94	2,420	-	-
1954	9,679	3,122	32.26	4,606	1,428	31.00
1955	14,877	4,799	32.26	8,380	2,599	31.01
1956	19,823	7,078	32.71	14,762	4,578	31.01
1957	32,603	15,237	46.73	21,310	10,404	48.82
1958	42,873	18,561	43.29	30,091	13,731	45.63
1959	42,977	13,587	31.61	29,003	8,287	28.57
1960	44,828	12,017	26.81	30,064	6,670	22.19
1961	59,988	22,080	36.81	43,326	5,977	13.80
1962	84,120	28,395	33.76	63,591	10,436	16.41
1963	79,550	24,810	31.19	59,069	9,678	16.38
1964	80,451	24,983	31.05	55,524	9,986	17.99
1965	102,433	27,895	27.23	72,558	9,395	12.95
1966	160,485	31,882	19.87	119,815	5,974	4.99
1967	207,823	28,216	13.58	157,823	3,645	2.31
1968	302,283	26,102	8.63	236,901	6,665	2.81
1969	423,272	19,586	4.63	338,409	3,976	1.17
1970	492,985	15,201	3.08	391,357	2,456	0.63
1971	600,850	9,715	1.62	464,794	1,945	0.42
1972	797,986	1,908	0.24	625,922	500	0.08
1973	756,453	-	-	574,296	-	-
1974	1,104,395	-	-	809,594	-	-
1975	1,695,990	-	-	1,241,823	-	-

Note: Indicates net expenditures of counterpart fund special account.

Source: Summary of financial statistics, Ministry of Finance, Seoul: various years. Cited in Kim, Chuk-Kyo (1977), "Appendix 6. Counterpart fund expenditure" (Seoul: Korea Development Institute).

2.1. Disciplining Korea

U.S. assistance came at a high cost to Korea. The aid agreement mandated that the Korean government adopt such policies as balancing the budget, maintaining a level of foreign currency, and establishing a certain exchange rate. Also, it gave the U.S. government a way to directly influence and shape Korean economic policies (Korean Library of Congress 1964:38–40) through U.S. agencies in Korea. The Combined Economic Board (CEB), for example, was set up in May 1952 to ‘advise’ the Korean government, and it in effect functioned as the highest-level economic decision-making body; 90 percent of the economic policies accepted by the Korean government were submitted by American advisers (Industrial Bank of Korea 1956:494).

Another influential agency was the U.S. Operations Mission to the Republic of Korea (USOM/K), which was established in 1959 and held veto power over Korean government plans.⁸⁸ After the military coup in 1961, the USOM/K (which later became USAID) became deeply involved in the Korean economy, from planning to implementation (Ahn, Y 1992),^{89,90} and it played a pivotal role throughout the 1960s and 1970s by mediating the involvement of the international lending institutions—such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank—in providing loans and technical assistance to Korea (Kim, M-j 1997). USAID created a national economic research and planning organization, the Korea Development Institute, and an international donor group, the International Economic Consultative Organization for

⁸⁸ Its predecessor was the Foreign Operations Administration, and the Office of the Economic Coordinator.

⁸⁹ For example, the military regime had to reduce the annual target rate of GNP increase per capita from 7.1 percent to 5.0 percent according to the advice of USOP in 1962. See Kimiya, Tadashi, 2011, “The Cold War and the Political Economy of the Park Chung Hee Regime,” pp. 66–84 in *Reassessing the Park Chung Hee Era, 1961–1979: Development, Political Thought, Democracy, and Cultural Influence*, edited by H. A. Kim and C. W. Sorensen (Seattle: University of Washington Press).

⁹⁰ For an illustrative example of the adjustment process of Korean annual budget proposals with the U.S., see RG 59, Box #5118, 895B.10/10-1658.

Korea, which influenced Korea until 1984 (ibid. 23). The USOM/K (USAID) exercised its influence to make sure Korea purchased mostly U.S. commodities and to incorporate Korea into the U.S.-centered global economy, and it succeeded beyond imagination (Lee and Sato 1982:26). Not only was Korea's development trajectory shaped by its policies, but Korea has since remained on the same trajectory even after USAID's official departure.

USAID's influence was not limited to shaping Korea's economy. It offered the U.S. opportunities to influence the Korean government's behavior. The U.S. government could now use an offer of aid as an incentive to get the Koreans do what it desired (Kim, M-j 1997) and a threat of aid denial as a disincentive to get them not to do what it disliked. The following episodes illustrate the political power created by the aid, and the Korean government response.

A North Korean spy, Hwang Taesŏng, was arrested in 1961 but the Korean government did not immediately inform the U.S. (Kim, H-w 1985: vol.2).⁹¹ Learning of the arrest two years later, the U.S. demanded that Hwang be turned over to its intelligence for questioning. When the Korean government did not comply, the U.S. withheld a PL 480 wheat shipment that was about to be disembarked at the port of Inchŏn (ibid.). This came at a time when food supplies were low due to a decrease in grain production.⁹² With the rice harvest still two months away and the government food reserves too low to survive them, the market descended into panic and the

⁹¹ Hwang claimed that he was a secret envoy from North Korea, not a spy. The timing of his infiltration, and his subsequent actions prior to the imprisonment, seemed to indicate that this might indeed be the case. Hwang came down to the south only three days after the coup, and had attempted to contact Park Chung Hee.

⁹² Rice production dropped by 448,000 MT in 1962 against the previous year, and barley production in 1963 (spring) dropped to two thirds that of the previous year (PSD Online July 31, 2015). The 1962 basic grain (rice and barley) production was at 90.3 percent of the national requirement; in 1963, it dropped to 70.9 percent. The cause for this drop in production was attributed to political chaos in 1961 (the military coup d'état) and the subsequent currency reform, and to bad weather in 1962 and 1963 (National Archives of Korea 2016).

hoarding of grain began. The Korean government had to turn Hwang over to the U.S., and the U.S. off-loaded the shipment soon afterwards (*ibid.*).

As U.S. ‘grant-in-kind’ aid to Korea declined in the mid-1960s, aid was utilized as a leverage to get Korea to comply and cooperate with the U.S. In 1965, the U.S. heightened its offensive in Vietnam, but the war was becoming increasingly unpopular at home and abroad. If Korean soldiers participated in the war, that would provide a façade of a collective security effort and help reduce U.S. casualties. It would also make financial sense, since sustaining Korean troops in the war would be much cheaper than supporting American soldiers. The Kennedy administration thus struck a deal with the Park government. It offered military aid together with \$150 million in development loans and agricultural commodities (Foreign Relations of the U.S.- Document 76, January 27, 1966), including PL 480 donations of food aid in exchange for the deployment of the Korean military to Vietnam (Kim, S-j 1976:288–90).⁹³ The Park government began dispatching troops to Vietnam in 1965. The U.S. has used food aid as a way to get around the restrictions of the U.S. Congress on military and economic assistance programs to Southeast Asia during the early 1970s vis-à-vis the Vietnam War. For example, not only did the U.S. supply Korea to send troops, in the fiscal year 1974, 70 percent of all Title I shipments went to South Vietnam and Cambodia (Rothschild 1990).

In another instance, the issue of aid to Korea was used directly in U.S. domestic politics. With Richard Nixon running for a second term as president, imports of Korean textiles were threatening to disrupt the textile industry in the southern U.S. Nixon’s strategy to win the southern states in the 1972 election required curtailing

⁹³ This is a joint communiqué issued by presidents Park and Johnson on May 18, 1963, laying out the continued economic and military assistance to Korea in return for Korea’s participation in the Vietnam War. The communiqué under article 9 indicates development loan funds and other “essential imports.”

Korean textiles exports (U.S. Congress 1978:192). On October 16, 1971, the U.S. offered Korea \$100 million in development loans and an increase in PL 480 food aid to \$275 million over the next few years in return for Korea voluntarily restraining textile exports to the U.S. (Foreign Relations of the U.S.-Document 100, July 16, 1971). The total of \$375 million was to offset an estimated 5-year \$325 million net trade loss to Korea based on an anticipated loss in exports of between \$600 and \$700 million (ibid.; General Accounting Office 1974:29).

Food aid was at the center of the scandal involving nine U.S. Congressmen and a Korean lobbyist, Tongsun Park. The 1976 scandal, known as 'Koreagate,' implicated not only the U.S. politicians from rice-producing states but also high-ranking American diplomats and the Park regime. Korea needed more rice to fuel economic growth and, through it, gain political stability. Rather than investing in agriculture, it was much more efficient to import American rice to keep urban wages low. One of the congressmen indicted in the scandal was Otto Passman. The chair of the subcommittee in charge of foreign aid budget, Passman once prevented South Korea from importing 400,000 MT of Japanese rice after a contract had already been signed (U.S. Congress 1978:211). He offset any cancellation-related cost and arranged for additional aid of \$80 million of PL 480 rice credit and \$31 million funds from a foreign aid program he supervised (Morgan 1980:303). Tongsun Park had been the principal intermediary between U.S. suppliers of PL 480 rice to Korea and the Korean government since the late 1960s. After being indicted for bribery, Tongsun Park fled to Korea in 1977, and in an effort to secure his testimony, the U.S. used food aid to pressure the Korean government to return Park to the U.S. (Chung 1988:240–41). Threats of aid withdrawal were made in the process, resulting in a reduction of the fiscal year 1979 PL 480 allocation.

As shown in the above instances, the U.S. used food aid to elicit desired responses from Korea. In the cases of the Vietnam War and the textile quota, where a sacrifice from Korea was required, the U.S. increased food aid. In the cases of negotiating with the military junta in the handing over of the spy and in the ‘Koreagate’ scandal, where there was a direct impact on domestic affairs, the U.S. either decreased or withdrew food aid. These cases reveal the nature of the relationships and the processes involved in disciplining a postcolonial state under the second food regime. It is paradoxical that the surplus cotton given to Korea for the purpose of protecting U.S. farmers negatively impacted the U.S. textile industry as processed Korean textiles entered the U.S. market. The U.S. having encouraged the growth of textile exports from Korea throughout the 1960s reversed this policy in the 1970s by discouraging textile exports to the U.S., offering as a quid pro quo for voluntary export restraints more food aid. On one hand, these cases show the limits of the agency of the postcolonial state under an international financial and trade regime controlled by the hegemonic global power. The Korean government resisted the U.S. by concealing Hwang’s existence; however, when the concealment was exposed, the Korean government pushed the U.S. to a limit by holding the position until the shipments of food was withheld at the port of Incheon. The Korean state and the U.S. were engaged in ongoing resistance and control if the goal was conflicting, and willing collusion if the aims coincided, even if there was an imbalance of power. On the other hand, the U.S. not only had chosen Korea as an anti-communist showcase of Third World industrialization, but also used Korea as a junior partner in its Cold War struggles against the socialist bloc.

3. Agriculture-Killing Aid

Food aid, and the PL 480 program in particular, had been widely criticized for depressing domestic agricultural production in recipient countries and strengthening

the position of the state (Schultz 1960, Fisher 1963). Schultz (1960:1029) argued that lower prices of agricultural commodities brought about by food aid would result in disincentives to local agricultural production. A declining agricultural price would also encourage farmers to shift from producing food grains to cash crops when most countries in the Global South needed more staple grains in order to attain a sustainable level of grain self-sufficiency. Korea was no exception, in that the large concessional sales of wheat under PL 480 had harmful effects on agricultural production by creating a “disincentive for the Korean Government to solve its agricultural problems” (General Accounting Office 1976:5).⁹⁴ Furthermore, the large-scale PL 480 program allowed the state to neglect agriculture in favor of the industrial sector in its investment priorities since the program helped feed the population (Lee, D-k 1987). In short, the food aid contributed directly to the decline of the agricultural sector and the impoverishment of rural communities.

Once the PL 480 program was operational in Korea, wheat constituted 40 percent of the total PL 480 commodities between fiscal years 1955 and 1981 (PL 480 Annual Report 1984:55). From 1960 to 1980, Korea imported 26 million MT of American wheat, mostly under food aid programs, which amounted to 23 percent of the total grain production in Korea in the same period (PSD Online 2015). The Korean wheat production in the concomitant period was a total of 2.8 million MT, which was slightly over 10 percent of the imported wheat volume. Not only did the massive infusion of the foreign wheat dwarf domestic wheat production, it also impacted Korea’s agricultural sector in a broader sense. With access to a cheap supply of a food grain, the Korean state was able to pursue a low-price policy for rice, the country’s

⁹⁴ The same report also noted that the large Title I sales program was used to offset cutbacks in other U.S. assistance programs (5), such as the local currency generated from the PL 480 sales offsetting the high cost of the military assistance program (GAO, “U.S. Assistance for the Economic Development of the Republic of Korea,” 1973:47).

main staple and dominant agricultural product, in support of its industrialization drive. Seeing few incentives to invest in the agricultural sector, the state abandoned rural communities to rot in rice paddies.

3.1. Impact on Korean Agriculture

The sheer volume of wheat brought into Korea enabled the state to use pricing policies to control the grain market and discourage the expansion of domestic wheat production, even though production acreage for wheat was already limited. Between 1956 and 1960, Korea received 3.1 million MT of grain, of which almost 50 percent was wheat (the Agriculture Statistical Yearbook 1959, 1964).⁹⁵ The influx of foreign wheat put downward pressure on the price in the local market, which was compounded by the fact that under PL 480, grain supply outstripped demand. PL 480 grain surpassed Korea's food requirements by 419,000 sŏk in 1957, 2.077 million sŏk in 1958, and 872,000 sŏk in 1959 (Lee, H-c 1999:96). Not only did the oversupply lower the price of domestic wheat, it also disrupted Korea's rice economy to the point where the price of rice dropped in the face of high inflation. The precipitous fall of domestic grain prices was disastrous for rural households, who derived more than half their income from grain sales (ibid. 97).

⁹⁵ Wheat includes wheat, wheat flour, and polished wheat.

Table 9. Production Cost vs. Government Procurement and Sale Prices of Domestic Wheat, 1961–81 (in won/60kg)

Year	Production cost	Government procurement price	Government sale price
1961	—	—	726
1962	—	—	708
1963	1,722	657	870 ⁽¹⁾
1964	2,090	—	1,404 ⁽²⁾
1965	—	1,350	1,404 ⁽³⁾
1966	—	1,350	1,566
1967	1,728	1,472	1,638
1968	1,860	1,561	1,752
1969	2,088	1,717	1,878
1970	2,136	1,975	1,992
1971	2,880	2,508	2,316
1972	3,636	3,260	2,928
1973	—	3,586	3,762
1974	4,578	4,661	4,164
1975	5,160	5,691	5,370
1976	7,596	6,951	6,414
1977	11,586	8,550	8,268
1978	12,168	11,130	10,038
1979	12,270	13,230	12,768
1980	12,210	15,880	15,162
1981	17,826	17,870	18,600

Notes: (1), (2), and (3): 1963 and 1964 listed prices are inconsistent in Yearbooks 1965 and 1970. YBK 1965 account seems to reflect the grain crisis situation at the time more accurately; “—” represents no available data; Units: Wheat measurement has been calculated from several different weight or volume measurements to 60 kg. Earlier years used Korean measurement of *kamani* (straw bag), and beginning in the early 1970s, the yearbook began recording in 76.5 kg. In between years, it used 60 kg.

Source: Agriculture Statistics Yearbook 1962, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1975, 1981, and 1985.

PL 480 wheat was sold on the market at 50 to 60 percent of the government procurement price of domestic wheat (KOFMIA cited in Kim, Y-h 1990:187). Even in 1963, when a grain crisis resulted in supply shortages, the government procurement price for wheat remained less than 40 percent of the production cost, as Table 9 shows. The table also shows that the government sold domestic wheat at the market below the

production cost during roughly half the years it ran the procurement program. Given that both the government procurement and sale prices of domestic wheat were higher than the PL 480 price, domestic wheat could not compete. Korean farmers were, in essence, underwriting some of the wheat production costs by incurring debt during this period. Since it was cheaper for farmers to purchase wheat in the market for their own consumption than to grow it, they saw few incentives to continue to cultivate wheat.⁹⁶ By 1989, wheat production had virtually disappeared. Production fell to 1,000 MT, while consumption was 2 million MT and rising (PSD Online 2015).

Not only did the abundance of PL 480 wheat decimate local production, it also led to the decline of the entire agricultural sector. Food aid enabled the state to implement a low-price policy for rice through a mandatory requisition system (National Archives of Korea, Ministry of Government Legislation 1950). Under the system, all rice growers were required to sell their harvests to a local branch of the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF; *Nonghyŏp*) at a procurement price determined by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The purchased rice was then sold on the market at a price again set by the ministry (*ibid.*). The easy availability of aid wheat provided a disincentive to the government to increase domestic production by means of a fair price policy (Ban et al. 1982). Instead, the government could afford to use the rice procurement system to keep the price artificially low in order to help keep wages low in the industrial sector. As rural livelihoods became more difficult, many people left rural villages to migrate to cities, where they became part of the low-paid industrial workforce.

The Korean farmer was locked into a subsistence economy in which debt grew alongside his crops, and this continued throughout successive governments. During

⁹⁶ I interviewed several former teachers from rural areas in the course of this research. They stated that instead of growing wheat in their area, farmers purchased wheat flour for consumption.

the Rhee government (1948–60), at no point except one year did the government procurement price for rice equal the cost of production (Moon and Ryu 1977:61). The government procurement prices were below 50 percent of the market prices for the half of those years (ibid.). This situation did not improve much under the Park Chung Hee government (1961–79). During the first 10 years of the industrialization, when the promotion of wheat consumption was reaching a new height, the low rice pricing policy kept apace. As Table 10 shows, the government procurement price for rice never equaled the market price. The U.S. food aid programs in effect supported the Korean state's bankruptcy of the rural economy.

Second, PL 480 imports facilitated Korean rice exports by making wheat and other grains available for domestic consumption. The Grain Exchange System (*yangkok kyohwan chedo*) was established in January 1959 to extract rice from farmers by exchanging it for wheat and other grains. However, farmers did not respond to the program as the government initially hoped; therefore, the program was modified to loan wheat during lean spring months in exchange for rice at harvest in the autumn. Subsequently, the state was able to surpass its goal by 10.2 percent (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 1999:34). This modified program generated more rice for the government to export while increasing the rural population's exposure to wheat. Whereas in urban areas wheat was viewed as an inferior substitute, in impoverished rural areas the reception was better because it was not treated as an inferior crop.

More rice under the state's control gave it increased access to the grain market. State intervention became easier thanks to the large stocks it amassed through food aid, the Grain Exchange System, and procurement from farmers. In the 1950s, the state's primary aim had been to achieve secure supplies for public institutions such as the military, police, and hospitals, as well as for emergency relief. In the 1960s and 1970s, state intervention became qualitatively different and more aggressive. It

focused not only on securing adequate supplies for public institutions but also on price control and management (Moon, P-y 1980).

Table 10. The Cost of Production, Government Procurement, and Market Prices for Rice, 1961–71 (won/80kg)

Year	Cost of production (A)	Government procurement price (B)	Market price (C)	B/A (%)	B/C (%)
1961	1,377	1,550	1,768	112.6	87.7
1962	1,422	1,650	2,801	116.3	58.9
1963	1,373	2,060	3,470	149.7	59.4
1964	1,936	2,967	3,324	136.4	89.3
1965	2,672	3,150	3,419	112.3	92.1
1966	2,495	3,306	3,750	132.5	88.2
1967	2,735	3,590	4,289	131.2	83.7
1968	3,403	4,200	5,140	123.4	81.7
1969	3,565	5,150	5,784	144.5	89.0
1970	4,642	7,000	7,153	136.1	97.9
1971	4,682	8,750	9,844	186.9	88.9

Note: November–January average prices.

Source: Extracted from Grain statistics, 1967–75. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Fisheries); Cost of Production Survey, 1967–75. The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, cited in Moon, P-y and B-s Ryu. 1977. “Korea’s Agricultural Policies in Historical Perspective.” Working Paper 7704. Seoul: Korea Development Institute.

Government intervention to affect market prices through the release of stockpiled grain became routine in 1965, and in each year after that the quantity of stock grain, particularly rice, and the frequency of government intervention increased (National Archives of Korea 2014 [1968]). For the most part, the government release price had been lower than the wholesale price. In 1962, the government rice stocks release price was 1,888 *won* per 80 kg, which was 67 percent of the wholesale price of 2,801 *won*. In 1963, the government release price was 2,312 *won* per 80 kg, only 66.6 percent of the wholesale price of 3,470 *won* (MAF Agriculture Statistical Yearbook 1965). This suggests that the purpose behind the government’s release of rice stocks

was to control prices. The government used grain releases to control the open-market price, and to prevent seasonal price fluctuations, rather than to maintain adequate prices to support farm incomes.

Third, the extended period of U.S. food aid allowed the Korean state to neglect agriculture in favor of the industrial sector in its policy priorities. Since having an increasing food supply was a precondition for industrial growth, and rising industrial output required increased availability of food,⁹⁷ the state would have had to invest more in the agricultural sector and food production overall in order to fuel industrial growth. However, the large infusions of food aid from the U.S. became a substitute for domestic investment. Successive administrations continued the industrialization drive without making investments in the agricultural sector, except for intermittent periods in the early 1960s and late 1970s.⁹⁸ During the Five-Year Economic Plan periods under export-driven industrialization (1962–81),⁹⁹ the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Fisheries) received a minimal budget, and even commercial banks loaned only small amounts to the agricultural sector (Chŏn 1986:329). The industrial sector, in contrast, enjoyed a high priority not only in funding allocation but also in other economic policy considerations.

⁹⁷ S. Enke, 1961, "Food Constraints on Industrial Development in Poor Countries," *Southern Economic Journal*, vol. 27:4.

⁹⁸ Agricultural sector investment in the early 1960s was due to the Park government's efforts to win rural support since the government lacked legitimacy after seizing the power through a military coup. In the 1970s, investment in the agricultural sector—especially in research and in raising the procurement level—came down to the issue of the balance of payments in importing grain when the world market hit a price hike.

⁹⁹ Korea went through seven rounds of the Five-Year Economic Plan (FYEP) from 1962–96, and these consists of the following periods: FYEP I (1962–66), FYEP II (1967–71), FYEP III (1972–76), FYEP IV (1977–81), FYEP V (1982–86), FYEP VI (1987–91), and FYEP VII (1992–96).

Table 11. Use of the Proceeds from the PL 480 Title I Agricultural Commodities, 1955–64

Year	Agreed amount	Common defense		Cooley Loan		U.S. portion	
		Amount USD 1,000	%	Amount USD 1,000	%	Amount USD 1,000	%
1955	15,000	6,000	40.0	-	-	9,000	60.0
1956	48,130	43,290	90.0	-	-	4,840	10.0
1957	18,900	16,200	85.7	-	-	2,700	14.3
1958	50,000	41,000	82.0	2,000	4.0	7,000	14.0
1959	33,870	28,720	84.8	-	-	5,150	15.2
1961	51,100	44,868	87.8	1,122	2.2	5,110	10.0
1962	71,540	62,812	87.8	1,574	2.2	7,154	10.0
1963	95,600	83,937	87.8	2,103	2.2	9,560	10.0
1964	75,700	64,345	85.0	-	-	11,355	15.0
Total	459,840	391,172	85.0	6,799	1.6	61,869	13.4

Source: USOM/K, cited in National Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Research Dept. *Food Policy* (1966:183)

The contrast in policy priorities could also be seen in the ways the government distributed the proceeds from the sales of PL 480 grain. The Counterpart Fund was set up in 1948 as a special account that collected the proceeds for shared use by the U.S. and Korean governments (National Archives of Korea 1948). For the most part, the funds received by the Korean government were used for purposes other than stimulating agricultural development. The volume of funds was huge, and 85 percent of all the money collected in Korea were used for ‘common defense’ (military support—usually purchasing military equipment from the U.S.), as Table 11 illustrates. U.S. food aid had a full circulation here: the counterpart funds used for common defense in Korea in reality were the funds the U.S. government paid (subsidy) American farmers to produce grain, and that money along with Korean people’s money to purchase wheat and agricultural commodities circulated back to pay U.S. weapon manufacturers. The money while circulating in Korea built up the

Korean military to support the Cold War confrontation. The remainder was invested in the industrial sector. Agriculture and various other sectors received very little assistance.

Although Korea received both program and project aid, all except PL 480 Title II (grants) and the U.N. World Food Program aid was program aid.¹⁰⁰ Project aid, through which Korea received \$512.2 million (USAID GBK 2008), was reduced but was directed at agricultural development projects. For example, 64,000 acres of upland tracts were developed using 42,000 MT of Title II commodities (mostly wheat) in 1964, and a year later, a further 100,000 acres were reclaimed by bench terracing. In addition, food-for-work projects funded soil erosion programs to enhance agricultural productivity (Cathie 1989:177). These projects were limited in scale, however, and some were even detrimental to Korea's agriculture, which was based primarily on rice cultivation. The school lunch program, funded by Title II grants, for example, supplied enough wheat flour to help make wheat a substitute for rice. Feeding school children with bread and similar products served as a platform to help future consumers acquire a taste for wheat products in the long run. Paying those involved in food-for-work projects in wheat flour produced the same effect (this topic is discussed in detail in chapter 4).

Program aid had a more indirect but perhaps more profound effect on agriculture. Rather than influencing the agricultural sector, it shaped Korea's overall economic policy through the conditions attached to aid agreements. The U.S. attached various conditions to its assistance, such as price stabilization, exchange rate controls,

¹⁰⁰ Generally speaking, program aid is given to a recipient government for a broader development plan rather than for any particular project, whereas project aid is given for a specific purpose, usually tied to capital investment in a separable productive activity. However, at times program aid can be offered for a particular purpose, and in this case the constituent parts of the program aid may in fact be earmarked (Cathie 1989).

and budget balancing, each time a new agreement was signed, as discussed earlier in the chapter. The Korean government, in turn, took the aid conditions and translated them into policies. For example, during negotiations on the *won*/dollar exchange rate in 1955, the U.S. stipulated that the rate be set at 500:1 but that it be revised if the annual price index surpassed 125 percent. The 500:1 exchange rate continued until 1960 mainly because the Korean government stabilized the price index by artificially (read forcibly) keeping the grain price low (NACF 1963:17). The agriculture sector, in other words, was forced to bleed so that foreign currency could flow at a rate favorable to Korean industry.

3.2. Consequences for the Rural Economy

Korean farmers experienced economic losses due to the low grain price, and the agricultural sector became unable to fully supply the nation with food and raw materials. What, then, were the financial losses shouldered by farmers, and what did it mean to have the agricultural sector lose its influence in Korea's development journey? Table 12 illustrates the trend of rural community deterioration, expressed in population decline during the study period to contextualize the pace of deruralization in Korea as a part of "global depeasantization" (Araghi 1995).¹⁰¹

The 1950s was the decade when farmers incurred the greatest financial losses from rice cultivation due to the low grain-price policy imposed by the government. Collectively, farmers incurred a loss of 9.54 billion *won* between 1950 and 1960. The total would be much greater if the years between 1961 and 1975, when the government procurement price was set below the market price, were included. According to the Korea Agricultural Bank, a farmer lost 2,374 *hwan* (currency unit

¹⁰¹ Farshad Araghi (1995:338) defines the term "global depeasantization" to describe the depopulation and decline of the rural areas and urbanization globally between 1945 and 2000.

from 1953–61) for one *sök* of rice he harvested in 1958 because the market price was 22,744 hwan per *sök* when the production cost was 25,118 hwan per *sök*.¹⁰² His loss would be even greater, anywhere between 4,500 and 5,400 hwan, between December and April the following year when a new crop flooded onto the market (NACF, Monthly Research 1963:19).

Table 12. Trends in Rural Population (in 1,000 persons) in South Korea, 1950–2010

Period	Population		
	Total (A)	Farm population (B)	(B/A) %
1950 (c)	20,167	12,864	63.8
1955	21,502	13,300	61.9
1960	24,989	14,559	58.3
1965	28,327	15,812	55.8
1970	31,435	14,422	45.9
1975	34,679	13,244	38.2
1980	37,407	10,827	28.9
1985	40,420	8,521	21.1
1990	43,390	6,661	15.4
1995	44,554	4,851	10.9
2000	45,985	4,031	8.8
2005	47,041	3,434	7.3
2010	47,991	3,063	6.4

Note: (c) For Year 1950 for total population (A) is actual 1949 census.

Source: (A) All from the National Statistical Research and Management Office/Population Research Department. Downloaded from KOSIS Statistical Database portal on January 25, 2014, except 1965 which was extracted from the 1966 Agricultural Statistical Yearbook; (B) Years from 1950–1985 were extracted from Agricultural Statistical Yearbook (1955, 1957, 1962, 1966, 1976, and 1988), and from 1990–2010 were extracted from KOSIS (ibid.).

¹⁰² There were three currency reforms during the 1950s and 1960s. The first was in September 1950, the second was in January 1953, and the third was in 1962 (National Archives of Korea 2006).

The low grain-price policy reduced farming household income to an extent where it was not even able to cover daily living costs. For the period 1956–61, rural households cultivating 1 to 2 *chǒngbo* of land were able to cover 92.8 percent of their household expenditure; households with between 0.1 and 1.0 *chǒngbo*, 84.4 percent; and household with less than 0.5 *chǒngbo*, 73.6 percent (Korea Agricultural Bank 1957–61). Since most farmers had no other sources of income, they were unable to cover the shortfall and as a result fell into debt. In 1953, reported farm household debt came to 20.1 billion hwan, which was equivalent to 8,971 hwan per household, and 71.7 percent of the debt shouldered by small farmers whose landholdings were less than one hectare (Lee, D-k 1987:209). That debt figure increased from 88.6 billion hwan in 1956 to 150.4 billion hwan in 1959 (ibid. 210).

The growing debt drove a vast number of farmers out of agriculture. Many were forced to sell their land and migrate to urban areas to become landless laborers (see Table 12 for the changes in rural population overall). Table 13 summarizes the estimate of migration out of farming from 1960 to 1980, indicated by intercensal periods 1960–65, 1965–70, 1970–75, and 1975–80. Net migration out of rural areas rose from 5 percent from 1960 to 65 to 13.6 percent in the following period of 1965–70. Rural areas lost about 14 percent of their population by migration, and the gain in urban areas was almost 20 percent (Korean Statistical Office, cited in Kwon, T-h 1989:171).¹⁰³ This form of migration accelerated in the latter half of the 1970s, when it rose to over 16 percent. As a result, Korea's rural population, which made up half

¹⁰³ One of the major features of this urbanward migration in the 1960s was the in-migration to one city: Seoul, the capital city and the national industrial center at the time. The proportion of the net urbanward migrants who established residence in Seoul was estimated at 70 percent and 61 percent for the periods 1960–65 and 1965–70 respectively. Seoul's migration gain in the corresponding periods were 19 percent and 28 percent each. Kwon, T-h (1989) estimated that 41 percent of Seoul's population in 1970 was due to in-migration from rural areas during the 1960s.

the total population of 28 million in the period 1960–65, fell to just slightly over one third in 1975–80.

Table 13. Percentage Gain or Loss due to Urbanward Migration, 1960–80

Area	Period				
	1960–65	1965–70	1970–75	1975–80	1980–85
Urban	10.2	20.0	11.2	12.0	7.0
Rural	-5.0	-13.6	-10.5	-16.1	-13.3

Source: Kwon, Tai-hwan. 1990. “The Trends and Patterns of Urbanward Migration in Korea, 1960–1985.” Pp. 154–74, in *Urbanization and Geographical Distribution of Population*. Edited by D. H. D. Bui. Proceedings of the Project Initiating Meeting, Pusan, Korea. September 29–October 3, 1989, page 171.

This migration cannot simply be explained in terms of demographic pressure and employment opportunities. If demographic pressure pushed people out of rural areas, rural out-migration should have occurred much earlier than the early 1960s. Push factors, such as small landholdings, the subsistence level of farming, and poverty and hunger, existed well before the early 1960s. Rural out-migration accelerated during the period 1960–68 when the average size of land per rural household increased. At the same time, the number of members per rural household decreased from 6.2 persons in 1960 (Agriculture YBK 1962) to 5 persons in 1980 (Agriculture YBK 1962 and 1988). In 2010, the average number of rural household is 2.6 persons (Agriculture YBK 2013). With the decrease in the household size, the rural economy suffered from labor shortages rather than oversupply during the late 1960s, a phenomenon reflected in the rise of women’s labor force participation rates (Cho and Koo 1983).

Rather, the out-migration, and the resultant rural collapse, during these three decades was a direct result of the state’s development strategies and agricultural policies. The state, whose first two Five-Year Economic Plans (1962–71) were contingent on the provision of cheap labor for their success, promoted rural-to-urban

migration in order to create a surplus army of labor in the cities.¹⁰⁴ In the 1980s, the migration out of farming escalated as the rural economy deteriorated due to the import liberalization of agricultural products and Korea's heavy food dependency (Bello and Rosenfeld, 1990:90). The decline in the rural population resulted not from agricultural productivity improvements but from worsening conditions in the sector.

The agricultural sector experienced a radical deterioration during Korea's rapid industrialization, just as the government intended. From 1957 to 1960, the manufacturing sector grew an average of 10 percent, but the agricultural sector grew an average of 1.6 percent. The agricultural sector's slow growth continued under the Five-Year Economic Plans (FYEP; 1962–81). The planned growth rate for the food production sector (agriculture, fisheries, and forestry) was unremarkable: 5.7 percent planned for the First FYEP, 5.0 percent for the Second FYEP, 4.5 percent for the Third FYEP. This compares to the rates of 15.1 percent, 10.7 percent, and 13 percent for the mining and industrial sector, as Table 14 shows. The agro-food sector did not even accomplish the modest goal in the Second Plan period with an increase during the Third FYEP, while the mining and industrial sector accomplished its targets in all period. In the Fourth FYEP period (1977–81), the agro-food sector even recorded negative growth. The difference in the target and actual growth rates reflected the government's belief that investment in the industrial sector would result in larger returns than the agro-food sector and therefore it should focus on the industrial manufacturing and service sectors.

¹⁰⁴ Moreover, it raised the ceiling on individual arable land ownership and re-legalized the tenancy system on the grounds that the concentration of land ownership was required for industrial farming, which would improve productivity. The IMF recommended the new land reform, arguing that the protection of Korea's agriculture from the world market had a distorted market-efficiency for the domestic economy; thus, it was imperative to improve productivity through industrial agriculture. But this land reform was not implemented because President Park Chung Hee was assassinated in 1979.

Table 14. Sectoral Growth Rate under Five-Year Economic Plans, 1962–81

	FYEP I (1962–66)		FYEP II (1967–71)		FYEP III (1972–76)		FYEP IV (1977–81)	
	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result	Target	Result
Gross National Product	7.1	8.3	7.0	10.0	8.6	12.1	9.2	5.5
Agriculture, Fishery & Forestry	5.7	5.5	5.0	2.3	4.5	6.3	4.0	-0.1
Mining & Manufacturing	15.1	14.8	10.7	20.2	13.0	21.2	14.2	9.7

Source: Economic Planning Board (1990), *Korean Economic Indicators 1990: Major Statistics of Korean Economy*. Seoul: Economic Planning Board.

Table 14 points to the widening gap between the incomes of rural and urban households: agriculture grew at an average rate of only 3.5 percent during the 1962–81 period whereas the national economy as a whole grew at an average rate close to 9 percent.¹⁰⁵ Agriculture’s contribution to the national economy also dwindled. Of total farm household income, 82.1 percent came from agricultural production in 1963, its share dropped to 65.2 percent in 1980 (MAF 1963 and 1980 cited in Kim, J-d 1997:246) .

As the agriculture sector stuttered, industrialization and overall population growth took off. Having purposefully choked growth in the agriculture sector, the state had to turn to other sources of food.

¹⁰⁵ There is a disagreement as to the actual growth rate of Korea during the period 1962–81, which coincides with Park Chung Hee’s rule in Korea. This may be due to a slight adjustment in actual growth rate for the Five-Year Economic Plan II reported by the Economic Planning Board (EPB). For example, the 1990 Korean Economic Indicators of the EPB reports a 10 percent growth rate for FYEP II (Table 14 in this text), while the same organization reports 9.7 percent in its 1979 and 1983 *Economic White Papers: Budgetary Summary* (cited in Kwan S. Kim 1991).

4. Consumption

As U.S. food aid depressed Korean rice production, the Korean state played an active role to limit rice consumption and promote wheat as an alternative. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry designated two days per week as ‘no-rice’ days when eateries should not serve rice, and serving sizes were reduced on the other days after the government mandated what size bowls could be used at restaurants (Notification No. 2377 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 1971). The MAF also instituted a regulation stipulating that rice served at restaurants and public institutions should be cooked with a mix of 20 percent barley and 80 percent rice (National Archives of Korea, MAF, 1962). The Ministry of Education also enforced the 20/80 mix regulation at schools by instructing teachers to examine students’ lunchboxes to make sure the barley/rice mixture met the regulation (Chosun Ilbo, 11/23/1971). The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry ordered rice mills to coarse-mill rice to 7 degrees rather than the preferred 9 degrees in order to minimize loss in processing. The National Assembly, too, participated in the nationwide drive by passing a law that prohibited the brewing of *makkoli*, Korean traditional rice wine (National Archives of Korea, MAF, 1966).

The state’s intervention in restricting rice consumption had the effect of promoting wheat, since PL 480 wheat was cheaper in the market. The price of wheat relative to rice and barley was 0.48 and 0.71 on average in the 1960s, and declined to 0.34 and 0.60 in the 1970s (Yoon 1989:517). Consumers were, in a way, coerced into consuming wheat and wheat-based foods by PL 480 wheat. The massive infusion of the foreign wheat not only priced out domestic rice but also enabled the state to limit rice consumption.

The large infusion of PL 480 wheat was accompanied by the introduction of Western food technologies and preparation methods to Koreans, who until then had

neither the need nor the desire for them. Beginning in the late 1950s and 1960s, the American kitchen-car traveled all over Korea to teach women how to prepare American foods using wheat flour.¹⁰⁶ Women's colleges established home economics and nutrition science departments which touted the benefits of eating wheat. Not surprisingly, wheat consumption per capita jumped from 11 kg in 1960 to 46 kg in 1981, until stabilizing at around 50 kg in the 2000s (FAOSTAT 2008). Since the settlement of the Uruguay Round negotiations in 1994, many American fast-food restaurants have made inroads into Korea. Koreans gradually became used to 'Western-style cuisine' consisting primarily of wheat and wheat products. The processes under which food consumption changed are detailed in chapter 5. Suffice it to note here that Koreans' consumption of wheat grew hand-in-hand with the infusion of PL 480 grains.

4.1. Wheat as an Industrial Input

During Korean industrialization, PL 480 agricultural commodities became an industrial input. The characteristic of PL 480 agricultural commodities shifted from predominantly food to include raw materials, especially cotton, and in terms of grain, predominantly wheat. Just as cotton was a 'producer good' that nurtured the growth of the manufacturing industry, particularly the cotton and textile industry, so wheat was a 'wage good' that underwrote the cheap labor (Cathie 1989). Since cotton's role in Korean industrialization is extensively discussed in the literature (Park, J-a 1972; Lee, H-s 1984; Cathie 1989; Kim, Y-h 1990, 2009; Lee, B-c 1997), the role of wheat is detailed below.

¹⁰⁶ A vehicle equipped with American cooking implements.

U.S. food aid contributed to Korea's development by helping keep wages low during industrialization and supplying adequate amounts of food. One of the main consequences of the food aid was that wages did not rise much despite the long hours and arduous conditions experienced by Korean workers throughout much of the 1960s. As one of the first empirical studies on foreign aid and Korean development observed, "[T]he real wages appear to have remained relatively constant during the early years of rapid growth of manufacturing. This enabled the upward shift in the demand for labor to be reflected in increasing employment opportunities, rather than in rising real wages for those already employed" (Krueger 1979:220). The Korean industrial regime required the majority of workers to toil seven days per week and to put in 84-hour weeks in the labor-intensive light industry (International Herald Tribune cited in Hayter 1981:106). The long workdays with a brief mealtime left workers to satisfy their hunger with wheat foods, ramen or *tchachangmyŏn* (noodles topped with fermented black bean sauce) to save time and money.

4.2. Feeding the Military

PL 480 wheat made a critical contribution to Korea's militarization as well as Korea's industrialization. It provided the means to establish a large military, particularly in its earlier phase of development, and was an important food source for the troops.

Following the Korean War, the government decided to increase its combat strength to 20 divisions from 8 divisions at the outbreak of the Korean War.¹⁰⁷ To achieve this increase it had to implement an economic 'defense support program' through which to channel massive amounts of assistance (Bix 1973). The U.S. and Korean governments needed to find a way to finance the larger military, preferably by generating enough

¹⁰⁷ By the time of the Korean War Armistice in July 1953, the Korean military size had expanded to 3 corps and 18 divisions; however, this was a wartime mobilization, not a peacetime size.

local currency to sustain it without incurring any additional financial burden on the U.S. treasury. They found a solution in the Counterpart Funds, which would be furnished by selling PL 480 grain in the Korean market. The proceeds would be used to help defray the cost of sustaining the military forces (USAID 1963).

Economic assistance does not usually include military aid, but in Korea this distinction was blurred. Korea received military assistance under Mutual Defense agreements for the sole purpose of military development, and it was also awarded wheat and other grains, often under the MSA Section 402 (PL 665) between 1956 and 1961. An important part of the U.S. aid was the “security supporting assistance,” and USAID administered a USDA program “Food for Peace” that provided wheat on a long-term, low-interest basis under Title I and allowed the Korean government to sell it to raise funds, as Table 15 shows. More importantly, the U.S. government explicitly used its economic assistance as a form of military aid, as reflected in a congressional declaration: “From the end of the Korean War through the early 1960s, it was understood that U.S. economic assistance would provide two thirds of the ROK defense budget” (U.S. Congress 1978:159). In reality, U.S. “economic” assistance provided a larger share of Korea’s military budget. The funds for the “economic” assistance were generated in part by selling fertilizer and petroleum products until the mid-1960s, and 80 percent of the Counterpart Funds generated through the PL 480 program were used to support the Korean military budget prior to 1971. Between 1954 and 1960, an average of 35 percent of defense expenditure was supplied by the Counterpart Funds (see Table 15).

While these funds were being used to subsidize a much bigger military, the aid wheat was also being directly consumed by the troops. The provision of wheat products, primarily in the form of hard bread and wheat noodles, began relatively early in the militarization phase, and the variety and amount of wheat products continued to

grow. The military began to employ trained dieticians to oversee its food services in 1965, and they contributed to the further incorporation of Westernized food and wheat (Choi, J-s, K-s Choe, and S-h Moon 2004). Soon after ramen noodles were first produced by Samyang Foods in 1963, the military food services began serving them in 1968 (Chosun Ilbo December 27, 1968; Choi et al. 2004; Yeo, W-s 2004). Ramen has since become an indispensable food item for soldiers at home and abroad.

Table 15. The Nature of U.S. Economic Assistance to South Korea

Types	Content
Security supporting assistance	Grants to be used to import U.S. commodities for developing industries; The Korean government sold the commodities on the domestic market to generate counterpart funds to use for military support. * Proceeds from the sales of these PL 480 commodities made up 96 percent of the military budget in 1960.
Development loans	For capital investment, use for industries and small and medium businesses. USAID determined loan recipients. * The loans were long term (40 years) and low interest (a maximum of 2.5 percent); USAID approved the final users and could impose certain requirements. * Loans were tied to Korean purchases of U.S. commodities.
Technical assistance	Designed to provide technical advice on a variety of projects ranging from training of economists and the staff of industrial, agricultural, and scientific organizations. * About \$8 million annually.
PL 480	Food for Peace, a USDA program administered by USAID in South Korea. It consisted of four titles, two of which provided significant funds to Korea. * Titles I: concessional sales on a long-term, low-interest basis. * Title II: grants mostly used for ‘food-for-work’ projects in rural areas.

Source: U.S. Congress. House. Investigation of Korean American Relations, 1978:162.

South Korea began exporting ramen to South Vietnam in 1968, and subsequently received permission from the Vietnamese government to build a ramen factory in 1970 (Chosun Ilbo June 3, 1970; October 27, 1970). It is likely that the ramen exports and the building of a ramen factory in South Vietnam were related to

supplying ramen to South Korean troops in Vietnam at the time. Although the operation was small, it marked a significant turning point for Korea's processed food industry, which got its start during this period using Vietnam as a launching pad. The development of the food processing industry is detailed in chapter 5.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter is to better understand the processes involved in Korea's incorporation into the global economy and the role played by U.S. food aid in them. After the Korean War, Korea received about \$13 billion in military and economic aid from the U.S. between 1954 and 1980, of which about \$9.5 billion was provided during the period of industrialization. Of that \$9.5 billion, economic assistance accounted for about \$3.1 billion, and much of that in the form of PL 480 food aid. Korea was the third-ranked recipient of PL 480 food aid during this period (PL 480 Annual Report 1980), behind India and Egypt, which have much larger populations. What were the reasons behind the seemingly overzealous U.S. position toward Korea? U.S. policy toward Korea was motivated by both political and economic concerns. While its priority was geostrategic in the Cold War, as discussed in chapter 2, it was also responding to domestic economic pressure. As postwar Western Europe recovered its agricultural productive capacity by the mid-1950s, it no longer needed to rely on U.S. food aid. Compounded by the increased productivity of American wheat producers, the U.S. was faced with growing oversupply. And Korea was one of the willing partners in receiving the surplus wheat.

The U.S. food aid program to Korea, while freeing up foreign exchange, helping the balance of payments, and softening inflation, was detrimental to the local agricultural sector. Food aid exerted a negative impact on farming productivity by depressing the market prices of wheat and rice. The state intervened heavily in the food market to enforce a low grain price, further impoverishing rural areas and

skewing the national allocation of resources. Although many studies highlight the positive contributions of food aid (Mellor 1987; Singer et al. 1987; Cathie 1989; Shaw 2002), they ignore the hardships and poverty it causes in rural areas. The nation's "rice basket" rapidly deteriorated as farmers abandoned the paddies for the factory-strewn urban landscape. Due to this migration, the number of people in the 14–19 and 20–29 age groups fell drastically in rural areas, while the 40–49, 50–59, and 60 and over age groups gradually increased (Kwon, T-h 1992). Consequently, many rural communities became "ghost villages," depopulated or left with only a small and dwindling number of the elderly.

At the same time, the limited investment in agriculture was used to further promote industrial agriculture. The production of synthetic agricultural inputs, for example, rose quickly during this period. Fertilizer production was 6,228 MT in 1960, and grew almost 100-fold to 550,336 MT by 1969 (Han, D-h 1999:113). The production of pesticides and herbicides, which was 2,901 MT in 1960, grew to 16,962 MT by 1969. The number of mechanized tractors skyrocketed from 153 in 1960 to 12,000 by 1970 (ibid.). As impressive as the numbers may look, the industrialization of the agricultural sector actually served to heap more debt on farmers. They had to shoulder the increasing costs of industrial inputs when they were forced to sell their products at an artificially low price set by the government. This only left more houses empty in rural areas as many farmers fled from their land—and their debt.

While U.S. food aid contributed to Korea's industrialization, it also bled farmers dry and left rural areas abandoned. The grain brought in under the aid programs fed industrial workers so they might work for low wages; it also fed farmers, who then found rice and wheat cultivation no longer profitable or even sustainable. It fed soldiers standing guard against the global communist threat, and eventually fed them in their fight against communists in Vietnam. Feeding people is a noble, perhaps

even sacred, act. But if the act of feeding people results in the long-term demise of food production, it needs to be seen in a different light. U.S. food aid, provided for over two decades, contributed to a fundamental transformation of Korean agriculture. Korea's wheat production all but ceased. Korea continues to grow rice, but at a much reduced scale. A country that once enjoyed food self-sufficiency and exported rice in the 1930s and 1940s now depends heavily on imports of grains and other foodstuffs. Farmers are heavily indebted, and the agricultural sector remains underdeveloped. Once-bustling rural communities were left impoverished and have become ghost villages, often sustained by "import brides."¹⁰⁸ The promise of the "rising water lifting all the boats" remains unfulfilled for the agricultural sector.

Tragic as the consequences of the U.S. food aid might be for the Korean farmers as food producers, however, this chapter leaves unexamined how Koreans, as consumers, reacted to the aid. It certainly empowered the state to control grain prices and reorganize agricultural production, as the above demonstrates. Was the aid implicated in the process of transforming what the Koreans ate and how they ate it? If so, how? It is to these questions that the following two chapters turn.

¹⁰⁸ Marrying a foreign bride has become a growing trend in Korea since the early 1990s. Accounting for less than 1 percent of new marriages before 1994, marriages between Korean men and non-Korean brides accounted for 8 percent of new marriages in 2007 (Lee, S-h 2011). Several reasons have been cited for the growing trend such as an imbalance in the male-to-female ratio as well as socioeconomic factors. The phenomenon of 'importing brides' began in the rural areas after young women began leaving their villages in the 1960s to look for work in urban areas, while young men were left behind to tend the farm. As a consequence, the number of eligible women for young farmers to marry dropped. By the time men reached into their 40s and 50s, they began to look outside Korea. Soon, county and provincial officials were promoting the importation of brides as a solution to sustain rural communities. Since then, the practice has spread throughout Korea, and now urban centers have taken the lead in importing foreign brides. By examining how the practice unfolded, the likely explanation is socioeconomic reasons—young women refused to marry into a rural community amid growing poverty.

CHAPTER 4:
FORCE-FEEDING AID GRAINS:
THE CAMPAIGN TO PROMOTE BARLEY AND WHEAT CONSUMPTION

*“White noodles, delicious bread! Savory coarse grains!
If you know the taste, you’ll feel like a child.
We can live healthy and well. We become tall and strong.
Coarse grains and wheat foods will chase weaklings away!”*

—A song to promote barley and wheat consumption (1972)¹⁰⁹

1. Introduction

Korea imported over 26 million MT of American wheat during the period of industrialization (1960–80) under U.S. food aid programs (PSD Online February 13, 2015).¹¹⁰ The import of such quantities of wheat created a serious challenge for the Korean state, and also the U.S. to a certain extent. Korea was forced to figure out ways of consuming such a large influx of a foreign grain unfamiliar to the local population. Pressed by the urgency to bring about industrialization, the state introduced more aggressive policies aimed at promoting wheat consumption.

The most glaring example of state intervention in the dietary transformation was the campaign for “the Promotion of Barley and Wheat Consumption” (*Honbunsik Changnyŏ Undong*; hereafter refer to as the HCU). The state-led HCU campaign was officially inaugurated in January 1963 and continued until the end of the 1970s with a

¹⁰⁹ A song promoted by the government during the HCU period. Lyrics by Lee, Wonsu, and composition by Kim, Dongjin. Translation by this author on November 25, 2015. The song was downloaded from the National Archives of Korea on November 25, 2015.
<<http://theme.archives.go.kr/next/education2009/riceSelfSupply.do>>

¹¹⁰ One hundred percent of imports were food aid until 1965; beginning in 1966, the Korean foreign exchange (KFX) was used to purchase a portion of wheat imports, and in 1973 the KFX amount financed a large part of the wheat imports.

brief resurgence in the early 1980s (National Archives of Korea—MAF 1962).¹¹¹ The HCU coincided with the massive inflow of PL480 wheat from the U.S., which sustained the campaign. The campaign went hand-in-hand with the state's project on national mobilization and social control of the biological life (bio-life) of its citizens, which included a shift in food consumption practices and intervention in population control (bio-life policy as opposed to social policy), to achieve its national food policy.¹¹² This period also coincides with the reign of Park Chung Hee (1961–79), who was committed to industrializing Korea, despite the immense human and social costs, in alliance with the capitalist class (Chibber 2003).

The Park Chung Hee government was born out of violence. Park seized power in a military coup that overthrew a democratically elected government and quashed a national yearning for democracy. To attain political legitimacy, which eluded the government throughout its hold on power, it made economic prosperity its goal (Cole and Lyman 1971; Frank, K-s Kim, and Westphal 1975; Koo, H. 1987; Kuznets 1994), and instituted the HCU campaign as one of the cornerstones of the national food policy to reinforce its export-led industrialization (ELI) plan. Its goal might not have been the transformation of the national diet, but the process by which the HCU policy was implemented was nothing short of intentional: the state apparatus was mobilized broadly and systematically to penetrate deep into even the most private sphere of what Jürgen Habermas (1987) labeled the “lifeworld,” the family dinner table, as well as to permeate throughout the public sphere.

¹¹¹ A similar project had been implemented by the previous two regimes and under the American military authority at a smaller scale and without much success. It is not clear when the HCU was terminated because it fizzled out with the discontinuation of “No Rice Day” in 1977, but it was reinvigorated in 1980 after the massive crop failure. Until 1985, the government closely regulated the national food policy.

¹¹² The bio-life policy included state policies to mobilize and control food and nutrition, population control, and physical health and appearance, among others, to support the national goal of industrialization in South Korea.

One of the techniques employed by the state involved reproducing and reinforcing social differentiation; cakes, cookies, and bread, which symbolized affluence, were promoted among the middle class to feed into its desire for upward mobility, while instant noodles and homemade *sujebi* (small pieces of handmade dough) were peddled to a broader segment of the population as a more affordable and yet satisfying substitute food.¹¹³ While these techniques reconstructed the differentiated income structure at the time, they were wrapped up in a homogenizing nationalist discourse. Eating less rice and more wheat and barley was portrayed as improving the national nutritional status and better supporting the economy of a country struggling with food shortages (National Archives of Korea–MAF 1962; National Archives of Korea–City of Seoul 1975). In reality, the HCU campaign was part of a policy designed to keep rice for exports and minimize investments in the agricultural sector by constraining domestic rice consumption.

In its later phase, the HCU campaign took a more coercive turn to restrict the quantities of rice allowed in each serving, and made it illegal for restaurants and public institutions to serve rice more than twice a week (National Archives of Korea–MAF 1971). The national policy was implemented through the media, educational institutions, and parastatal (organizations partly or wholly controlled by the government) and local organizations. As the state became more forceful, it instituted direct measures through agencies such as the military, educational institutions, and the market. State intervention became even more aggressive as global food supplies tightened in the 1970s.

The preceding two chapters discussed the macro-political and economic reasons for promoting wheat consumption in Korea. This chapter examines the

¹¹³ Small pieces of wheat flour dough, similar to dumplings without fillings, are dropped into soup.

interplay of national social forces involved in the HCU policy in a bid to understand the factors that precipitated the changes in food consumption practices in Korea. Even a totalitarian state would be limited in the power to change what foods individuals enjoy eating. The central question this chapter addresses is, therefore, how did this change in consumption come about? More specifically, what were the mechanisms used to transform the national diet? How did the process of transformation unfold within the context of the state's grip on Korean society? To examine the increase in wheat consumption is to shed light on how the state intervened in people's daily lives to shape their food preferences under the pretext of modernizing the nation.

2. The Political Economy of the HCU

The HCU was launched in the 1960s because of an interplay of two sociopolitical factors, one external and one internal. On one hand, the global food regime, which was linked to the larger global capital accumulation, was coming under pressure due to changes in the global food situation and U.S. food aid policy. Domestically, on the other hand, population growth and urbanization, together with Park's need for rural political support, were adding stress to domestic food production and distribution (Brandt 1979), as the following section describes.

American food aid certainly helped fill the deficit in Korea's grain consumption requirement, and at times—for example from 1956 to 1961—even surpassed Korea's needs. Also, U.S. food aid supplies gave successive Korean governments more than just grains. They bolstered government revenues, paid for a large share of the military budget, and provided political legitimacy for a 'democratic' country standing against the communist North. Most importantly, the food aid laid the foundations on which to pursue late capitalist development and create an industrial class. More food aid from the U.S. meant more money and more power for those who received it and, ultimately, helped Park Chung Hee remain in power, however corrupt

or repressive his government might have been.¹¹⁴ The Park government, as the previous Rhee government before it, mobilized all the resources it could to receive more food aid from the U.S.

However, the Korean state began to be saddled with multiple challenges in the late 1960s. Although its rapid industrialization strategy required sustained food aid, Washington began to phase out its assistance and no longer accepted local currency for PL 480 concessional shipments. After the Nixon administration announced a new doctrine in 1969 that allies should shoulder the primary responsibility for their own defense,¹¹⁵ Korea could no longer rely on cheap food imports from the U.S. In 1970, the Korean economy declined precipitously—the growth rate was cut in half from the previous year, from 15 percent to 7.9 percent (Haggard and Moon 1993:73)—and by 1971 South Korea’s trade deficit mounted to \$1.3 billion, mainly to the U.S. and Japan (GAO July 1973:12). Concurrently, the country was facing a serious debt situation with the rate of debt servicing passing the 20 percent threshold, while debts with a maturity of one year were increasing (ibid.). To make matters worse, world grain prices spiked between 1971 and 1974 (Peters and Langley 2009).

Korea’s predicament was tied to the global political economy. The capitalist world economy was in serious turmoil resulting from the breakdown of the Bretton Woods system, the 1973 oil shock, and the 1973–74 world stock market crash. World grain prices jumped as a result of an increase in global demand due to the devaluation of the dollar, the Soviet Union’s massive grain purchases on global markets from 1972

¹¹⁴ For an example, Park Chung Hee was known as the “wheat flour President” due to his practice of distributing wheat flour around election times in the name of public works projects (Chosun Ilbo, January 23, 1964).

¹¹⁵ Emma Rothschild (1990) argues that Nixon’s food aid policy reflected the position that PL 480 was costly at the time of high inflation and the balance of payments. At the same time, Nixon strengthened the military aspect of PL 480 based on the belief that foreign aid should be tied directly to national interest.

to 1974 (Friedmann 1982), and the reduction in American wheat production (Schnittker 1973).

In the 1970s, the U.S. experienced a trade deficit for the first time in a century. By 1972, the deficit grew to \$5.9 billion (U.S. Census 1998), and banks around the world refused to accept dollars, threatening to destabilize the U.S. economy. The U.S. decoupled the dollar from the gold standard, and consequently the dollar was devalued. It was during these years that the U.S. began to turn to agricultural exports as a means of offsetting its growing trade deficit. The depreciation in the dollar made American grain cheaper and more competitive on the global market.

About the same time, the Soviet Union was experiencing production shortfalls, with reports of damage to the wheat crop in the winter of 1969. The Soviet Union reported a 13 percent drop in its 1972 wheat production compared to a year earlier due to poor weather conditions (Kim, M-h et al. 2008). At the same time, it continued to adhere to a food policy of increasing meat consumption (Neetz 1970; Hopkins and Puchala 1978), which led to the purchase of half of America's wheat stocks—one quarter of the production total in 1972 (Destler 1978:46). This sale drew down substantially the amount available for PL 480, even with dollar purchases.

The 1973 oil shock not only put a strain on the U.S. to balance its payments; it also placed even more duress on nations dependent on oil for agriculture. World crop production in 1974 came in below expectations and was particularly low in those nations which could not afford to purchase oil for the production of fertilizer. Of course, this further contributed to production shortfalls. In addition to the 'unexpected' sale to the Soviet Union,¹¹⁶ which depleted the wheat stocks, the U.S. held back 19

¹¹⁶ There were some signs of trouble in Soviet wheat production prior to the crop failure in 1972. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's *Foreign Agriculture* (1969:7), which reported 10 to 15 percent of total winter grain acreage being damaged due to poor weather in 1969, a decrease in grain production by 5 percent in 1970 (Evans 1970:11), the purchasing of 2 million tons of wheat in 1971

million acres from wheat production in 1973, sparking food price inflation in the world market until 1976 (Frundt 1975:276; Destler 1978:47). From 1973 to 1974 international wheat prices rose 3.4 times from the previous year (Kim, M-h et al. 2008).

The export-dependent Korea felt the strain of the world recession sharply and came under more pressure due to Sino-American rapprochement. The Park government, built up as a bulwark against communism, saw the thaw in the Cold War as a threat to its survival and the U.S. acceptance of communist China as the abandonment of South Korea. Feeling isolated and left to fend for itself against hostile North Korea, it needed to step up its security.

It was not only national security that was under threat; food security was also in jeopardy. Korea suffered from poor harvests in the late 1960s, and rice self-sufficiency, as high as 99.1% in 1967, dropped to 81% in 1969 (Food Administration Burea-MAF cited in Moon and Ryu 1977: 159).¹¹⁷ In order to compensate for the shortfalls, it had to import rice, and by 1970 it imported 937,000 MT, the largest amount to date (PSD Online August 2015).¹¹⁸

The rice shortages and resulting growth in imports was a double drag on Korea's export-dependent economy. The shortage led to an increase in the rice price, which in turn added to the cost of living, creating upward pressure on wages. This wage pressure was unwelcome news to industrialists, who were struggling to stay afloat in a shrinking, more competitive export market at the time. They needed to find

from Canada (Chrisler 1971:10–11), and predicted increased grain imports due to bad weather (Willis 1972:2–4) before announcing in July 1972 a three-year grain sales agreement with the Soviet Union (USDA/FAS 1972:2–4).

¹¹⁷ A self-sufficiency rate here is a bit suspect because it reflected a consumption requirement under consumption restraint. Nevertheless, the rate changes between 1967 and 1971 illustrate the trend of the available amount.

¹¹⁸ Trade Year 1970/1971. Rice imports reduced the following year. See USDA/FAS PSD Online for details.

a way to increase food production and lower the cost of living to relieve the pressure for wage increases. At the same time, they were concerned about rice imports swallowing up the hard-won dollars from industrial exports. Foreign currency that could have been invested in more productive activities was being used to meet consumption needs. Furthermore, rice imports were adding to the growing trade deficit. The food imports, mounting trade deficit, and pressure from industry and big business led the state to conduct a sudden about-face in its agricultural policy (Moon P-y, 1974).¹¹⁹ The state established the Office of Rural Development in 1970 to carry out agricultural research and began plans to increase food production through a Third Five-Year Plan (1972–76). It also stepped up its campaign to reduce rice consumption by bolstering the HCU policy.¹²⁰

To increase food production and mitigate the widening income gap between rural and urban communities, the state instituted a dual pricing system in 1969 whereby it paid a higher rice price to farmers and charged a lower price to urban wage earners (Moon, P-y 1974; Pinkston 2007). It also initiated *Saemaul Undong* (the New Community Movement) as a mass campaign to reduce rice consumption and promote alternative grains such as wheat. It maintained tight control over what kinds of grain the movement promoted, as it wanted to retain the flexibility to respond to fluctuations in the global market. When the wheat price rose on the global market in 1972, impacting PL 480 concessional sales, for example, the Park government used the

¹¹⁹ Agricultural laws were promulgated to increase production, infrastructure was created, high-yielding hybrid seeds were developed, and farmers were forced to plant the new HYV seed, *Tongil*.

¹²⁰ Rice is more expensive than wheat on the market, and South Korea continued to receive PL 480 concessional food aid for another decade until 1981. In addition, PL 480 rice is cheaper than domestic rice on the Korean market because locals prefer the taste of Korean rice over the PL 480 version, which tended to be long-grain rather than short-grain, as Koreans preferred.

movement and other policy instruments, such as price controls, to curtail its consumption for nonstaple uses.¹²¹

3. Disciplining Society and the HCU

Rapid population growth and urbanization are two factors often cited in the debate on industrialization and diet transition in the Global South. The demographic variables and urbanization do affect agricultural production capacity and food demand by shaping caloric requirements, food availability, and the structure of food consumption (Regmi and Dyck 2001:23). In Korea, too, these two factors, coupled with related resource constraints, contributed to the justification of the HCU policy.

While Korea experienced population growth through a natural increase and net migration in the 1950s after the Korean War,¹²² the Park government's strict population control program ('family planning program'), initiated in its first year in power, slowed that growth considerably. Yet still the rice production increase was too low for the population density, as Table 16 illustrates, which meant that a shortage of food grains remained a problem during this period. From Table 16, it appears that the rate of increase in rice production was particularly low between 1967 and 1971, and again, between 1977 and 1981. However, the reasons for the low production in the two periods differ: the period 1967–71 was mainly due to the low investment in agriculture. This period coincides with the second FYEP (1967–71), when the industrial sector received the lion's share of investment resources (Moon, P-y 1974). The period 1977–81 was largely attributed to the use of hybrid seeds (*Tongil Rice*) in monocropping of rice that was afflicted by plant disease and to bad climatic conditions

¹²¹ Industrial use of wheat in producing alcohol, glucose, grain syrup, and feed, among others.

¹²² There was a mass migration of one to two million people from the North to the South during and after the Korean War. G. Henderson (1987:100) estimates that about 1.8 million—17 percent of the North's population at the time—migrated to the South (cited in B-l Philo Kim (1995:168)).

(Kim, T-h 2009). Low levels of production were further complicated by uneven consumption in the years when production fell precipitously, such as the 1967–71 period.

Table 16. Comparison of the Rate of Growth for Population, Density, Rice Production, and GNP in South Korea, 1962–81

Year ⁽¹⁾	Rate of population		Rate of rice	
	increase (%) ⁽²⁾	Population density persons/sq.km ⁽³⁾	production increase (%) ⁽⁴⁾	Rate of GNP growth (%) ⁽⁵⁾
1962–1966	2.57	296.1	6.7	7.5
1967–1971	2.21	319.2	1.2	9.5
1972–1976	1.70	356.8	6.0	9.8
1977–1981	1.57	384.8	3.0	7.3

Note: (1) Years correspond to Five-Year Economic Plans; (2)–(4) represent the average of each period. **Source:** (2), (3), and (5) are from Economic Planning Board (1962–1985) Economic Index, cited in Chung, Hae-kyung 1988:21; (4) the Agriculture Statistical Yearbook.

The imbalance between the population density and food production was exacerbated by urbanization. Although this process began in the postwar period, most urban growth occurred after the formal adoption of industrialization policies under the Park government in the 1960s. For example, the rates of industrialization and urbanization in Korea during this period mirror each other. From 1966 to 1990, Korea had its urbanization and industrialization grow by 37.5 percentage points and 39.6 percentage points, respectively (Ding and Zhao 2011:908). In 1966 the growth rates for both were 42.1 percent, in 1970 they were 49.6 percent and 49.8 percent, and in 1980 they were 66 percent and 66.7 percent, respectively (ibid.). The urban population increased threefold in 20 years, from approximately 9 million people (about 35.8 percent of the total population) in 1960 to 27 million people (about 71.8 percent of the

total population) in 1980 (KOSIS 2008).¹²³ Urbanization created more mouths to feed but removed many hands that would feed them.

Urbanization created other problems for food production and distribution. It decreased the available acreage for production as rural populations contracted,¹²⁴ and urban centers expanded into arable lands,¹²⁵ while annexing cultivated areas for industrial zones. It also created a burgeoning class of urban poor, who moved away from rural areas to escape poverty but found themselves under- or unemployed.

Since the Korean economy was not able to absorb the growing urban population, the government responded with the HCU, which promoted barley consumption in rural areas and wheat consumption in urban centers as a substitute for rice. In a sense, rural people got the more, culturally speaking, inferior of inferior grains. It was one thing to turn to barley and wheat as a substitute for rice when the latter was in short supply. It was quite another to get the people to actually eat them.

3.1. Social Control through Reorganization of Food Consumption

The Park government instituted various measures, such as the HCU, to try to change the national diet. The HCU was not an entirely new idea but was more of a progression from earlier modernization campaigns of everyday life of people. The USAMGIK carried out a modernization campaign, which was continued under the Rhee (1948–60) and the short-lived Chang (1960–61) governments as the New Life

¹²³ Urban area includes towns and cities.

¹²⁴ This has to do particularly with the cohort migration. Most labor migrants were younger cohorts. For further details see Eui-young Yu, “Migration and Urbanization” in Hae-young Lee and Tai-hwan Kwon (eds.), 1978, *Korean Society: Population and Development*, vol. 1 (Seoul: Population and Development Studies Center, Seoul National University); for off-farm migration, see Ban, Sung-Hwan, Pal-Yong Moon, and Dwight H. Perkins, 1980, *Rural Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), pp. 316–90.

¹²⁵ Another problem, which has become much more serious in the last two decades, has been the corporate ownership of rural land. Corporations purchased large tracts of rural land—much of it in former production areas—for speculative purposes.

Movement (*Sinsaenghwal undong*), a strategy to amalgamate the fragmented postwar Korean society (Chong, H-j 2006).¹²⁶ Under the U.S. military government, the Women's Bureau (*Punyŏkuk*) was involved in administering political and social programs,¹²⁷ and the Republic of Korea upon founding in 1948 inherited the same bureaucratic structure. In addition to running social programs to 'modernize' the everyday life of Korean citizens including food preparation and nutrition (*ibid.*), the Women's Bureau was involved in organizing and supporting "modern" women's organizations (Yang 2010). Most of the modern women's organizations first supported by the USAMGIK, and subsequently by the Korean state, were conservative or rightwing, and their activities were in support of the state, whether in politics or social control programs such as the New Life Movement (NLM).

Perhaps the indirect propagation of social control programs through women's and civil organizations might be one of the most significant legacies on Korean society, and its impact became evident during the following decades. During the Rhee government, the NLM was implemented in a variety of ways directly by the government ministries, and civil groups. On one hand, austerity measures were instituted through enacting laws and regulations by evoking either food shortages or shaking off 'uncivilized cultural tradition' (National Archives of Korea / President's Office 1949). There were six NLM campaigns, three specifically targeted to food and beverages by the government ministries in less than a year's time prior to the Korean

¹²⁶ The USAMGIK established the Women's Division (부녀국) in 1945 and launched a life reform project as part of a modernization campaign. The project's focus was on Westernizing Korean society through replacing traditional practices in everyday life. Once the Republic of Korea was established in 1948, the project became a national life rationalization movement (국민생활합리화운동), and in 1950, in the midst of the Korean War, a law (전시생활개선법) was enacted to conserve resources, a type of operation bootstrap under wartime conditions rather than pursuing rationalization of everyday life (Chong, H-j 2006).

¹²⁷ The U.S. military government issued Decree 107 to establish a women's bureau (Punyŏkuk) in 1946 along with a female police force (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs 1987).

War.¹²⁸ On the other hand, parastatal women’s organizations were mobilized to wage the national campaign. For example, the *Taehan Buinhoe* (Korea Women’s Association) worked closely with the Women’s Bureau of the Social Department to implement the NLM programs such as Save the Energy Movement, Rebuild National Life Movement, and so forth to create specific rules to increase social discipline. Yang (2010) argues that the purpose of the *Taehan Buinhoe*’s NLM was to control people’s everyday life to inculcate anti-communism and to reinforce the state control by internalizing statism in women.¹²⁹

The NLM experience and already-established social and organizational infrastructure were to provide a good basis for the forthcoming Park government’s national campaigns. After seizing power in May 1961, Park Chung Hee established the National Reconstruction Movement (NRM; *Kukka chaekön pömkungmin undong*) to mobilize the population behind its modernization project, in part to gain political legitimacy but also to consolidate the junta’s control over the populace. The NRM was under the direct control of the military junta’s command center, the Supreme Council

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Date	Campaign or Movement	Government office
August 1949	Modernize food consumption, and reform fashion	Ministry of Education
Oct. 1949	No meat day	City of Seoul
Oct. 1949	Reform fashion style	Ministry of Education
March 1950	Conserve food	Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and other ministries
March 1950	Citizen Life Renovation	Vice-ministers’ meeting
March 1950	No drinking day	City of Seoul

Source: Extracted from Kim, Hak-jae, 2008, “Yeosun and the state-building in a state of exception,” p. 211 in *Building of the Republic of Korea and the Yeosun Incident*, Academic Symposium on the 60th Anniversary of Yeosun Incident.. Cited in Yang, Dong-sook (2010:196).

¹²⁹ Yang (2010:188) argues that the primary goal of the *Taehan Buinhoe* was to spread anti-communist sentiment, and the New Life Movement was an indirect way to approach its goal.

for National Reconstruction (SCNR; *Kukka Chaekŏn ch'oe kohoeŭi*).¹³⁰ Park Chung Hee used it to reorganize and control society through a web of state agencies and parastatal organizations penetrating deep into urban areas as well as remote rural villages nationwide. The NRM anchored neighborhood organizations to governmental authorities and provided support for officially initiated social programs, while parastatal organizations implemented official programs (Seo, J-s 2000). The NRM was the government's vector for reconstituting society, of which a biopolitical project was a vital component. Through it, the government implemented a variety of social control programs in the everyday lives of ordinary citizens such as initiating a national physical exercise campaign,¹³¹ propagating new fashions (*sinsaenghwalbok*), pumping out national songs on radio and TV, imposing length requirements for men's hair and women's skirts, and implementing a population control program and the HCU policy. In other words, the biopolitical project reflected the state's attempt to control the most basic aspects of human life.

While the HCU policy was advocated under the pretext of 'modernizing' the national diet to improve the health of the population, its basic goal was to reduce domestic rice consumption. This would allow the staple to be exported to earn foreign currency in times of abundance and imports to be curtailed during supply shortages. The confluence of two factors helped create the conditions for the campaign that was forged at this time. Korea suffered from a food deficit for the reasons outlined in chapter 3. The U.S. needed to unload its wheat surplus, and the Korean government needed a way to overcome its food deficit. Furthermore, Washington needed an ally in

¹³⁰ The military junta established the Supreme Council for National Reconstruction (SCNR) three days after it seized power through coup d'état on May 16, 1961. The SCNR consisted of 32 members, and it was the supreme governmental policy-making and policy-executive body.

¹³¹ The NRM physical exercise program was militaristic in style, and it resembled exercises in militarized Germany between 1929 and 1933, and in 1930s China as a part of the New Life Movement (Hong 2004:398).

its military campaign against communism, and Seoul needed one to support its campaign against the North Korean threat. A marriage of convenience was born. The two reached an agreement to finance a large military buildup in Korea through food aid. The Korean government would sell the wheat from the U.S. at home, turning the free grain into a source of revenue. Since it was providing wheat to the population, it could restrict rice consumption so that the leftover might be exported (Kim, Y-h 1990:186). The U.S. and Korean governments saw in the HCU an opportunity to open at least two sources of income that would finance their political projects.

Many welcomed the HCU. The U.S. wheat trade associations helped the Korean flour-milling industry rebuild mills destroyed during the war as a way to promote increased wheat consumption. The Korean flour-milling industry was established to accommodate U.S. food aid, and it actively supported the initiation of the HCU. The Korea Flour Mills Industrial Association (KOFMIA) monopolized wheat aid (ibid. 194) and controlled membership. It had a close relationship with the government. Through a monopoly arrangement and special exchange rate accorded to it by the USAID (or ICA), the industry profited handsomely, accumulating much of the capital that it later used to establish conglomerates in Korea. When the industry was experiencing difficulties from overexpansion in 1957, the KOFMIA lobbied for rice exports to be increased, thereby creating a shortage at home that would result in higher demand for wheat (ibid. 231, 234).

With governments and businesses fully promoting wheat and barley consumption, the only part missing was the appetite of Koreans. In the 1950s, the HCU was focused on conserving rice. Government ministries restricted the consumption of rice by restaurants and alcoholic beverage manufacturers (National Archives of Korea, Central Prosecutor's Office 1951; Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 1966) and were not as aggressive in promoting wheat consumption until later

that decade. They relied mostly on public awareness campaigns and promotions by trade associations, the print media, and Western relief organizations, with support from dietary reformers and students to press for the abandonment of what it deemed inefficient traditional food to what it believed to be more nutritious, cheaper, wheat-based food.

Although wheat foods were provided across the socioeconomic spectrum, promotion focused primarily on ‘middle-class’ communication channels such as women’s magazines, YWCA cooking classes, and primary and secondary home economics classes. With close to a threefold increase in U.S. food aid in 1957—from \$20 million in 1955 to \$57 million in 1957 under PL 480—there was an urgent need to increase wheat consumption in Korea (PL 480 Annual Report 1955 cited in Cathie 1989:134).

The state and parts of big business were in agreement and forged an alliance to bolster the campaign, but the people did not readily accept wheat if given a choice—both its taste and preparation methods were unfamiliar to rice-consuming Koreans.

With the flour-milling industry rapidly recovering processing capacity after the war (Park, C-n, 1997:330), the state tried to convince the people what was good to eat and why, and to teach them how to prepare dishes using wheat. Government ministries began conducting dietary improvement workshops and nutrition classes, advocating that wheat flour was more nutritious than both rice and barley (Chosun Ilbo August 27, 1959, September 4, 1959).

The U.S. helped in these efforts. As part of food aid shipments, world wheat¹³²—the peeled bulgur made from red wheat which was made to resemble rice—

¹³² World wheat was developed by the U.S. to send as food aid to rice-eating countries to entice people to consume wheat. World wheat is made by chemically treating bulgur wheat (Kent and Evers 1994:239–40).

was shipped to Korea. Since world wheat was cheap and it could be cooked in the same way as rice and superficially resembled it, the poor began to consume it in place of rice, but not without resistance (Chosun Ilbo May 30, 1959). In later years there were further attempts to produce artificial rice (MAF 1971), such as a grain made from a mixture of rice and wheat (*inchomi*) or rice and sweet or white potatoes (*inkongmi*), but the attempts never fully succeeded.

In line with the government ministries' efforts, public campaigns aimed at dietary modernization were being waged, particularly at women. For example, *Yŏwŏn*, the leading women's magazine at the time, chastised readers for eating what they liked rather than what was nutritious (Yi, S-a 1958). The article outlined a weekly menu of wheat noodles and barley-mixed boiled rice, and an explanation of the nutrients to be consumed (ibid.). In the same magazine, the following issues had two-page spreads on baking (actually steaming) a Christmas cake (Han, O-h 1958), preparing pancakes (Kim, S-b 1959), and making steamed buns and preparing toast (*Yŏwŏn* December 1959:270–272).

The efforts to promote wheat consumption were slow in gaining people's acceptance and needed to be spearheaded by a flagship initiative. The HCU was officially inaugurated as such under the NRM in 1962. It was a dietary reform program that held wheat as the centerpiece of grain consumption policy. Under the program, state agencies directly dispensed wheat and wheat products. Those who were receiving food assistance were given wheat flour, and government cafeterias served bread and noodles so government workers would have no choice but to eat wheat products for meals during the workday (Chosun Ilbo December 29, 1962; MAF 1963). The government heightened the propaganda to glorify wheat as 'nutritionally superior' to rice and wheat consumption as a patriotic act (see Table 20 for nutrient composition of rice, barley, and wheat). It issued Decree No. 3 to regulate the rationing of rice at

restaurants and public agencies' cafeterias (Kim, S-j 1971:106). As part of these efforts, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry launched the 'Bread and Milk for Lunch Movement' and suggested that the salaries of civil servants should be paid in wheat flour (MAF 1963; Chosun Ilbo January 23, 1964).¹³³

Despite the Korean state's relentless efforts to promote wheat consumption, the HCU was not well received by the populace, especially the middle class, who could afford rice.¹³⁴ The government responded by launching direct measures to make HCU policy take hold. In January 1969, it designated one day a week when no restaurants were allowed to serve rice and began to impose price controls on the grain (MAF 1969). Two government ministries were tasked with overseeing the campaign. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry oversaw the grain consumption policy, while the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs organized nationwide activities, such as developing recipes and organizing regular cooking classes and bread-baking sessions, to get the public to accept wheat. The campaigns also featured large signs encouraging people to eat more wheat and mixed grain (rice with at least 30 percent other grains) for the sake of "health, happiness, and the national economy" (Jean 1972:6–7).

It is worth bearing in mind that the HCU did not continuously promote wheat. It did so when wheat was abundant and cheap thanks to U.S. aid, but it urged restraint when the wheat price rose, or when there was a need to promote rice consumption during a bumper crop. When agricultural research produced a high-yielding rice variety, *Tongil*, for example, the government required farmers to plant it

¹³³ Civil servants—grade-level 4 and below—and low-rung military officials were paid partially with sacks of wheat flours from April 1964 on a monthly basis (Chosun Ilbo March 11, and June 27, 1964).

¹³⁴ Per capita rice consumption continued to rise in the 1960s, from 106 kg in 1963 to 136 kg in 1970 (NSO; CAY constructed).

nationwide.¹³⁵ This switch was highly successful in increasing rice production across the country (Figure 4).

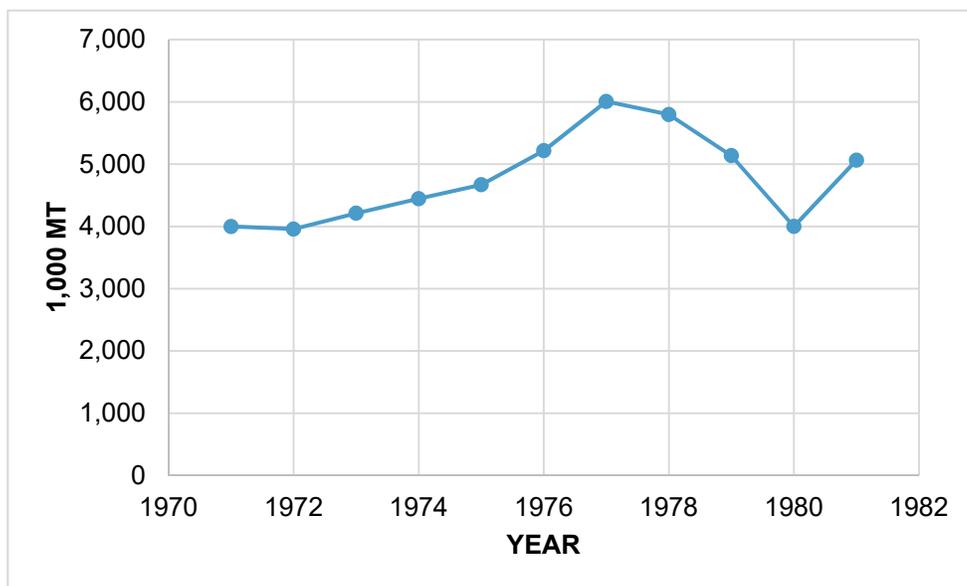


Figure 4. Annual rice (milled) production, 1971–81.

Note: Milling rate is 0.9999.

Source: Foreign Agricultural Service USDA PSD Online 2015.

It was so successful, in fact, that the government eliminated no-rice day in January 1977 and relaxed consumption controls (MAF 1977; *Taehan News* 1977). However, the nationwide cultivation of a single variety was the seed of its own undoing. A plant disease, to which *Tongil* was vulnerable, spread nationwide, resulting in a precipitous drop in rice production in 1980.¹³⁶ The government's reaction was predictable: it reenacted the HCU decrees to restrain rice consumption once again.

¹³⁵ The *Tongil* variety was developed by the Office of Rural Development, and introduced in 1971. The government forced farmers to plant the variety; when farmers resisted officials even destroyed traditional variety seedbeds. The variety initially produced 30 percent greater yield, but there was a great deal of consumer and farmer resistance because of its taste (a lack of) and susceptibility to pests. For details, see Burmeister (1988).

¹³⁶ Like many other high-yielding varieties, *Tongil* was susceptible to plant diseases. Once the plant disease set in, it spread like wildfire. Production in 1980 was approximately two thirds that of 1979 (CAY calculation).

Annual per capita rice consumption reflects the changes in the HCU policy. It declined by 10 kg between 1970 and 1977, when consumption controls were enforced (KOSIS 2014). It grew by 9 kg and 10 kg, respectively, from the 1977 level in 1978 and 1979, when the controls were lifted, and began to decline in 1980, when they were reinstated (ibid.).

4. Coercive State Intervention

The HCU, which had initially been carried out as mainly a public campaign under the NRM, took a more serious turn in the late 1960s as Park's dictatorship consolidated its grip and the need to regulate food consumption became vital to its economic plans. Although the NRM still played an active role, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry took control of HCU policy implementation in 1966.¹³⁷ As the food situation worsened, a new, more powerful department was established within the Ministry in 1973 by Executive Order No. 6459 to take over HCU implementation (Official Gazette 6351, 1973). The new organization, the Department of Food, was specifically dedicated to 'dietary improvement,' that is, to promoting wheat and barley consumption (Song 1999:22).

After the martial law and the *Yushin* constitution in 1972 gave President Park less restrained power and less need for public accountability, his rule became more repressive and direct (Ma, I-s 2000). The HCU policies also became more aggressive with the reorganization of government institutions as well as legal frameworks. Food shortages provided the rationale for the HCU, but the ways in which it was forced on the people reflected the totalitarian nature of the state. The Park government ran the country like a military institution: it used fewer carrots and more sticks to mobilize the

¹³⁷ In 1966, the Food Policy Bureau oversaw the HCU policy; in 1973, a new division, Food Administration, was established (Song, I-j 1999:22).

people to support its national goals. The state forced its way into people's kitchens, lunchboxes, and the dinner table to regulate grain consumption.

4.1. Administrative Intervention

The power of the state includes its ability to promulgate laws and having the bureaucracy to enforce them (Weber 1964). After a major revision in August 1963, the Grain Management Law, Articles 17 and 18, gave the administration the power to intervene in the grain market as well as the legal basis to support the HCU.¹³⁸ As Table 17 reveals, the directives were quite specific. For example, the June 1967 decree required food services—restaurants and cafeterias—to mix 25 percent or more of barley or wheat (usually in the form of noodles) into rice-soup.¹³⁹ According to the December 1974 Decree, restaurants and food services were required to serve rice in a smaller bowl than Koreans were using at the time. This was intended to limit the quantity of rice served. Directives became more intrusive until 1977, when the restrictions began to ease, which was mainly attributed to increased rice production.

¹³⁸ The Grain Management Law was enacted in February 1950 to replace the compulsory rice collection system under the U.S. military authority with a government-purchase system at government-determined prices. Since then, the Grain Management Law was used as the basic legal authority for the government's foodgrain policy to control grain distribution and consumption. The law was revised 12 times between 1950 and 2006; the Grain Management Law recognized the authority of the government to issue decrees to intervene on "matters related to grain merchants, transportation operators, and food processors as needed" (Article 17), and on "the food and beverage services in the hotel and restaurant industry" (*Nonghyŏp Chunganghoe* 1965:681). Articles 17 and 18 were eliminated from the law in July 1999.

¹³⁹ Usually called 'tang,' it is a type of soup with rice added to beef or bone marrow broth with vegetables and different spices.

Table 17. Administrative Decrees Related to the HCU

Date	Content
6/14/1967	Cafeteria: required to mix 25% or more of other grains in rice-soup or serve barley or wheat products; Restaurants: required to mix 25% or more of other grains in cooked rice
2/24/1968	Restaurants: Required to mix 25% or more of other grain in cooked rice
9/24/1968	Restricted use of grains by food manufacturers (allowing only tuber crop flour and corn)
1/23/1969	Prohibit restaurants and inns from serving rice on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 11AM to 5PM, and allowed to serve only wheat foods; Prohibit cafeterias from serving rice; Declare Wednesdays and Saturdays as “No Rice Day” and the “Day of Wheat Foods”
1/31/1969 ^(a)	Prime Minister Directive #72, requiring all government office and local administrative units to ensure government workers and general population adhere to the HCU; the Minister of Education should oversee the implementation of the HCU in schools; the Minister of Culture and Information should implement the public education on the HCU
11/1/1971	Prohibit serving of a table iron-pot rice
7/20/1972	All restaurant-served rice must contain 25% or higher rate of barley
3/14/1973	All restaurant-served rice must contain 30% or higher rate of barley; No use of rice in production of cookies and biscuits, and taffy products
12/3/1974	Required to use rice milled at 7% ^(b) ; Required to mix 30% of barley in rice-cake products; Required to serve rice in a bowl
12/31/1976	Required to sell rice milled at 7% or less; Prohibit selling non-mixed grains
10/15/1977	Removal of rice milled at 7%; Removal of rice bowl requirement
11/9/1977	Allowance of rice cookies and biscuits, and use of rice in taffy products
11/1/1979	All restaurant rice to serve 20% or higher rate of barley or wheat products
3/25/1983	All domestic rice to be milled at less than 10%
4/20/1984	All restaurant rice to serve 10% or higher rate of barley or wheat
11/1/1986	Removal of 10% or higher mixed grain
1/1/1989	Removal of government-stock rice to be milled at 10%, and allow 12% for processing.
1/1/1990	Allowing the use of 100% white rice in producing alcohol

Note:

(a) Taken from Directive 72.

(b) Prepared by milling brown rice grains to remove a proportion of the bran layer and whereby up to 10% or more of the total weight of the grains is removed. 0% is brown rice and 10% is considered white rice.

Source: The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food Policy Bureau (1997) “Food Policy Data”; Administrative Directives.

Most administrative directives were initially targeted at the food industry, such as restaurants and cafeterias, before gradually spreading to food and alcohol

manufacturers, rice millers, and grain merchants.¹⁴⁰ The 1971 decree, however, expanded government regulation into households. It literally spelled out what they might eat, how much, and what they might not. Its requirements include the following: at least 20 percent of barley must be mixed with rice when cooking rice; three meals per week should be wheat foods; rice bowls be replaced with those of government-designated size; a child's lunchbox should be mixed either with barley or wheat foods; and people should not visit eateries that did not serve wheat-based foods (Song, I-j 1999:24).

With the poor rice harvest of 1967–68, the regime became more aggressive in its exercise of administrative power. In January 1969, the Ministry of Home Affairs—by far the most powerful and feared ministry at the time¹⁴¹—joined the two primary ministries of the HCU—Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), and Health and Social Affairs (MHSA)—in issuing a decree to prohibit the food service industry from serving rice on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 11 AM to 5 PM (see Table 17 for decrees related to the HCU). The joint decree illustrated the seriousness of the state's position on promoting wheat. Those violating the decree were punished with fines, the loss of a license, or the closure of business for a period of time. The administrative decree controlled the type and amount of food grains consumed. It did this by requiring a certain percentage of other grains to be mixed in with the cooked rice or by mandating the use of a certain-size bowl, and by allowing wheat foods to be served as staples in place of rice. The decree also restricted rice usage in processed foods and nonstaples (i.e., rice cakes, cookies, and taffies), controlled the rice milling rate, and

¹⁴⁰ Most government and public agencies and large private companies in Korea operated cafeterias for their employees, providing lunches free of charge or at a minimal cost. The cafeterias were a good venue for implementing government policies.

¹⁴¹ Except of course, the Korean Central Intelligence Agency.

determined what could be sold at retail (only rice mixed with other grains could be sold in retail). The restaurant industry resisted some of the stipulations. They were willing to serve barley mixed in with the rice but were unwilling to sell wheat foods (DongA Ilbo, November 17, 1971a).

The Park government took steps to ensure that the decrees were enforced and that violators incurred penalties against their pockets and their reputations. The HCU was overseen directly by the highest level of the Park regime. The prime minister issued Directive 72, Rice Conservation in January 1969 to the Ministries of Education and Culture and Information. Government workers—most often from the two ministries mentioned—were sent out to inspect restaurants in even the smallest towns and cities. Violators were assessed penalties, and the reports of the inspections were often published in daily newspapers. For example, in Seoul it was reported that the city had a ‘special guidance inspection team’ that investigated “14,744 businesses and found 514 restaurants in violation of the decrees; of those violators, 301 were closed down for a set duration, 22 lost their business license, and 191 were indicted for wrongdoing” (DongA Ilbo, December 19, 1972). The intelligence agency reported the status of the HCU inspections directly to President Park (Executive Office 1975). The prime minister also issued directives to ministries, such as Prime Minister Directive 72 on January 31, 1969 on conserving rice. The Park regime mobilized the entire bureaucracy to make sure the HCU was successfully implemented.

4.2. Mobilization of Parastatal Organizations¹⁴²

In the 1960s, the NRM's reach extended from large cities to small towns, penetrating state agencies and private companies; it claimed membership of 3.6 million—out of a total population of 25 million in 1961—with 500,000 employees. The NRM Committee on Dietary Improvement worked closely with the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to develop new recipes for wheat foods—not only Western-style but also noodles and dumplings—and popularized its use by holding cooking classes and distributing information leaflets. The committee ran a national campaign, one-wheat-meal-a-day,¹⁴³ and established a wheat center in every district in the country.

In the 1970s, when the international political economy was shifting and domestic political pressure mounting, the Park regime launched the New Community Movement (NCM; *Saemaül Undong*) as a development panacea to better control the rural areas.¹⁴⁴ The NCM was as extensive as the NRM, but it took a more sophisticated approach to implementing the HCU. The NCM framed the HCU as a project to rationalize everyday life and carried out activities in tandem with state agencies, buttressing the administrative decrees. Its targets were both households and commercial enterprises. It utilized all communication methods available at the time—such as radio, TV, public service films, street propaganda (megaphones), village loudspeakers, and publications—to get its message across. It also got neighborhood associations to participate in its programs. Due to the development nature of the NCM,

¹⁴² In the authoritarian state of Korea during the Park era, the line between the official government agencies and parastatal organizations was blurred, as was the case with the Headquarters of the National Reconstruction Movement, and the New Community Movement. There were different grades of government funding, involvement, and running of parastatal organizations throughout the Park period.

¹⁴³ In 1962 alone, the NRM produced 100,000 leaflets, held over 7,000 cooking classes with over 100,000 housewives and students attending, and had many media appearances.

¹⁴⁴ The New Community Movement (*Saemaül Undong*) was officially inaugurated in 1971; its activities were already underway in the late 1960s, overlapping with the National Reconstruction Movement.

it paid particular attention to rural communities and the youth population. For example, the NCM designated 1,847 pilot rural applied nutrition villages (*nongchon ũngyong yŏngyang sibŏm maũl*), 1,500 pilot youth programs, and 192 practicum cooking facilities (Chung, K-j 1996:109–110), connecting to the already-established Applied Nutrition Program (ANP; *ũngyongyŏngyang saŏp*). The ANP was a joint program of the Rural Development Administration (RDA) of Korea¹⁴⁵ and U.N. agencies¹⁴⁶ that ran from 1968 to 1986, specifically targeting diet changes to improve nutrition in rural areas as a part of a global ANP efforts.¹⁴⁷ The ANP project stimulated changes in rural diet, accepting unfamiliar foods, teaching rural women how to prepare Western foods. The NCM even held national and local cooking and food competitions, and it had a detailed plan of action with directives that covered the entire year.

Much of these activities were carried out by four major parastatal women’s associations. Apart from the Life Improvement Club (*Saenghwal Kaesŏn Kurakpu*), which preceded the HCU, three were established during the period of heightened intervention by the state. Of the four organizations, two were directly under the MHSA, and the other two under the MAF. This exemplifies how the state penetrated the smallest administrative units of neighborhoods crisscrossing the entire country. Table 18 details the nature and the scope of the four associations. In 1977, three were merged under the *Samaũl Women’s Association* (Korean Women’s Development Institute 1985:385). Their purposes and priorities differed somewhat, but all four focused on getting women to support the state’s campaign on the HCU and worked to

¹⁴⁵ The RDA is a national government agency responsible for agricultural research and extension.

¹⁴⁶ UN agencies included UNICEF, the FAO, and the WHO.

¹⁴⁷ The FAO boasts that ANP projects were launched simultaneously in different countries; by 1961, 26 ANP projects were established, and within 5 years 56 country projects were fully operational (McNaughton 1975, cited in FAO document, “Alleviating malnutrition in communities.” Downloaded in July 2016. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/v7700t/v7700t05.htm>).

extend the state's influence over communities throughout Korea. The HCU activities focused on the need to promote the staple diet transition from rice to other cereals and on nutrition education (ibid. 373–75, 381).

Table 18. Women's Associations under the NCM with Local Chapters, 1976

Item	Women's class [<i>Punyŏ Kyosil</i>]	Association of Mothers for Family Planning [<i>Kachok Kyehoe ōmōnihoe</i>]	Life Improvement Club [<i>Saenghwal Kaesŏn Kurakpu</i>]	<i>Samaŭl</i> Women's Association [<i>Samaŭl Punyŏhoe</i>]	Total number
Oversight agency	Ministry of Health & Social Affairs	Ministry of Health & Social Affairs	Office of Rural Development	National Agricultural Cooperative Federation	
Year formed	1967	1968	1958	1973	
Purpose	Capacity-building; be a vector for women's participation in NCM	Family planning; community development	Scientification of rural life	Rural standard of living; organizing rural women	
Membership age-group	20–60; women	20–47; child-bearing-age women	20–60; women	18–50; women	
# of members	2,150,000	749,819	561,646	420,000	3,881,465
Local chapters (Ri, Dong) ^a	44,049	29,984	29,099	12,500	115,632

^a *Ri* is village, and *Dong* is neighborhood in cities and towns.

Note: As of December 31, 1976, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

Source: The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, cited in Korean Women's Development Institute. 1985. *The White Paper on Women's Issues 1985*, Seoul: Korean Women's Development Institute, p. 386.

There were other women's groups not directly organized by the government but whose participation in the NCM was no less thorough. One such group was the Korea Women's Association (who had the significant involvement with the previous governments and the NLM), which had 1.6 million members, and its activities were directed at middle-class women in the cities (Korea Women's Association 1971). The KWA's activities were similar to those of the NCM women's associations but

provided the appearance of ‘voluntary’ participation in the HCU, contributing to the normalization of the middle class’s wheat consumption. For example, the KWA held a dietary improvement rally in August 1971 and published a letter to President Park to institutionalize the consumption of wheat and barley. It passed a resolution calling for:

1. Mixing 15 percent or more of other grains in cooking rice
2. Consuming three wheat food meals or more per week
3. Not patronizing restaurants that did not follow the HCU requirements
4. Eating seasonal food
5. Replacing staples with wheat and barley because eating rice is behind the times. (Korea Women’s Association, August 1971:12)

The activities most frequently undertaken by the parastatal organizations were public campaigns to propagate the ideas and messages supporting the goals of the state.

4.3. Intervention through Primary and Secondary Schools

Modern states employ education systems as an integral part of influencing sociopolitical behavior and sustaining political systems (Ramiraz and Boli 1987). During the Park regime, the education system was used as an effective political instrument to enhance its control over the state apparatus and strengthen the power of the state over society (Seth 2002:192–223). The state used the education system as a means of disciplining and unifying the populace, and to support efforts to expand the economy. The Park government used education institutions to carry out political socialization¹⁴⁸ to ensure that future generations were beholden to the “imagined

¹⁴⁸ The process of induction into a political system.

community”¹⁴⁹ of Korea it had concocted. Simultaneously, the regime reoriented the educational system from academic to vocational and technical in an attempt to produce a disciplined workforce for expanding the industrial economy (ibid. 5). The HCU policy was implemented as though it were an ideological test kit where students were forced to publicly demonstrate their loyalty and patriotism through everyday consumption practices.¹⁵⁰

Primary and secondary schools were an ideal place for the state to transmit ideas and beliefs about wheat consumption as both a public and private act, and to advance the goal of the HCU. The HCU was extensively worked into the education system by trying to imbue students with ideas that made wheat consumption look natural and legitimate. Schools, with their system of reward and punishment, were an effective vehicle for systematic indoctrination and discipline. The idea of wheat consumption was conveyed to students throughout the day. In the mornings when students arrived at school, they were greeted with songs about wheat blaring through loudspeakers. In class, students were taught about wheat through textbooks and lectures, and they were tested to check that they were taking in that information. During lunch, students were subjected to lunchbox inspections or were given wheat products under school lunch programs. Writing and arts contests awarded those who excelled at extolling wheat’s virtues. School rules promoted wheat consumption, using banners on the walls and incorporating it into class mottos as a reminder.

¹⁴⁹ In the sense of Benedict Anderson (2006:6–7), who defined a nation as “an imagined political community” that is different from an actual community.

¹⁵⁰ An example of how patriotism was interpreted from adhering to the HCU would be a case described in Lee, S-h (2002), “I Received an Award for Eating a Barley Meal,” in *I Read Old Newspapers* (Seoul: Dau). The sentiment is indicated in the following excerpt (translation mine): “I was caught with a rice lunchbox during the lunchbox inspection. The school’s discipline officer inspected lunchboxes in our class that day; upon discovering my rice he meted out corporal punishment and yelled at me angrily for 10 minutes, shouting: “This rascal has no *patriotism!* *You don’t have any concern for the country!* [emphasis added] Since that day of punishment I habitually quake with fear every time I hear words like ‘patriotism, nation or state.’ I just cannot shake it off after all these years.”

Working with students had a multiplying effect. Not only were the students more readily accepting of the new foods, but family consumption practices could be shaped through “children’s needs and preferences” (Lewin 1942:1).¹⁵¹ The scale of penetration into homes through schools was enormous considering the emphasis on educational commitment of Korean families and government investment. Primary school education was compulsory beginning in the 1950s, and enrollments grew from 3.9 million in 1960 to 5.8 million in 1970, by which time enrollment for all grades was universal, and the dropout rate was very small (Seth 2002:78). Middle school enrollments increased from 621,000 in 1961 to 2.5 million in 1980, an enrollment rate of 94.7 percent, and in the concomitant period, high school enrollments jumped from 416,000 to 2.3 million, an enrollment rate of 69.7 percent (Ministry of Education, cited in Choi, H-j 1994:14).¹⁵² During the two decades of the HCU policy, millions of students and their families were subjected to, and participated in, the HCU policy. State officials urged schools to adhere diligently to lunchbox inspections because “homes must be reached through school in order to entice the entire nation to acquire the HCU-lifestyle” (Bae, K-s 1975:23).

The typical school day was saturated with the HCU: textbooks espoused the benefits of wheat and barley, teachers inspected lunchboxes for the required ratio of other grains in cooked rice, and school meals featured wheat foods. Extracurricular events, such as competitions that came with awards, were organized to reinforce the learning. The state used teachers as instruments of its authority: they were structurally induced to administer the HCU directives with little or no autonomy. Any dissenting

¹⁵¹ A recent study by Norgaard et al. (2007) also concluded that children exert influence over the food choices of the family.

¹⁵² The student numbers were cited from Republic of Korea, Ministry of Education, Statistical Yearbook of Education, 1971 and 1981; the rates of enrollments came from p. 14 of Choi, Hee-jin, 1994, “A Study on the Influence of Social Changes on Dietary Life from 1960s to 1980s,” MS thesis, Department of Food and Nutrition, Ewha Womans University.

voices were purged systematically “to remind them of the power of the state to discipline and punish recalcitrant behavior” (Seth 2002:211). The state also utilized Korea’s rapidly growing student population: it mobilized students to demonstrate public support for state policies, promote loyalty to the state, disseminate political information, and reach into homes to change what individual families put on the dinner table.

4.3.1. Textbook Portrayal—Image Production

Textbooks were one of the most important elements of the educational system in Korea; every student was required to read, study, memorize, and comprehend them, as well as be tested on them. Decisions regarding what appeared in textbooks and how the information was presented (by both authors and teachers) had a major impact on students’ understanding. With the authoritarian, top-down approach to education in Korea, what was written in textbooks, or how it was interpreted by the classroom teachers, was often accepted as the “truth.” Because the confluence of the Confucian culture and the authoritarian state discouraged students from questioning the authenticity of claims being made by a teacher, the educational forum was an ideal venue for the regime to justify its actions and policy choices.

Textbooks for home economics and technical courses served as a primary vehicle for transmitting information about wheat and barley consumption, and their information was tinged with a bias toward wheat. Textbooks for primary schools criticized a rice-based diet as unbalanced and lacking in essential nutrients while describing the consumption of wheat and barley as wholesome and “nutritious.” Textbooks often highlighted the need to abandon the traditional rice-based diet and switch to wheat and barley. The following excerpt from a 1975 fourth-grade textbook provides a good example of how the subject was portrayed and taught in primary schools:

Consuming rice alone results in a vitamin B and protein deficiency. Mixing beans, barley or wheat with rice makes up for this deficiency. Due to food processing, barley and wheat can now be mixed with rice conveniently. Wheat foods, such as noodles, *sujebi* and bread, are good to eat; if consumed with milk, butter, or eggs, wheat foods are nutritious, convenient, delicious and good for your health because it digests well. Although we are an agricultural nation, we need to import rice every year because of food shortages. It makes good sense to eat one wheat or barley meal a day: it is economical, nutritious, as well as time saving and convenient. Eating rice is a foolish habit we need to correct. (The Ministry of Education 1975:59–60, cited in Song, I-j 1999; translation mine)

4.3.2. *Lunchbox Inspection*

As was the case with the Prime Minister’s Directive 72, the HCU directives were sent to the Ministry of Education, and from there to individual schools through the institutional hierarchy. The official directives regarding lunchbox inspections were often specific to the point of mandating the percentage mixture of grains, and school administrators relayed the instructions to classroom teachers. If a teacher did not follow them, he was disciplined with a promotion delay or a pay freeze. The threat of punishment was not always needed, for some of the administrators and classroom teachers ‘voluntarily’ implemented them. Some even went above and beyond the official directives by demanding that the ratio of barley or world wheat be 50 percent rather than the mandated 30 percent and that bread be distributed for lunch (DongA Daily June 12, 1976).

The lunchbox inspections were carried out daily or through spot-checks a few times a week, and the results were recorded before being reported to the Ministry of Education. According to Cha (1973), inspection results were recorded in a student ‘implementation card’ (see Figure 5) after each inspection, and the cards were periodically—monthly or quarterly—tallied up (see Figure 6) for report to the ministry. If a student followed as instructed, s/he received “○” or “△,” and if a student brought

rice, s/he got “X.” Those who did not bring lunch—in most cases those whose families did not have access to sufficient food—would receive a “/” on their card.

Barley and Wheat Consumption Implementation Card							School
(Grade Class) (Student #) Name ()							
date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Date	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
4/1				4/26			
4/2				4/27			
...				...			
4/24				5/19			
4/25				5/20			
Barley (O)				Violation (X)			
Wheat (Δ)				No lunchbox (/)			
Subtotal				Total			
Percentage				Approved			

Figure 5. HCU implementation card.

Source: Cha, B-c (1973).

	# of cards reported	HCU implemented (followed) for the reported period	Wheat consumption implemented (for the reported period)	Instruction violated (for the reported period)	No lunch	HCU total	Total	Ratio
Basic information								
1 st Quarter								
2 nd Quarter								
3 rd Quarter								
4 th Quarter								

Figure 6. Student (parents) status of the HCU implementation results.

Source: Cha, B-c (1973).

Students who followed the rules diligently received public recognition and awards (Cha, B-c 1973:93–99); those who ‘violated’ the HCU instruction were punished by having their lunchboxes confiscated, by having to clean the classroom, or

by having a notation on their transcript. In some cases, parents were called to the school to write a statement of future adherence (DongA Daily June 12, 1976). There were other punishments that had the effect of making students appear “lacking morality” and “unpatriotic” (Lee, S-h 2002).

Through the system of punishment and reward, schools systematically controlled both students and parents. It tried to induce more active participation by selecting those students who were exemplary in adhering to the HCU while punishing those who did not adhere to wheat consumption guidelines.

4.3.3. School Lunch Programs: A Ground for Building a Taste for Wheat

School meals and lunch programs were used to directly promote the consumption of wheat-based foods. Initially, the aid came through UNICEF as part of a war-relief program, and subsequently through CARE in 1957. It was a massive program targeting mainly primary school students (an annual average of 1.1 million to 1.6 million children¹⁵³) in the form of bread (wheat and corn) and powdered milk (Chang, C-k 2000:129, 204).

School meals were in the form of gruel (corn) to make them more acceptable to children before they gradually transitioned to steamed bread, but by 1963 the program had shifted to providing bread (Park, J-k 1986:13). By 1966, wheat bread and hard biscuits were the predominant form of food in the program,¹⁵⁴ which coincided with the growth of the bread industry (ibid. 227) and USAID’s direct provision of wheat to the program. Teachers, however, continued to battle with the avoidance of bread and milk by students even into the mid-1970s (Kwon, H-k 1975:131).

¹⁵³ UNICEF provided relief feeding programs to an average of 1.25 million students per year during the period 1953–56, CARE provided an average of 1.1 million students per year during the period 1957–65, and USAID provided an average of 1.6 million students per year.

¹⁵⁴ In remote locations where timely delivery of bread was not possible, *sujebi* was provided to students.

Table 19. Number of Students in the School Lunch Program, 1963–78

Year	# of schools with lunch program	Total # of students (in 1,000) (A)	# of students receiving lunch (in 1,000) (B)	Rate of recipients (%) B/A
1963	4,762	4,184	1,779	42
1964	4,897	4,398	1,812	41
1965	5,215	4,773	1,861	39
1966	5,552	5,115	1,912	37
1967	5,892	5,342	2,000	37
1968	5,495	5,495	2,000	36
1969	5,705	5,553	2,000	36
1970	5,717	5,671	2,164	38
1971	5,983	5,727	1,771	31
1972	6,097	5,733	2,184	38
1973	5,820	5,092	1,476	26
1974	6,208	5,619	1,402	25
1975	5,980	5,599	1,384	25
1976	6,010	5,504	1,216	22
1977	6,265	5,514	1,300	24
1978 ^a	360	5,604	129	2.2

Source: Compiled from Economic Planning Board, and the Ministry of Education Statistical Yearbook 1986, cited in *The Fifty-year History of School Health and Feeding Program*, 2000:251–252.

^a In September 1977, a serious case of food poisoning caused by “cream bread,” which affected 5,500 students with one death, led to the suspension of the lunch programs for most schools. This explains the drop in school lunch programs for the following years.

In 1969, USAID and the Korean government agreed to institutionalize the school lunch program within Korea’s educational structure and to transform the welfare-oriented school lunch program for needy children into one covering all elementary school students.¹⁵⁵ Table 19 illustrates the number of students who were part of the school lunch programs from 1963 to 1978, when wheat foods were

¹⁵⁵ This meant some benefited from subsidized lunch programs and others were required to pay the full price.

provided as the main staple. The school lunch program at the beginning had the good intention of providing much-needed food and nutrition to needy children, but it was also used as another means of dispensing wheat, buttressed by the HCU policy.¹⁵⁶

School meals and lunch programs were not mandatory like other programs, but schools followed the HCU policy to the point where they established their own “Wheat Consumption Day” and required students to either pack bread for lunch or collected money to purchase bread and milk for lunch on those days (DongA Daily, 6/12/1976). When students declined to eat bread at lunch they were classified by teachers as eating unhealthy, unbalanced meals, a situation to be corrected (Kwon, H-k, 1975:131).

4.3.4. Onto the Family Dinner Table

Individual households also became a target of the HCU. Restructuring consumption preferences through public institutions and the food industry had limited scope. The state understood that it was the family, as a micro-social unit, that could deliver the shift to barley and wheat consumption most effectively. Plans to take aim at the family dinner table were made with the reasoning that “if we are to succeed in improving dietary practices, we need to challenge individual kitchens and family dinner tables to consume more wheat and barley rather than working with the food services industry”¹⁵⁷ (MAF 1971). The 1971 plan reconceptualized the Korean kitchen and food preparation routines, and came up with a corresponding supply structure for a stable, convenient delivery of wheat to households. The most critical component was the state’s attempt to make women more accommodating of the HCU policy.

¹⁵⁶ The school meal program became a school lunch program in 1969 when the HCU policy was strengthened.

¹⁵⁷ National Archives of Korea, July 31, 1971. Translation mine.

Because Korean kitchens and utensils were not suitable for preparing Western-style wheat-based dishes, nor were housewives familiar with making them, housewives had to move away from traditional cooking practices and learn about nutrition and Western cooking methods. But other than preparing noodles, it was not possible to bake bread or cookies, since Korean kitchens did not have ovens. The state therefore began developing and distributing recipes for wheat-based dishes that could be prepared in a traditional kitchen, while the ministries launched a campaign to ‘modernize’ kitchens and establish a supply chain for cheap wheat (ibid.).

Parastatal women’s associations were mobilized to push the HCU into individual households (Korea Women’s Association August 1971; MAF 1972:46). For example, one of the largest women’s organizations in the country at the time, the KWA, held a national rally on dietary reform in 1971 calling on housewives to get onboard with the campaign and passed a resolution aimed at the family dinner table (KWA August 1971:12).

Schools were the ideal vehicle for distributing knowledge of the new consumption ideas to households and for reminding families about the HCU. The Ministry of Education required schools to frequently send reminders to families about adhering to the HCU. Inspecting packed lunches provided information about a household’s consumption practices, and sending reminders to homes was a way of shaping behavior in line with state policy. Schools also summoned mothers to take part in HCU seminars as part of efforts to fundamentally change their food behavior.

5. Manufacturing a Discourse on Consumption

One of the biggest obstacles in reshaping the national diet to consume wheat was the Korean people’s preference for rice, only in not terms of taste but also its symbolic and cultural value. For over a millennium, communities had been built around the cultivation of rice, and lives were woven through its consumption. In Korea, as in

many Asian nations, rice was the base from which social orders were forged and ancestral rites were performed. Rice was *sui generis* among grains in Korea: ‘rice’ was differentiated from all other cereals, which were lumped together with the designation “other grains.” Cooked rice was referred to as a ‘meal,’ and it symbolized living well, a life of well-being. Rice’s status had been earned through history and cultural practices in Korea, and it had to be a particular type of rice (japonica).

There are four types of major categories of rice in the world: japonica, indica, aromatic, and glutinous (Childs and Burdett 2000), and of the four, the variety consumed and preferred by Koreans has been japonica. The characteristics and forms of these four types of rice differ. Japonica rice is usually grown in temperate climates while indica rice is grown in tropical and sub-tropical areas, and the grains are round and do not easily crack or break. When cooked, this rice is moist and sticky (ibid.). Indica grains, on the other hand, are long and break easily. When cooked, the rice is fluffy and does not stick together. Korea and Japan produce japonica, while most of the rice in Southern and Southeastern Asia, and Southern China, is indica rice (International Rice Research Institute 2007). The Korean preference of not any rice but japonica rice would not easily be relinquished.

The Park regime worked to counter the symbolic and cultural status of rice by manufacturing a public discourse in favor of wheat consumption.¹⁵⁸ One of the most effective ways was mobilizing ‘science’ and ‘rationality’ encapsulated in the vague notion of Western modernity. The HCU was framed as a dietary improvement project to ‘modernize’ Korean society, and the Park regime made use of nutritional and medical “rationality” as its framework. The regime argued that a rice-based diet was

¹⁵⁸ Many other arguments were employed as well; among them, wheat consumption for conserving household expenditures to support the national economy, and the inefficiency of traditional dietary practices were frequently invoked. Advertisements also had a dramatic impact.

nutritionally inferior and medically problematic, not to mention a financial burden on the national economy, holding back Korea's progress. At the same time, wheat was presented as a superior crop that could substitute as a staple and would open doors to modern consumption, suggesting that a "rational" choice of wheat would be an indication of progress toward a modern society.

5.1. Rice, the Grain of Death

5.1.1. Nutrition Assessment

The nutritional analysis shown in Table 20 was an example of 'science-based knowledge' comparing rice to wheat and barley, and a variation of Table 20 was used, depending on the type of communication, to create negative images about rice as an inferior crop with a relatively weaker nutrient composition. As Table 20 illustrates, rice had the lowest amounts of several types of nutrients compared with wheat and barley, whereas wheat was the most nutritious for several nutrients. It does not define what type of each grain represents, nor does it list many other nutrients in each grain. The quantification of the crops gave an appearance of scientific authority to which people were asked to submit, and it was used extensively to denigrate rice and amplify the virtues of wheat and barley. Western nutritional science was in the early stages of being introduced to the public in South Korea, and a cottage industry quickly grew to publicize nutritional information in support of the HCU policy.

Table 20. Nutrient Composition of Rice, Barley, and Wheat (in 100g)

Component	Rice	Barley	Wheat
Energy (kcal)	342	340	354
Moisture (%)	14.5	13.5	11.1
Protein (%)	6.4	10.2	11.2
Fat (%)	0.8	2.0	1.4
NFE ^a	77.4	70.4	74.2
Calcium (mg)	4	40	46
Phosphorus (mg)	160	270	220
Iron (mg)	0.4	4.0	1.6
Vitamin (mg)			
B1 (mg)	0.10	0.35	0.28
B2 (mg)	0.14	0.07	0.07
Niacin	1.5	7.0	7.0

^a Starch.

Source: Extracted and composited from Han, I-k, Korean Journal of Nutrition, (5):1, 1972:8–10

Nutritional scientists were busy not only producing scientific research but also making claims of the inadequacy of rice (see below). According to them, rice

- had low quantity of protein, and the quality of the protein was “bad,”
- lacked vitamins A, D, and C,¹⁵⁹ and was low in B₁, B₂, and niacin,
- had inferior amino acids,
- was low in calcium, iron, and phosphorus,¹⁶⁰
- was too glutinous for good digestion, and
- would acidify blood to cause weakening of the heart, kidney, and liver.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Vitamins A, C, and D are not shown in Table 20.

¹⁶⁰ All four are from Han, I-k (1972:9–10).

¹⁶¹ The last two are from Chŏng, C-h, 1975:36, and the same argument is published in *Yŏwŏn*. Chŏng argues that since rice is an acidic food, rice consumption will eventually cause blood to become acidified.

In 1968, when the first comprehensive national nutritional survey was conducted in South Korea,¹⁶² some nutritional scientists claimed there was an overconsumption of rice on the basis of their analysis of nutritional intake, from which Koreans drew the majority of their caloric intake from cereal. The rice overconsumption reduced the consumption of other foods; therefore, Koreans' preference for rice was blamed as the cause of Koreans' malnourishment (Han, I-k 1972:11).¹⁶³ The recommendation was to consume more animal protein and micronutrients (Ju, J-s 1968; Yu et al. 1968), as well as more wheat and barley (Kim, S-h 1969:69; Han, I-k 1972). These recommendations were featured widely in women's magazines and in the public sphere. In reality, most Koreans were struggling to get adequate amounts of calories as nutrition, and such recommendations therefore seemed ludicrous.

The quantification of rice indicated nothing about how Korean dietary practices supplemented the rice-based diet with side dishes of vegetables and plant protein. As the "entire Far East lived on a diet of rice and its by-products" (Braudel, 1992:152), so did Korea. The argument that rice was nutritionally inadequate was turned on its head two decades later when Korea faced a rice surplus. Suddenly, the arguments were that rice, when compared to wheat, had twice as much amino acids (lysine in particular) and had the higher quality protein, though in a lower quantity (Son, S-m 2001:862–863). Son (2001) stated that rice also has three to four times the cellulose and hemicelluloses (microfiber) of wheat, and that rice starch, which had

¹⁶² The first nutritional survey in South Korea was done in 1953 by an American government agency, the Interdepartmental Committee on Nutrition for National Defense, under the auspices of the U.S. Army, of the Korean soldiers to measure nutritional conditions. By the early 1960s, the nutrition survey shifted away from the military to the civilian population. However, 1968 marked the first comprehensive national survey.

¹⁶³ Han (1972:10) argued that Korean's imbalanced diet led to decreased height and weight; thus, it was difficult for Koreans to be good athletes.

been claimed to be “too glutinous for good digestion” (enzyme-resistant starch), actually functions as fiber (Kim, H-y 1993, cited in Son 863). Additionally, rice had become nutritionally superior and had numerous functions in the prevention of diseases (Chöng, K-c 2001:890). As the political economy changed, so did the nutritional tune.

In the scientific arguments concerning nutrition, the Park government focused on a select set of nutrients that supported the HCU claims. Participating scientists either misinterpreted the “findings” or ignored the facts of the study. For example, in the above statement about the “inferior amino acids” found in rice, I-k Han’s (1972) own findings supported a higher amino acid content for rice (Table 21). However, Han argued that rice contained lower levels of amino acids by comparing it to meat instead of wheat and barley (9).¹⁶⁴

Table 21. Amino Acid Content of Rice, Barley, and Wheat (%)

Amino acid	Rice	Barley	Wheat
Arginine	5.4	–	3.9
Histidine	3.4	–	2.2
Lysine	2.2	3.2	1.9
Tryptophane	1.1	1.1	1.1
Phenylalanine	5.6	4.8	5.5
Methionine	2.6	1.4	2.0
Threonine	2.2	3.2	2.7
Leucine	6.7	6.5	7.0
Iso-leucine	4.9	4.0	4.2
Valine	8.8	4.8	4.1

Source: Extracted from Han, I-k, Korean Journal of Nutrition, (5)1, 1972:9.

¹⁶⁴ Han cited three nutrients that rice lacks in sufficient amount in his analysis of rice nutrients: (1) Vitamins A, D, and C (lacking), and B₁ and B₂, as well as Niacin, (2) Amino Acids, and (3) Minerals. Han compares the rice nutrients against meat, milk, and eggs in discussing amino acids. Similarly, Han compares rice to animal products in discussing minerals.

5.1.2. *Medical Consequences*

High consumption of rice, people were warned, would cause a litany of medical conditions such as beriberi, neuralgia, memory loss, glossitis, stomatitis, anemia, hypertension, gastroenteric disorders, and circulatory problems (Han, I-k 1972:10; Oh, Y-h 1972:328; Yŏwŏn 1972:358). Textbooks of that era warned that rice consumption would cause children to become “uncontrollable” and would acidify the body to cause encephalopathy (Ministry of Education 1975:87). One medical argument that was widely popularized was that rice consumption was related to the spread of encephalopathy. According to K-s Lee (1975:27), encephalopathy would “cause the body to lose immunity, which leads initially to chronic tiredness, headaches, indigestion, common cold, constipation, loss of appetite, and boils, but soon it will develop into more serious diseases . . . [in] some cases, it would lead to diabetes.” Another argument, citing foreign and therefore more authoritative scientists, was that “the high consumption of carbohydrates causes a fatty liver” and that “the higher consumption of rice causes more heart disease and a shorter life span.” Therefore, the author declared that rice consumption was a “national nutritional problem” and recommended other grains instead of rice (Jung, J-c, and K. Haw 1968:10).

Many articles similar to the ones above appeared repeatedly in HCU-related publications and public advertisements. Rice became the grain of illness. The Korean example illustrates that science can be used as a mechanism to strengthen ideology.¹⁶⁵ These ‘scientific facts’ were used to bolster the regime’s political project. Most of the Korean scientific community, particularly in the field of nutrition, colluded with the state, as evidenced by an article published in the *Journal of the Korean Home*

¹⁶⁵ This is quite in contrast to Althusser’s argument of science practice as being separate from ideological practice. That is, Althusser posited that along with the economic, political, and ideological, science practice makes the social formation.

Economics (1981). It stated, “Korean nutritionists participated in the research to support government policy in promoting wheat consumption . . . and came up with a rate of mixture most acceptable [to the public]” (Lee, J-m 1981:113). In some cases, the studies seemed aimed at providing the basis for the state’s political goals such as the development of artificial rice (rice and wheat mixture) or formulating a ratio of rice/barley to optimize nutrition (Ju, J-s et al. 1973). The scientific community, whether willingly or not, supported the Park regime’s HCU policy by conducting research based on political cues.

5.2. Wheat, the Superior Crop

5.2.1. Nutrition Benefits

To counter the firmly entrenched status of rice as Korea’s favored staple, a desire for wheat had to be created. This could not be achieved through direct force alone; therefore, the state collaborated with the scientific community and used advertising and other activities of food corporations. The construction of a desire for wheat was the other side of the coin to controlling the Korean desire for rice. Arguments for the desirability of wheat ranged from its being a superior crop to rice nutritionally and medically, to ‘grain eugenics,’ which argued that wheat-consuming nations were superior to rice-consuming ones (Lee, S-h 2002).

A table similar to that of Table 22 was used to boast of the superior qualities of wheat in women’s magazines, public announcement films,¹⁶⁶ brochures, and so forth. For example, articles in women’s magazines stressed that wheat had more “calories, protein, fat and calcium compared to rice” (Oh, Y-h 1972:328), and some even argued

¹⁶⁶ From 1953 to 1994, the Ministry of Culture and Public Information produced weekly public announcement films to be shown in movie theaters before the main films were shown to publicize the state policy.

that “bread has more vitamins which are good for brain function” (Lee, S-a 1963:384). “To counter vitamin B₁ deficiency from the over consumption of rice, one should eat bread with two meals a day at least, if not at all three meals” (ibid. 379). The magazine articles were often written by those in positions of authority such as scholars and school teachers and were followed by recipes and illustrations on ‘how-to’ prepare wheat foods, or weekly or seasonal menus. Figure 7 is an example of a ‘how-to’ illustration on preparing handmade noodles and *sujebi*, as well as bread and sandwich-making illustrated in women’s magazines that could be used in existing kitchen facilities. The proliferation of ‘how-to’ illustrations and instructions showed the state was aiming to ‘teach’ the population what wheat foods were, how to prepare them, as well as how to consume them.

Table 22. An Example of a Table Used to Demonstrate Why Wheat Should Be the Main Staple

Food	Quantity	Gram	Energy (calorie)	Protein	Comparison of calories with 1 bowl of rice
Rice	1 bowl	150	225	5	1 bowl
Bread	1/4 gun ^a	120	280	8	1.5 bowl
Noodles (wheat)	1 bowl	250	300	12	1.5 bowl
Noodles (buckwheat)	1 bowl	230	300	10	1.5 bowl
Sweet potato	1, Medium-size	200	220	3	1 bowl
Rice cake	1, large-size	75	200	5	1 bowl

^a A Korean unit of measurement to measure weight. 1 gun equals 500 grams.

Source: “Ideal menus and wheat foods to stimulate appetite in early spring,” *Yöwön*, March 1972: 358.

In using a nutrition table—in many cases a table was presented without specifying the quantity measured—the benefits of wheat consumption were overly stressed. Table 22 is an example used in an article which emphasized that wheat should be consumed as a staple food. From the table, it is unclear as to what else had

been used in the making of the bread (such as butter and sugar), and the noodle dish (such as meat).

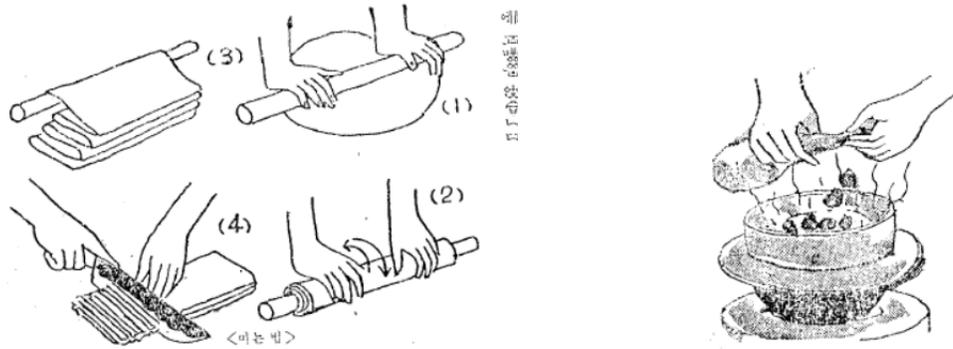


Figure 7. Magazine illustrations demonstrating the preparation of handmade noodles and *Sujebi*.

Source: Yöwön 7(7) 1961: 319.

5.2.2. Medical Benefits

Several claims were made about the medical benefits of wheat consumption. The following are some of the most prevalent arguments at the time:

Wheat flour is fortified with vitamin B,¹⁶⁷ which will supplement everything lacking in rice . . . To establish good eating habits, children should be given wheat foods frequently. Ramen is liked by many people, and processed food should be consumed more. (Hyun, K-s 1969:33)

[Compared to rice] wheat has higher calories, protein, fat, and calcium. Wheat also contains more vitamin B₁ and B₂.¹⁶⁸ Not only that, wheat foods have excellent digestive power; it reduces any stomach or digestive disorder. (Oh, Y-h 1972:328)

Wheat foods are nutritious. Wheat, and barley flour can prevent loss of appetite, tiredness, and beriberi due to their higher vitamin B₁ content, as well

¹⁶⁷ Rice can easily be fortified with vitamin B as well.

¹⁶⁸ Higher calorie and fat contents were viewed as positive since people were still nutritionally “underfed,” living in a food shortage period.

as being able to revitalize your skin and prevent melasma and freckles due to higher fiber content. (Yoon, S-w et al. 1981:15)

The above statements represented different segments of society. The first claim was made by a nutritionist and a home economics professor, the second by a high school teacher, and the third came from the food industry. Wheat, it seems, could not only satisfy hunger and provide nutrition; it also had the power to heal.

6. Reconstituting Women through Dietary Reform

The HCU's household campaign was directed at altering how women saw themselves, and the concept of the 'new woman' was prescribed by the state. The state argued that this new industrial society needed a new type of housewife, and the way to remake a woman's self would be through a state project—the HCU. The campaign sought to present women primarily as a cook for the family but did not regard them as women in their own right, with their own lives to live.

The HCU promoted the public discourse that housewives should be the agent proactive in the pursuit of modernization. As South Korea was rapidly industrializing, it argued, the nation needed mothers capable of producing 'healthy children' to work in the industrial economy. To rationalize dietary practices, a woman had to become proficient at balancing the household budget, plan meals in advance so that she did not have to waste time on daily market runs, and research menus to provide varied and nutritious meals for her family. A popular women's magazine argued, "a family's health depends on a carefully planned menu" and "the most important responsibility for a housewife is to be knowledgeable about dietary life" (Yōsōng DongA, January issue, 1977; translation mine). This argument came with featured recipes and encouraged effective planning by including a weekly, monthly, or sometimes even seasonal (Sinyōwōn, June 1972:342) menu schedule. A woman needed to be responsible for her family's health through food and keeping the home clean and safe;

at the same time, she needed to find ways to secure her own “rights” as a modern housewife.

To further the process of remaking women, public events were held and campaigns waged by both the state and private entities. One example was the “household account book campaign.” Popular women’s magazines offered a year-end supplement which provided a budget book and menu calendar for the upcoming year. They would also sponsor contests in which women were invited to send their completed schedules. The magazine *Yŏwŏn* sponsored an annual “Best Housewife” award, while another, *Yŏsŏng DongA*, circulated a survey “finding” that close to half—49.3 percent—of respondents said the most important factor in improving women’s status and rights was “women themselves.” Only 8.7 percent replied that changing the unequal legal structure was the most important factor, although 18.8 percent indicated that more responsibility needed to be given to women (*Yŏsŏng DongA* December 1976:152–60). The Korean education system also made it mandatory for girls from elementary school onwards to take home economics classes that would reinforce the discourse of the new woman.

7. Conclusion

In no more than three decades, the South Korean diet was transformed from one of rice, supplemented by barley, to a wheat-based diet supplemented by animal protein. This transformation was not a natural outcome of Korea’s economic growth that demanded the diversification of food. It was brought about by the state directly intervening in the everyday lives of the people to support its export-oriented industrialization push. It also reflected Korea’s place in the global agro-food system

under the Second Food Regime (1945–73, discussed in chapter 3)¹⁶⁹ as well as Korea’s state-led development strategy during the period of rapid industrialization (1960–80).

The HCU was the main tool wielded to encourage the populace to increase wheat consumption. It emerged as such in the 1950s due to two sociopolitical factors. The first was the global food regime: it needed an outlet that would consume surplus U.S. wheat. The second was domestic. The Korean government adopted an industrialization strategy in the 1960s that required a cheap labor force in order to gain a price advantage in the international market. In order to keep wages low, the government had to ensure that the cost of living remained low. Providing a cheap source of nutrition, therefore, was central to the state’s industrialization drive. The two factors fused to create the HCU, which ‘encouraged’ Koreans to eat wheat, thereby satisfying both the U.S. and the Korean government’s needs at the same time.

In the following decade, these two factors underwent a change, forcing Koreans to adapt again. When wheat production plummeted in the 1970s, U.S. food aid policy became less “generous,” creating unforeseen difficulties for the Korean state in feeding the population. Internally, the Korean government came under pressure as U.S. food aid began to be phased out and cheap wheat was no longer an option. This switch in the Korean food situation also put pressure on the industrial sector as workers required higher wages. The Park regime tried to revamp the agricultural sector in the 1970s to increase grain production and attempted to regulate what ordinary people could eat. In addition to the HCU, NCM and similar elements of

¹⁶⁹ Food regime theorists Friedmann and McMichael describe agriculture’s role in the international political economy and argue that there are three food regimes—first (1880–1914), second (1945–73), and third (emerging from 1980s–present) in the world capitalist economy.

social mobilization were implemented to restructure Koreans' food practices as the state saw fit.

Of course, there were other reasons for the wheat consumption increase, such as a population increase and urbanization, as discussed earlier. While demographic changes and rural–urban migration affected agricultural production and food consumption practices in Korea, state intervention was more palpable, direct, and effective. The state intervened in people's lives through social institutions and political structures, undergirding its actions with its coercive power. It also instituted a variety of bio-sociopolitical projects to achieve its goal of reorganizing society. It even reframed its social control as a path toward 'modernization,' a word that represented 'progress and development.'

Furthermore, the state mobilized the medical and educational communities to convince the Korean people of the superiority of wheat over rice. In case its manufactured argument fell on deaf ears, an imitation of rice was invented to fool consumers into believing that they were eating rice when in fact they were consuming wheat. *The Kiplinger Magazine* (1966: 46) explains why "Wurld wheat" was invented with the support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the grain industry:

Convincing the world's hungry peoples to eat our wheat and like it is not as simple as it sounds. To millions of Asia's rice eaters, wheat is a strange food. So scientists of the Department of Agriculture are striving to make it palatable to Orientals . . . In one process being tried, cooked wheat kernels are peeled by hot lye, tumbled briskly, then whirled vigorously in water, and dried. The result is a grain that is nearly as white as rice and cooks like rice.

At the same time, a discourse about consumption was created to differentiate rice from wheat. Rice was represented as a crop that embodied the cultural traditions of yesterday, and eating it was portrayed as being behind the times. In contrast, wheat was held up as a superior crop of the modern era and of the future.

The state used its powers, both coercive and discursive, to force-feed wheat to Koreans and convince them that they liked it. Now this compels one to ask: how successful was the HCU in transforming Koreans' consumption and taste? A measure of its success can be seen by examining how enduring the transformation of the Korean diet, initiated and driven by the state, was after the state stopped its forceful policies. The next chapter examines the lingering effects that the HCU left on the Korean diet as well as the new developments that consolidated wheat's position as the second most important grain in the Korean diet.

CHAPTER 5:
WHEATING THE APPETITE FOR WESTERNIZATION:
REFASHIONING FOOD CULTURE IN KOREA

“[F]ood politics are an aspect of class politics, even though they work through international politics.”

—Friedmann (1990:13)

1. Introduction

This chapter critically examines the lasting impact of the HCU campaign on Korea’s staple diet and food culture. It analyzes the changes in the consumption structure of staple grains as a way of evaluating the transformation of the materiality of food choices. It also assesses some of the social, cultural, and economic consequences of the dietary changes to better understand the process by which wheat consumption became embedded in Korean society as a cultural and social index combining the semiotics of food tastes and status, together with the standards for nutrition and health. The transformation of dietary practices not only represents changes in the material substance of food but, more significantly, reflects the ideological and social impact on Korean food culture.

The period under examination is from 1961 to 2001. This 40-year period encompasses baseline information immediately prior to the enactment of the HCU policy (1961–62), the period of implementation (1963–77),¹⁷⁰ and the post-hoc period, which could be viewed as exhibiting the impact of the HCU policy (1978–2001).

¹⁷⁰ 1961 is theoretically significant for political and economic reasons. The Park regime, under which the HCU policy was implemented, seized power that year and inaugurated the food policy as a pivotal program in its industrialization drive.

2. Reorganization of Social Diet

The socioeconomic changes discussed in the previous section contributed to the changes in the Korean diet, but they paint an incomplete picture of how this reorganization was linked to the wider transformation of society. This section discusses how the diet was reconstructed and how the HCU policy contributed to the ‘commodification’ of food consumption and the Westernization of the Korean diet.

2.1. Commodification of Food Consumption

Food is not merely a source of nutrition. It is part of the very social fabric of people’s lives. Having a meal is a social act. It includes the process of preparation and presentation as well as the consumption of food, all of which are based in social interactions and customs. Commensality, the act of sharing a meal, is one of the most fundamental expressions of human relationships and sociability. Food culture is deeply ingrained in a society, and the deeper it goes the more difficult it is to change people’s diet.

The commodification of food,¹⁷¹ the process by which it becomes an object to be bought and sold, removes food from the social fabric. Everyday meals have become something that can be “taken-out” or “dined-in,” while even the food provided at ancestral feasts (*chesa*) and holiday festivities—the preparation, presentation, and commensality of which was viewed as an expression of filial piety—are now often purchased online. These days, the depth of filial piety seems to be determined by how much the food costs.

¹⁷¹ Sobal (2000), citing the work of Nee (1989), describes ‘commoditization’ as the cultural movement of food consumption from homemade to manufactured foods that is a component of larger patterns of marketization. Commoditization occurs in a market transition where shifts from subsistence to wage activities occur, and in this context, food becomes economic objects (“commodities”) rather than intended for consumption. I use the term ‘commodification,’ not ‘commoditization,’ to articulate the process by which social relationships that do not have an economic value are assigned to commercial relationships.

Wheat played a key role in this commodification process, which, in turn, consolidated Korea's consumption of wheat as a staple food. Wheat foods were commodified through the development and growth of the food processing and service industries. Korea's industrial food processing kicked off in the 1960s with PL 480 imports (Chung, H-k 1988:55). While wheat's physical characteristics make it more amenable to processing than rice or barley (Kim, K-s et al. 1997:55), it also had an added advantage from conditions in the international political economy of the time. Not only was the wheat imported under PL 480 cheaper than rice or barley; it also came with advanced technologies for processing and storage. Turnkey milling equipment and even storage facilities for wheat were imported or built with ICA funds, that is, at no immediate cost to the Korean government (Kim, Y-h 1990:191).¹⁷²

Korea, which had four modern flour mills before the Korean War, had constructed 22 through U.S. food aid by 1959 and was able to process 258,000 MT of wheat per day (Park, C-n et al. 1997:330). The second expansion (1967–72) took place during the HCU period to bolster the development of the food processing industry. During this expansion, the annual growth rate of flour processing recorded an average of 32 percent. Growth was recorded at 92.9 percent in 1967 against a figure of 0.2 percent the previous year (ibid. 412). While the first expansion was to process the relief wheat, the second was to support the state's HCU project. The flour-milling industry was able to grow thanks to the state's highly visible hand: the industry was given a monopoly on cheap imported wheat as well as subsidies (ibid. 334). Flour-milling constituted a major component of the food industry in the 1960s and 1970s. The food industry's rate of growth outpaced the GNP growth rate by 2.5 percent

¹⁷² The Korean flour mill industry mobilized 50 percent of domestic funds and received 50 percent from U.S. assistance to construct milling facilities (Kim, Y-h 1990:191).

between 1960 and 1984,¹⁷³ and the food processing industry's contribution to GNP rose from 3.2 percent in 1960 to 5.5 percent in 1984 (Korean Nutrition Society 1989:228–29).

With the growth of the food processing industry, buttressed by a high milling capacity, the consumption of processed wheat foods surged. Annual per capita consumption increased 288 percent from 1971 to 1975 over the previous period (1966–70), and 251 percent between 1976 and 1980 (Table 23). Wheat foods accounted for roughly half the increase in each period. Table 23 shows the composition of processed food on an average annual per capita basis from 1966 to 1990. The first two periods (1966–70 and 1971–75) fell under the HCU period and reported the highest contribution of wheat foods (60.8 percent and 48.2 percent respectively for bread and noodles, and cookies) to the total production of processed foods. The high proportion of the 'bread and noodles' category indicates that wheat foods were meal substitutes, possibly linking their consumption to the HCU policy. The proportion of wheat foods to total production then declined with the termination of the HCU policy, and the food processing industry diversified into other areas, particularly beverages.

¹⁷³ The growth rate of GNP was 8.0 percent and the growth rate of the food industry was 10.5 percent between 1960 and 1984 (Korean Nutrition Society 1989:228).

Table 23. Composition (g/year, %/year) of Per Capita Average Annual Supply of Processed Food in Korea, 1966–90

Period	Total	Bread, noodles	Cookies	Meat	Fat & oil	Milk	Dairy	Beverage
1966–1970	5,646 (100%)	2,341 (41.5%)	1,092 (19.3%)	29 (0.5%)	—	840 (14.9%)	166 (2.9%)	1,178 (20.9%)
1971–1975	16,282 (100%)	5,758 (35.4%)	2,077 (12.8%)	92 (0.2%)	492 (3.0%)	2,748 (16.9%)	1,073 (6.6%)	3,941 (25.1%)
1976–1980	40,929 (100%)	11,126 (27.2%)	3,749 (9.1%)	299 (0.7%)	980 (2.4%)	8,470 (20.7%)	4,477 (10.9%)	11,837 (29.0%)
1981–1985	65,721 (100%)	12,538 (19.1%)	5,345 (8.1%)	975 (1.5%)	1,491 (2.3%)	18,310 (27.8%)	8,207 (12.5%)	18,856 (28.7%)
1986–1990	94,238 (100%)	16,827 (17.8%)	6,607 (7.0%)	1,255 (1.3%)	1,515 (1.6%)	32,554 (34.5%)	12,471 (13.2%)	23,010 (24.6%)

Notes: Each calculation represents annual average amount and percentage. Each food category is as follows: Bread and noodles (bread, noodles, instant noodles, and Korean vermicelli), cookies (biscuit, sugar cookies, gum, and chocolate), meat (ham, sausages, and bacon), fat and oil (margarine and shortening), milk and dairy products (butter, cheese, ice cream, infant formula, and fermented milk), and beverage (soft drinks and juice).

Source: Economic Planning Board, Statistical Report on the Mining and Manufacturing Industries, cited in Choi, H-j 1994:28

The HCU policy also fostered the development of the food services industry, initially by setting up and supporting outlets for serving wheat foods. The HCU policy, through NRM, initiated start-ups called Wheat Foods Centers or ‘*Punsik Centers*.’ *Punsik Centers* were small diners or snack bars that were allowed to sell only low-priced wheat foods.¹⁷⁴ These functioned as cheap eateries providing Korean-style wheat-based dishes such as noodles and dumplings for mass consumption, many of which sprung up around secondary schools. Some of the centers were based in food trucks and operated 24 hours a day. Run by parastatal groups (Yöwön, February 1972:96–97),¹⁷⁵ the trucks could be deployed to different locations, and their main goal was to push the consumption of wheat foods. The trade group KOFMIA and an American trade group, Wheat Associates, established the Korea Wheat Center in 1969 to train potential entrepreneurs in wheat foods preparation, selling, and processing (Foreign Agriculture, June 9, 1969). *Punsikchöm*, snack bars that included *Punsik centers* and small food stalls selling mostly noodles and dumplings, grew at a phenomenal rate: by 4,600 percent in 1969, 58.6 percent in 1970, 49.6 percent in 1971, 52.7 percent in 1972, and 37.5 percent in 1973 (Song, I-j, 1999:54). Overall growth rates were very high, but the colossal growth rate in 1969 would have been unthinkable if not for the direct involvement of the dictatorial regime.

While the development of instant noodles, ramen, was one of the factors that sparked the proliferation of *Punsik centers* and food trucks, noodle dishes were also served at neighborhood Chinese restaurants. With no established food services sector at the time, Korean and Chinese restaurants were the most common. Unlike Western-style eateries, Chinese restaurants catered to the working class and were firmly

¹⁷⁴ *Punsik Centers* can now also sell *kimbap*, which is rice rolled in seaweed with vegetables and meat.

¹⁷⁵ What is interesting here is that South Korea was under a midnight curfew in 1972, so having a mobile wheat foods service operating 24 hours per day seems incongruous.

established in cities and small rural towns alike. The state imposed price controls on noodle dishes at Chinese restaurants, and they quickly became popular thanks to their low cost. During the period between the late 1960s and early 1970s, Chinese restaurants grew at an annual rate of 10 percent (ibid. 54).

The supply of cheap wheat, rapid urban growth, and the impact of the HCU policy saw the food services industry begin to develop beyond wheat food centers and cheap eateries.¹⁷⁶ While the restaurant industry began to expand rapidly in the mid-1980s with the introduction of fast-food chains, the 10-year period between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s best illustrates the influence of the HCU policy in establishing the food services industry (*Oesik sanŏp*).¹⁷⁷ Table 24 shows the growth of the dining-out portion of total household expenditure on food from 1975 to 1986; the proportion grew steadily over a decade, from 2.2 percent in 1975 to 9.1 percent in 1986. Korean food dominated that expenditure until 1981, when Western-style food accounted for the main growth in the industry. Chinese food, on the other hand, showed growth until 1978, and then both Korean and Chinese food consumption declined, though with some fluctuations. This situation heralded the changing characteristics of the industry, where spending at Western restaurants would continue to rise at a rapid rate, a trend that would continue into the 1990 and 2000s.

¹⁷⁶ The food service sector comprises all outlets involved in the provision of meals outside the home. In this study, the food service industry or food service sector refers to restaurants, institution and company cafeterias, bakeries, snack bars, and food stalls.

¹⁷⁷ As stated in the text, South Korea did not have an established food service sector until the 1980s; there were restaurants and food stalls on a small scale. It was through the HCU policy that the food service sector began to form. Of course there are economic reasons that precipitated the formation of the food service sector. However, the shape that the Korean food service sector took had been formatted through the HCU period.

Table 24. Household Monthly Eating-Out Food Expenditure, 1975–86

Year	Total food expenditure (won) (A)	Eating-out			Korean		Chinese		Western	
		Expenditure (1,000 wŏn) (B)	Growth rate (%)	B/A	Expenditure (1,000 wŏn)	Growth rate (%)	Expenditure (1,000 wŏn)	Growth rate (%)	Expenditure (1,000 wŏn)	Growth rate (%)
1975	28,960	623		2.2	369		179		18	
1976	35,240	746	19.7	2.1	447	21.1	229	27.9	17	-5.6
1977	42,340	1,492	100.0	3.5	1,022	128.6	347	51.5	59	247.1
1978	54,590	2,092	40.2	3.8	1,411	38.1	469	35.2	80	35.6
1979	65,543	2,884	37.9	4.4	2,131	51.0	550	17.3	84	5.0
1980	79,677	3,491	21.0	4.4	2,755	29.3	536	-2.5	109	29.8
1981	93,197	4,207	20.5	4.5	3,375	22.5	615	14.7	110	0.9
1982	106,938	6,243	48.4	5.8	3,203	-2.5	676	9.9	199	80.9
1983	111,532	7,218	15.6	6.5	3,045	-4.9	809	19.7	230	15.6
1984	119,282	8,125	12.6	6.8	3,254	6.9	789	-2.5	338	47.0
1985	118,898	9,127	12.0	7.7	3,030	-6.9	744	-5.7	262	22.5
1986	126,658	11,579	26.9	9.1	3,950	30.4	784	5.4	305	16.4

Source: Economic Planning Board 1975–1986 Urban Household Expenditure Yearbook, cited in Chŏng, H-k (1988:61).

The food services industry took off in the mid-1980s with fast-food chains, and it grew by leaps and bounds in the 1990s, with family restaurants serving mainly Western foods (Han, K-s et al. 2004: 315). Sales volume grew from 1.67 billion won in 1976 to 33.6 billion won in 2000, an 84-fold increase. Most of the fast-food chains and family restaurants were transnational companies, mainly from the U.S. In the 1990s, six out of eight top fast-food chains were American-based, and the average annual growth rate of the top eight chains was recorded at 138.7 percent between 1991 and 2000 (ibid. 317).¹⁷⁸ In 1983, fast-food restaurants serving noodles began appearing, and by 1987 they had surpassed the number of restaurants serving hamburgers (The Food Industry, vol.88, no.97, cited in Choi, H-j 1994:32).

Although the expansion of the restaurant sector is often linked to income growth, it is connected just as much to the liberalization of Korea's agro-food sector to global capital, partly attributable to Korea's domestic needs in industrial development and to trade pressure from the U.S. (Mo, S-m 1986:120; Kim K-h 1996:182).¹⁷⁹ In 1978, Korea began liberalizing its industrial sectors to global capital, and by 1979 it had completely opened up to foreign technology through a decree. This set Korea on a path towards receiving new food technology and investment from overseas in the 1980s (Korea Nutrition Society 1989:202).¹⁸⁰ Under increased trade pressure from the

¹⁷⁸ The eight chains are Lotteria (Japan), McDonald's (USA), Hardee's (USA), Burger King (USA), Wendy's (USA), KFC (USA), Popeyes (USA), and BBQ (Korea) (Han, K-s et al. 2004:317).

¹⁷⁹ South Korea completely opened its industrial sector to foreign investment with the Foreign Investment Decree in April 1979 (Korean National Archives, <http://contents.archives.go.kr/next/content/listSubjectDescription.do?id=007242>, accessed 8/9/2009). The impetus was to support the Heavy and Chemical Industry development, but the law was extended to all industries.

¹⁸⁰ In less than a decade since instituting the decree, there were 60 multinational corporations in the food industry; of which eight were 100 percent foreign owned: five were American, two were Japanese, and one was Swiss (Korean Nutrition Society 1989:202–203).

U.S.,¹⁸¹ and the start of the Uruguay Round (1986–93) negotiations,¹⁸² the Korean market was further opened up to accommodate a variety of food supplies, such as frozen meat and other foods, and food supply chains, such as super- and hypermarkets. The growth of the food services industry in the 1980s and 1990s saw a new culture of dining-out emerge (Ministry of Health and Welfare 2003:13).¹⁸³ The sector's expansion was a reflection of the growing taste for wheat, the preference for Western foods cultivated during the HCU period, and the commodification of food consumption in general. A series of changes in the food supply, brought on by industrial and policy changes, was a direct cause of the shift in Korea's food industry in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁸⁴

For the state's HCU project to succeed, the food industry needed to mass-produce wheat foods and accompaniments to induce consumption in a variety of ways: bread with jam and butter, cakes and cookies with milk, and instant noodles. With the

¹⁸¹ In the 1980s, the U.S. put increased pressure on South Korea due to the huge deficit it had incurred in massive military spending in order to win the arms race against the former Soviet Union. This was evident in the U.S. trade action against South Korean exports during the 1980s. Between 1980 and 1988, the U.S. took 57 non-Section 301 cases filed against South Korean firms. In addition, non-tariff barriers, such as antidumping actions and countervailing duties, were targeted at South Korean goods (C.S. Eliot Kang 2000:82).

¹⁸² At the conclusion of the Uruguay Round negotiations, South Korea became subject to opening up its food and agricultural markets fully—all measures of quantitative restrictions had been converted into tariffs—except rice in terms of market access. However, the rice market was under the minimum market access, which meant that there was an incremental increase of import sharing annually up to 5 percent of consumption starting from 3 percent in the first year. Low tariff rates are applied to the in-quota volume so as to guarantee easy market access from exporting countries (Lee and Kim 2003).

¹⁸³ Unlike the HCU, there was no direct government policy intervention in the Korean food service industry in a systematic way (Kim, E-h and W-k Lee 2013).

¹⁸⁴ Another important factor in South Korea's position in trade negotiations was its domestic situation at the time. These changes were taking place against the backdrop of a tumultuous political period in South Korea. After a 19-year dictatorial rule, Park Chung Hee was assassinated in October 1979, and a new military dictatorship followed via a coup. With fierce resistance from the people, the new dictatorship of Chun Doo Hwan was particularly vulnerable to the demands of the U.S.. Lacking any political legitimacy—which was compounded by its massacre of people in a Southwestern city of Kwangju in 1980—throughout its tenure (1980–87) the dictatorship looked to the U.S., and economic growth, to sustain its rule, a situation not dissimilar to that of Park's regime.

growth in income, more processed foods were consumed, and people ate out more frequently. In turn, the food industry produced a greater variety of wheat foods, and the number of places where they could be eaten also expanded. The commodification of food consumption in Korea was constructed and stimulated by the interplay of social forces—state policy, industrial interest, and consumption practices.

2.2. The Development of the Food Industry

Korea's food industry developed through two simultaneous processes: the rise of the food processing industry, which produced a diverse range of wheat foods, and the expansion of food vendors, who served cooked wheat foods. Both processes were given a helping hand by the food additives developed and used in a wide variety of processed foods in the U.S. and Japan. It was thanks to these additives that Koreans developed a taste for bread, cakes and cookies, and, later, processed noodles. They came to find these wheat-based foods not only edible but even enjoyable.

Most bread, cakes, and cookies have added sugar, and this may have contributed to popularizing wheat foods, some scholars argue (Mintz 1985). Rozin (1982:228–29, cited in Beardsworth and Keil 1997:243) posits a biological factor in humans' innate liking for sweetness and, therefore, a tendency to consume sugar. The argument has been made that children, more than adults, have an avid taste for sweetness (Beauchamp and Cowart 1987:136, cited in *ibid.* 243). This seems to be supported by the fact that children preferred sweet bread as a snack or substitute for rice (Yi, C-j 1985:20, 25, 26, 28),¹⁸⁵ and various types of sweeter bread were often recommended as snack foods in schools and in homes by public 'experts.' On the other hand, as Mintz (1985:xxv) argued, food choices are more than individual

¹⁸⁵ Korean breads, particularly in the HCU period, were made with sweet filling. Even those breads without fillings tended to be sweeter than Western loaves of bread.

preferences or self-evident human predilections for sweetness, in this case. Rather, they are about power in society: how a society is organized, who has power and who does not, and the power that one society has over another also affect what we eat. In Korea, both sugar and wheat converged in the not-so-invisible hands of the government to become favorite snacks.

Noodles—especially instant ramen—became a preferred snack food beyond its original function as a wage-earner’s food. By far Korea’s most popular convenience food, ramen is popular because it is quick and easy to make and imitates the traditional hot, spicy dishes Koreans enjoy. Ramen comes in a variety of soup bases, and other foods such as vegetables and eggs can be readily added. It is particularly popular among secondary school students (age group 13–19) in Korea. The increasing trend of people eating outside the home, together with the accessibility of affordable wheat food stalls and inexpensive eateries such as Korean and Chinese restaurants and noodle shops, contributed to rising wheat consumption.

The cohort who reached adulthood in the 1980s had attended primary and secondary schools during the HCU period.¹⁸⁶ As adults, their food choices became socially and economically significant. They were exposed to a sustained HCU campaign and subjected to the regime’s wheat promotion policy—which presented a positive image of wheat consumption and fostered a taste for bread through lunch programs—for a prolonged period.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶ The people who had, at least partly, attended primary and secondary schools during the HCU period. Those who started primary schooling at age 7 in 1963 would be 23 in 1980, but the age groups would be much broader because of the spread of 13 years of primary (6 years) and secondary (6 years) schooling.

¹⁸⁷ If a student began primary schooling when the HCU started in 1963, s/he would have had 13 years of wheat-training by the time s/he graduated from high school in 1976.

Figure 8 shows the cohort's preference for wheat in contrast to rice and barley in 1998 and in 2005.¹⁸⁸ In 1998, the HCU-influenced group¹⁸⁹—ages 30 to 49—had consumed 63 percent more than the next group (ages 50–64).¹⁹⁰ Both in 1998 and in 2005, the 20–29 and 13–19 age groups showed a sharp increase in wheat consumption; particularly in 1998, when there was a 90 percent increase by the 20–29 age group against the HCU group. A possible explanation for this can be found in the food choices of mothers who were exposed to the HCU policy. In addition to consuming wheat products themselves, they were more ready to give their children wheat. Since dietary practices and food preferences are acquired at a young age (Parraga 1990:661–64; Birch 1999:42; Hill 2002:260; Mendez and Popkin 2004:236), wheat consumption is likely to continue, as consumption practices are passed on to the next generation.

Educational levels have been identified as a predictor of food choices, and studies have found that, in Korea, mothers with more years in education tended to choose wheat foods (Ham, I-s 1984; Lee, H-s et al. 1985; Kim, H-k 1987; Kim, K-s et al. 1997), presumably because they were systematically subjected to HCU activities for a longer period of time.

¹⁸⁸ I chose the age span from 13 to 65+ because there was a significant consumption increase from age groups 7–12 to 13–19. The reason is that the intake rate for the 7–12 age group is below that of adults'; however, the 65+ age group has a similar total intake problem even though the group is included here.

¹⁸⁹ The HCU cohort group—those who were exposed to the educational system (primary, middle, and high schools) between 1963 and 1977—would be most likely ages 30 to 54 in the 1998 survey, and ages 45 to 54 in the 2005 survey. Since the age categories in the nutrition survey were 30–49 and 50–64, I used the 30–49 age group as the HCU cohort for the purpose of discussion. The 13–19 age group has the highest total grain intake of all groups, although the 20–29 age group has the highest total consumption rate in 2005 (2005 Nutrition Survey: 7–8).

¹⁹⁰ The HCU cohort consumed 132 percent more than the 65+ age group. Since total consumption rate is lower in the 65+ age group, it would not have been an accurate comparison.

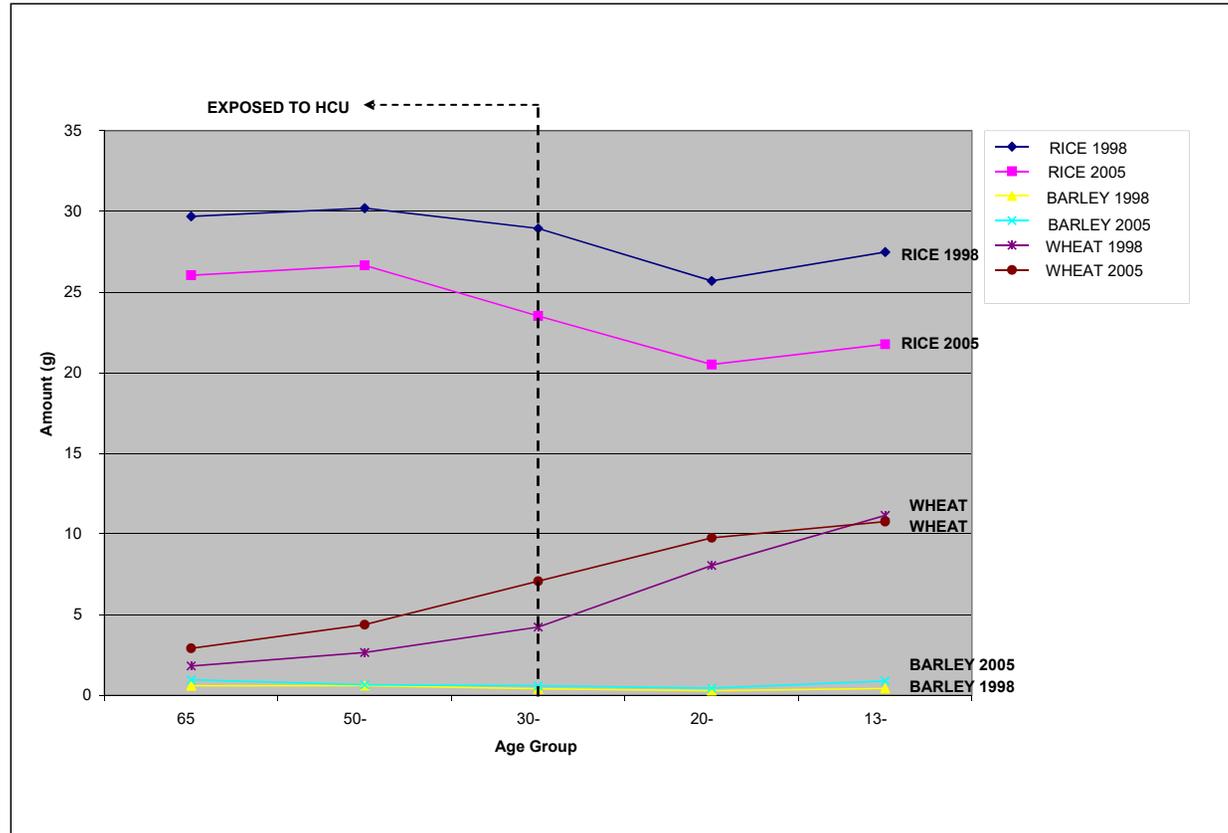


Figure 8. Cohort comparison of daily per capita of rice, barley and wheat, 1998 and 2005

Note: (---) denotes cohorts exposed to HCU in 1998 survey.

Source: This figure is constructed on the basis of data from the Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 1998: 69 and 2005:160–63.

Related to the education level of homemakers as the primary food preparers was the preference for Western-style wheat foods. Wheat consumption was framed as part of the Western lifestyle, which signified affluence, culture, and modernity. Western eateries were usually called *rest'orang* [restaurants], phonetically spelled in the Korean alphabet (*hangul*). Korean eateries were more often associated with the clientele or type of food served, that is, “diners for drivers” (truck stops; *kisa siktang*), “soup and rice houses” (*kukpapchip*), and so forth. Going to a Western restaurant was to consume the setting, how the food was served, how it was eaten (knife and fork instead of chopsticks and spoon). It was an act of consuming the West, where the food originated. Research indicated that people chose Western restaurants for the ambience (Yi, H-o 1984:30). This can be interpreted as a result of public campaigns promoting wheat consumption as a venue to consume (or become) the modern and cultured. Mothers, who had grown up perceiving affluence and cultural sophistication to be synonymous with the West, are more likely to serve bread and cakes to their children, as well as to influence their children’s food choices in that direction.¹⁹¹

Figure 8 illustrates remarkably similar consumption trends of rice, wheat, and barley in 1998 and 2005, with the exception of the 13–19 age group, which shows a convergence of wheat consumption, albeit with a still-rising trend. In 1998 and 2005, the rate of rice consumption continued to decline, a trend that is likely to continue since overall grain consumption in Korea has been declining. Wheat, on the other hand, may be stabilizing since the pace of its increase slowed in 2005. From 1998 to 2005, daily wheat consumption for the 13–19 age group dropped by 3.9 grams, although it is uncertain whether this drop indicates a downward trend or stabilization, or merely a fluctuation. Barley has been on the increase, but the overall rate of

¹⁹¹ Traditional Korean meals throughout the day are similar, unlike Western meals.

consumption is insignificant. Even if the wheat consumption trend stabilizes at the current level, the average national per capita consumption level will likely rise due to changes in demographics. Dietary habits will perpetually move towards Western food culture, and this means that wheat, as a second staple, will make up a higher proportion of the grain intake in the overall structure of Koreans' diet.

Although the HCU campaign was conducted nationwide, the most concentrated efforts were targeted at the urban middle class. There were several reasons for this. First, much of the bread, cakes, and cookies sold on the market at the time were too expensive for the working class. Second, the main thrust of the HCU campaign was the nutritional superiority of wheat over rice, and the middle class was more receptive to the practice of good nutrition (Levenstein 1988:72). Third, the main impetus for the HCU was to conserve rice, and the middle class was more affluent and thus, if left alone, more likely to consume rice than the poor.

It has been suggested that food tastes and preferences are determined by social class (Bourdieu 1984), and that people try to emulate the consumption patterns of the upper strata of a social hierarchy (Veblen, original 1899, reprint 1961). With rising incomes in Korea, people across all social classes now consume bread and cakes, along with the beverages and condiments that come with them. Contrary to arguments that the relationship between social class and consumption has dissipated (Mason 1998:130), emulating the upper-class consumption practices and lifestyle is still very much prevalent in Korea. In the 1960s and the 1970s there was a clearer distinction between social classes in terms of food consumption, and it is very likely there was a "trickle-down" effect of wheat consumption.

2.3. Westernization of Food Culture

With the commodification of food came the Westernization of food culture in response to both domestic and global structural changes in the 1980s. Korea was

preparing to host two international sporting events—the 1986 Asian Games and the 1988 Olympics—and the government hoped to use this as an opportunity to elevate the country’s stature (as well as that of the regime) in the world’s eyes, as well as to the Korean people themselves. In anticipation of a large influx of foreign (read Western) visitors during these events, the government explicitly ordered its agrobureaucracy to develop agri-food items that would cater to Western tastes. For example, it launched the “Olympic vegetable initiative” in the early 1980s after Korea was selected to host the 1988 Summer Games. The initiative directed the Horticultural Experiment Station to develop a variety of vegetables agreeable to Western tastes, such as potatoes to make french fries (Burmeister 1988:95). Such policies provided a beachhead for transnational food service retailers to accelerate their expansion into Korea (Kim, D-r 2004:166). The mid-1980s was also a time when the U.S. was ramping up pressure on Korea to open up its agricultural and food markets to international trade. Since the domestic U.S. market was saturated with fast-food chains, U.S. food services were looking to aggressively expand overseas (Bak, S 1997:139).¹⁹² With the overlap of the Korean government policies and American business needs, fast-food restaurants and Western-style food supply chains saw huge growth. The dovetailing of domestic and U.S. business interests is perhaps most visible in the fact that the opening of the first McDonald’s in Korea coincided with the Seoul Olympics in 1988. Other food service businesses soon followed and provided opportunities for increased consumption of processed foods, frozen meat, and other high-value foods, all of which were based directly or indirectly on wheat, as will be explained later.

¹⁹² McDonald’s began assessing marketability in South Korea in the 1970s and set up operations in 1986 (Bak, S 1997:139).

Most fast-food chains, except for the noodle franchises, were Western-style eateries serving burgers, french fries, chicken, pizza, doughnuts, ice cream, and so on. The total sales volume of the chains in 1990 was 55.2 billion wŏn; by 2000 that had reached 1,382 billion wŏn, a growth rate of 2,404 percent over a 10-year period (Han, K-s et al. 2004:316). As an example, in 1990, two years after opening in Seoul, McDonald's recorded a sales volume of 2.8 billion wŏn, and by 2000 that had grown to 260 billion wŏn (ibid. 317). Western-style restaurants were not limited to fast-food chains, however. In the early 1990s, transnational, full-service family restaurants began appearing and grew just as quickly. Their total sales volume was 18 billion wŏn in 1993 and grew to 443.4 billion wŏn in 2002 (ibid. 319).

Western-style supermarkets also experienced rapid growth in Korea at the same time (Reardon and Berdegue 2008:4). By 2001, these food retailers carrying diverse selections of imported frozen, convenience, and processed foods¹⁹³ had a 65 percent share of processed/packaged foods in Korea's food retail sector (Regmi and Gehlhar 2005:49). Total sales in the sector was \$39.6 billion in the same year, of which Western-style outlets—supermarkets, hypermarkets, department stores, convenience stores, and direct sales—accounted for 33 percent (Oh, S-y August 2003:5).

The rise of supermarkets and convenience stores contributed to the transition of the Korean diet from traditional foods—those with a strong cultural identity—towards more Western patterns of food consumption. Koreans now consume more Western-style foods such as bread, meat, and other high-value foods¹⁹⁴ which are

¹⁹³ For South Korea, entry into the World Trade Organization in 1996 was a crucial factor for the retail sector. The WTO demanded the opening up of service industries—finance, retail, business services and education—to foreign investors despite fierce resistance by many Koreans (Suh, S-m 2003:67).

¹⁹⁴ “High-value” is a term given to a group of agricultural products, generally those with value added through processing (such as soybean oil) or because they require special handling or shipping (such as

more energy dense and contain more fat and added sugar. The transition can be seen in the shift of macronutrients in Koreans' energy intake, which moved away from carbohydrates towards protein and fat between 1969 and 2005, as Table 25 shows. It is worth noting that the most substantial change in macronutrient composition occurred around the mid-1980s when Western-style foods began to become more prevalent.

Table 25. Trends in the Composition of Energy Contribution from Macronutrients

Year	Carbohydrates (%)	Protein (%)	Fat (%)
1969	80.3	12.5	7.2
1975	80.0	12.8	8.6
1980	77.3	13.1	9.6
1985	70.9	15.4	13.7
1990	69.2	16.9	13.9
1995	64.8	16.1	19.1
2001	65.6	14.9	19.5
2005	64.3	15.4	20.3

Notes:

Percentage of protein = [protein energy/(protein+fat+carbohydrate) energy] × 100

Percentage of fat = [fat energy/(protein+fat+carbohydrate) energy] × 100

Percentage of carbohydrate = [carbohydrate energy/(protein+fat+carbohydrate) energy] × 100

Source: Data extracted from 2005 Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, p.14.

The shift is also seen in Table 26¹⁹⁵ where there is a move away from fisheries products to meat-based products including dairy. In 1969, daily per capita consumption of fisheries products was 18.2g and of meat-based products was 13.2g. In 2005, fisheries products was 67.7g while meat-based products increased to 210.7g (2005 KNHNES, 2006:126–28). Consequently, calorie intake rose substantially, particularly for higher income groups. Daily per capita calories from animal oils and

fresh fruit). There are intermediate commodities for further processing and consumer food products that go directly to the retail market and foodservice sectors in the importing country.

¹⁹⁵ Meat-based products include meat, poultry, and their products; eggs, milk and dairy products; and animal oils and fats.

fats increased from 3.32 kcal in 1969 to 6.35 kcal in 1981, and to 24.83 kcal in 2001 (FAOSTAT 2009). This represents a more than sixfold rise from 1969 to 2001 and a threefold increase from 1981 when Western-style fast-food chains began to spread.

Table 26. Proportion of Plant-Foods and Animal-Foods Consumed in Korea, 1969–2005

Year	Plant-foods (%)	Animal-foods (%)
1969	97	3
1975	92.2	7.8
1980	90.8	9.2
1985	82.6	17.4
1990	81.1	18.9
1995	79.1	20.9
2001	80.1	19.9
2005	78.4	21.6

Source: Data extracted from 2005 Korean National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, pp. 126–28.

While overall cereal consumption has decreased steadily since 1979, per capita wheat consumption continues to rise, mostly in the form of Western-style foods. Koreans often eat bread, milk, and cereal, nearly all of which are imported, instead of the traditional rice and soup for breakfast. Wheat is consumed throughout the day in the form of biscuits and crackers, pasta, cakes and pastries, and other snacks. Lunch is the meal Koreans are most likely to go for Western-style food such as in fast-food restaurants (Kang, H-h 2005:17). Overall, it is desserts where the Western style predominates¹⁹⁶—almost half of all desserts, 48.9 percent, consumed by Koreans in 2001 were Western (ibid. 11).

¹⁹⁶ In 2003, Korean spent \$1.8 billion on confectionery products, of which \$167 million worth was imported. The U.S. was the number-one exporter of sweets to South Korea (Kim, S-w, August 2003:14).

Westernization of the Korean diet is on the rise, as Table 27 shows. The National Health and Nutrition Survey reveals overall upward trends in the consumption of Western-style foods when looking at all meals.¹⁹⁷ Given that the trends are led by the upper strata—higher income, higher education—living in large urban centers, as well as people below the age of 29, the trend is likely to continue. Led by the upper socioeconomic classes, Western food preferences will continue to grow in Korean society. The younger generation is being exposed to the Western diet earlier, making it difficult to change food choices in later life (Mendez and Popkin 2004; Pingali 2004).

The Westernization of Asia's diet is usually explained in terms of urbanization and income growth (Huang and David 1993; Pingali and Rosegrant 1998; Regmi and Dyck 2001; Pingali 2004; Fabiosa 2006)¹⁹⁸—when a society becomes economically better off, the natural inclination is to consume Western-style foods which are becoming global foods. The Korean experience, however, cannot be explained in terms of urbanization and economic development alone. The transition was framed by the macro-political conditions of the Cold War, and, in the country's late capitalist development, wheat offered the possibility of both cheap labor and the allure of an advanced society.

¹⁹⁷ The National Nutrition Survey (NNS) was conducted from 1969 to 1995 by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and beginning in 1998, the NNS became the National Health and Nutrition Survey, which included the National Health Interview Survey to the existing National Nutrition Survey.

¹⁹⁸ There are differing perspectives linking the diet transition to macro- and micro-level processes. Jeffrey Sobal situates the diet transformation in the context of globalization of the food systems and nutrition transitions (Sobal 1999). Popkin has begun to link the changes in global food supply system (2006).

Table 27. Trends in Western Food Consumption by Sociodemographic Characteristic, 1998 and 2001

Sociodemographic characteristics		1998 (%)			2001 (%)		
		Korean	<i>Western</i>	Other ⁽¹⁾	Korean	<i>Western</i>	Other ⁽¹⁾
Meal	Breakfast	92.19	5.07	2.74	92.59	6.06	1.38
	Lunch	85.4	7.45	7.15	85.64	8.72	5.64
	Dinner	91.17	4.62	4.21	90.76	5.80	3.43
Income	Low	87.36	8.88	3.77	87.03	10.39	2.59
	Middle	83.02	11.94	5.03	83.10	13.48	3.43
	Upper	81.44	13.56	5.00	81.84	14.47	3.69
Education	No schooling	95.48	3.26	1.25	95.02	4.23	0.74
	Basic literacy	94.31	4.18	1.50	—	—	—
	Primary sch.	92.5	5.38	2.12	92.93	5.53	1.44
	Middle school	90.52	6.64	2.85	95.30	6.61	1.39
	High school	89.27	7.51	3.22	89.04	8.81	2.15
	College	87.30	9.16	3.54	83.80	12.60	3.59
	Postgraduate	83.75	13.01	2.53	82.09	14.00	3.82
Gender	Male	83.11	11.79	5.10	82.89	13.64	3.46
	Female	83.58	12.01	4.40	82.89	13.62	3.49
Age	3–6	81.01	13.53	5.46	72.73	22.46	4.81
	7–12	84.99	12.45	2.55	75.69	19.76	4.55
	13–19	85.27	10.60	4.13	74.20	20.01	5.78
	20–29	82.47	12.70	4.82	78.81	15.91	5.27
	30–49	83.47	12.31	4.93	85.26	11.61	3.13
	50–64	80.09	14.21	5.70	91.30	7.16	1.55
	65+	84.90	10.57	4.52	92.82	6.26	1.10
Region	Large urban	81.29	13.47	5.25	82.02	14.38	3.61
	Mid & small urban	83.37	11.86	4.76	81.92	14.47	3.60
	Rural	87.54	8.77	4.75	86.45	10.98	2.97

Note: (1) Other denotes Asian foods other than Korean; Three food groups include fusion foods belong to each category (Korean = Korean & Korean fusion, Western = Western & Western fusion, and Other = Asian other than Korean & Asian fusion).

Sources: This table is constructed on the basis of information from data analysis done by Kang, H-h (2005; Meal, p. 18; Income, p. 26; Educational, p. 31; Region, p. 28; Age, pp. 21, 23).

Korea's path towards a Westernized diet was paved with food aid from the U.S.¹⁹⁹ Wheat that came as part of the aid program helped Koreans take the first step

¹⁹⁹ This does not mean there were no Western influences in the Korean diet before the 1960s. There were, in fact, dietary influences going back to the colonial period and during the period of American occupation. However, these were limited to a small group of the upper class that was able to be exposed to Western foods and infuse them into their overall Western-gazing lifestyle.

on the path.²⁰⁰ Imports of cheap wheat established a boundary within which the Korean state instituted its food policies. Even when both barley and wheat were promoted under the HCU, the former quickly disappeared from the diet—even though it had been the de facto second crop for over half a century—because it lacked the power that wheat represented, as well as the structure that ensured the continued supply of wheat. Not only did wheat feed the Korean people, it also fueled the nation’s urbanization and economic development.

Historically, food has symbolized social status (Mennell 1985; Mintz 1985). The consumption of certain foods confers high status on individuals, while prestige may be attached to certain foods themselves or to the context and manner in which they are served (Bourdieu 1984; Elias 1994). Status is also attained through the type of foods served, and social distinctions are subtly inscribed through food behavior. High status is associated with bread, cookies, and cakes, which were usually expensive items in Korea. Korea’s access to cheap and abundant wheat enabled it to join the capitalist world economy and also made the state’s political project of reconstructing the urban diet possible. When the consumption of wheat became part of the social system, individuals’ consumption practices based on developed taste and appetite became the most important factors in continued consumption of wheat foods.

3. Social Differentiation of Wheat: Luxury Food versus Wage Food

3.1. Luxury Food

Wheat consumption was divided according to the social status of consumers. While wheat was fed to the entire population, it was processed largely in two different forms: bread and noodles. The former was pushed on the middle class; the latter on the poor.

²⁰⁰ In assessing dietary Westernization, wheat consumption is considered as a strong indicator (Pingali and Rosegrant 1998; Uusitalo et al. 2005:514–615).

Bread and noodles represent two forms of cooking: dry heat for bread baking and wet heat for noodle boiling, both requiring different cooking equipment (oven or pot). Owning an oven—even if not a full oven, and just for a portable one—and being able to operate one requires both money and knowledge. Even purchasing bread at a bakery and being able to garnish it would require, again, both money and accessibility to Western cultural practice. While wheat played a role in differentiating social groups, it also served to unify the nation as wheat consumers.

The HCU campaign was predominantly directed at the emerging middle class in Korea because its main objective was to conserve rice.²⁰¹ The campaign promoted wheat as a superior replacement to rice by highlighting its benefits. Accompaniments to wheat foods such as jam, butter, and other animal products were suggested as helping provide a nutritious (Western) alternative to traditional rice meals.²⁰² This meant only those in the middle and upper classes could afford them, given the low household income in Korea at that time. Western-style wheat foods, along with dairy products, were being promoted to the middle class and were being received with a certain degree of positivity. The nouveau middle class was willing to accept the state's hegemonic discourse on wheat consumption and participated in the project by consuming bread and cakes. The interests of the state and the newly emerging middle class had converged in Western-style wheat consumption. However, this convergence had to be supported by the rise of the food industry.

The poor had less choice in matters of staple consumption; when rice was not affordable they consumed whatever else was available, be it wheat or barley. They

²⁰¹ Due to the rapid industrialization and urbanization in the 1960s and 1970s, South Korea experienced a new form of social differentiation from the past, which bore the emergence of the middle class (Hong, D-s et al. 1997:41).

²⁰² An example of this is in women's magazines, particularly *Yōwōn*, which had a staple supply of articles on promoting wheat consumption as a 'total' meal.

often chose wheat because it was cheaper than barley since it did not have to be consumed together with rice as barley did.²⁰³ For some, it was not a matter of choice, as they were given only wheat as a relief food (PL 480 food-for-work). For the poor, wheat-based food was mainly composed of homemade noodles (*kalguksu*) or *sujebi* in broth, which lacked much of the protein the HCU nutrition discourse was advocating.

In the 1960s, a set of factors converged to facilitate the growth of bakeries and confectionaries. Part of the three ‘white industries’ (wheat, sugar, and cotton), the sugar and flour-milling industries were expanding thanks to HCU policy support, and bakeries and confectionaries were growing in scale and product offerings. Korea had little more than a handful of small and medium-size bakeries until PL 480 assistance (Kang, H-s 2002:7). Under the HCU policy, 7,000 bakeries were established (Morgan and Oberdorfer 1975), and by 2000, there were over 19,000 (Kang, H-s 2002:10) with sales volume of 1.6 trillion wŏn (ibid. 1). The bakery and confectionery sector saw a rise in the number of franchises, as well as the corporatization of operations. With this came a rise in industries providing inputs to the sector, including the first baking school in 1973 (Korea Baking School 2009).

The growth of the Samlip Food Corporation, a subsidy of the SPC Group, illustrates how players in the bakery and confectionery sector were boosted by food aid and the HCU policy to become large corporations.²⁰⁴ Samlip began the mass production of bread in October 1961, five months after the Park regime seized power (History of SPC 2006:181). Samlip’s operations soon took off amid the development of the HCU campaign. As the HCU intensified its campaign to promote wheat, Samlip

²⁰³ Culturally it was rare that boiled barley was eaten without being mixed with rice, in part due to barley’s less glutinous nature. Wheat, on the other hand, was rarely mixed in with rice, and its glutinous nature lent it to being made into different forms of food.

²⁰⁴ Samlip Food Corporation was the original parent company. As Samlip diversified into both food and non-food sectors, the SPC Group was established as the parent company.

worked overtime to increase its production and meet the demand created (ibid. 190). Not only did Samlip bake bread for American troops stationed in Korea, it also used PL 480-wheat flour from the government to produce bread for the USAID-funded free school lunch programs. The bread produced under the program was named the “handshake bread” after USAID’s logo (ibid. 186–87). Samlip’s expansion accelerated in the 1970s as it shifted its line of products from the sweeter bread of the earlier decade to more expensive offerings. It marketed the newer products as more closely representing Western culture and even sought to reinvent itself as a cultural industry under the slogan “The bread industry is the cultural industry” (ibid. 185). The confectionery goods aimed at the middle class were thus transformed into a cultural and social index that symbolized a refined taste and higher status. During the 1970s, Samlip diversified into a food corporation expanding beyond bakery and confectionery products and ranked within the top 100 Korean corporations. Samlip’s sales volume increased from 10 billion wŏn in 1974 to 40.5 billion wŏn in 1978 (ibid. 206–208).

3.2. Wage Food

Given the limited size of the middle class, however, there was a limit to the amount of wheat they could consume in the form of bread, cakes, and confectionaries despite the platform provided for growth during the HCU period. It was noodles that picked up the slack, playing a more important role in increasing total wheat consumption.

In the 1960s, most noodles were made at home or in small neighborhood shops. That was, until *ramen* came along.²⁰⁵ The deep-fried instant noodles with higher calories from animal fat (tallow) became popular later in the decade as the

²⁰⁵ The Korean pronunciation is ramen; however, I use the better-known English pronunciation of “ramen” in this study.

HCU campaign intensified its efforts to bolster the state's industrialization drive.²⁰⁶

Ramen was popular among the poor and the working class because it was cheap. In 1963, a packet of ramen containing 100 grams of fried noodles retailed at 10 wŏn, which was equivalent to a city bus fare or half the price of a cup of coffee (Samyang Foods 1991:84, 316). The low price suited the state, as it wanted to keep wages low in order to boost export industries.

The history of Samyang Foods Company reveals how closely the state was involved in the introduction of ramen to Korea. It was founded three months after Park seized power in 1961 and was able to produce ramen thanks to the junta's direct economic and political backing. To import ramen equipment and technology from Japan it had to overcome a lack of dollars and the absence of diplomatic relations with its neighbor. These issues were solved after it received \$50,000 in American food aid funds from the government²⁰⁷ and, more importantly, was given permission to trade with a Japanese corporation. Its sales volume of ramen saw a meteoric rise in just a few years after it began manufacturing, rising by 213 percent in 1967,²⁰⁸ by 254 percent in 1968, and by 110 percent in 1969 from the previous years (ibid. 133).

Others joined Samyang Foods in producing ramen in the late 1960s,²⁰⁹ and the annual

²⁰⁶ Processing techniques for instant noodles have diversified throughout the decades. The initial ramen product, which is still used, was fried in animal fat and dehydrated; now there are many instant noodles that are not fried.

²⁰⁷ The founder of Samyang Food Corporation, Chung-yun Chŏn, claimed he had received \$50,000 from Jong-pil Kim (Kim Jong-pil; public moniker, JP) to import equipment and technology from Japan (Yi, H 2009). Kim was second in command of the military junta and oversaw the creation of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. Chŏn also claimed that the \$50,000 he received was from the \$100,000 South Korea received from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. \$50,000 was a large sum considering Korea's foreign currency reserves at the time were only \$38 million (Yi, H 2009). Kim Jong-pil confirmed Chŏn's claim on allocating \$50,000 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's coffers (Kim, J-p 2015).

²⁰⁸ Samyang Foods began diversifying noodles to include other dry (not fried) noodles in 1970 and eventually expanded into other food items in 1975 (Samyang Foods 1991:305–306).

²⁰⁹ Lotte (Japanese capital) entered the ramen market in 1965, and through the 1989 ramen scandal, Lotte (currently Nongsim) now dominates the market.

growth rate of the ramen market was around 10 percent through much of the 1970s (Korea Federation of Banks 1985:558). Although Samyang Foods continued to expand beyond ramen in the 1970s, it sustained the top market share until the ramen scandal almost bankrupted the company in 1989. The ramen scandal (*uchip'atong*) refers to a 1989 accusation that Samyang Foods used tallow for non-human consumption industrial usage for its ramen production. When a newspaper article appeared in November 1989, it sent a shock wave through Korea considering the widespread consumption of ramen. People's health and safety concerns led to a consumer boycott and the arrest of nine Samyang Foods employees. Samyang Foods was cleared of the charge by the court in 1995, but the incident already had pushed the company to lose a large percentage of the market share. Samyang Foods claims to have saved a total of 1.34 million MT of rice by supplying consumers with ramen between 1963 and 1981 (SAMYANG FOODS 1991:317).²¹⁰

The noodle industry had the lion's share of the wheat flour allocation throughout the HCU period, as Table 28 illustrates. Ramen topped the list of the most sold processed foods in Korea in 2006, with 347,000 MT produced and domestic sales of 1.1 trillion wŏn. If the cup, rather than the usual packet, of ramen was included in the figures, total production would come to 434,000 MT with domestic sales of 1.5 trillion wŏn (Korean Food and Drug Administration 2006, cited in Kim, S-h 2006:32).²¹¹

²¹⁰ Samyang Foods arrived at this calculation based on the number of packs sold (approximately 11.2 billion) between 1963 and 1981.

²¹¹ The amount excludes the export total of \$37 million of ramen, and 26 million of cup ramen. Cup ramen was listed separately, and ranked 18th in the most sold processed foods.

Table 28. Consumption Trend (%) of Wheat Flour by Usage

Year	Home-use	Noodle industry	Bakery, confectionery	Industrial, sauce, beverage	Total
1963	20	45	20	15	100
1964	20	45	22	13	100
1965	20	47	23	10	100
1979*	20	48	19	13	100
1985*	9	42	24	25	100
1990*	5	50	25	20	100
1995*	4	52	22	22	100

Note: *1979–95 included in the “noodles” category for use by the noodle and restaurant industries

Source: For 1963, 1964, and 1965: The Korea Industrial Bank chosabu (1966), “Korea Industry” [Hanguk ui sanöp] vol. 1, p.137, and The Korea Flour Mills Industrial Association (1985) “Wheat and Flour Mill Industry,” p.297, cited in Kim, Y-h 1990:234; For 1979, 1985, 1990 and 1995, Park, C-n et al., in *Wheat and Wheat Flour* 1997: 355.

What were the reasons for sales experiencing such high growth? First, ramen was cheap and convenient; second, its taste and appearance suited Koreans’ food culture. During the two decades of the HCU, the middle class was still relatively small and the vast majority of Koreans were poor. Society was in transition, with a large migration from rural areas to urban centers, leading to widespread poverty. With so many working for low wages, ramen provided a full meal substitute which satisfied Koreans with a sense of fullness, with added calories from tallow used in the manufacturing processing. A cultural structure of a Korean meal required a staple grain (rice), a soup (usually hot), and several vegetable dishes with Kimchee as the centerpiece. A meat or fish dish was only available to those who could afford it. Ramen provided an all-in-one meal, with a soup base usually flavored to give a meaty taste. A study reported that 73.1 percent of the people surveyed in 1988 consumed ramen because it was a convenient substitute meal (Kim, S-k and A-r Lee 1989:395–96).

As the hot, sweet tea sustained the British working class (Mintz 1985), so did the hot, spicy broth with noodles uphold Korean workers through their long working day. The importance of ramen's role was evidenced by the state mediating the establishment of the industry, not to mention giving indirect subsidies via cheap wheat, and the high growth of the industry began during the HCU period, which saw a sharp increase in employment from primary sector to secondary and tertiary industries.²¹² The number of wage earners grew from 2.4 million in 1963 to 6.5 million in 1980 (Koo, H 2001:35), and with workers having to put in long hours without a proper meal break, the convenience of hot instant noodles was critical.²¹³

Equally critical was its low price. At a time when inflation was running at an annual rate of 13.7 percent²¹⁴ (Kim and Roemer 1979:72), the price of ramen remained constant at 10 wŏn until 1969, even though the amount of noodles per packet had increased from 100 grams to 120 grams (Samyang Foods 1991:319). The price of ramen rose incrementally after 1970, but the increases lagged far behind other items. By 1981, when the price of ramen reached 100 wŏn, the price of other comparable meals, *Tchajangmyŏn* (a noodle dish served in Chinese restaurants in Korea) and *Naengmyŏn* (cold noodles), was 500 wŏn and 1,300 wŏn respectively (ibid.), and a

²¹² Changes in the percentage of employed people by industry, 1960–75

Industry	1961	1970	1975
Agriculture, fishery & forestry	79.8	50.4	45.9
Mining and manufacturing	4.9	14.4	19.1
(manufacturing)	(4.5)	(13.2)	(18.6)
SOC & service	15.3	35.2	35.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Bank of Korea, Economic Statistics Yearbook, each year, cited in Lee, D-k 1987:228

²¹³ For an excellent description of the industrial transformation of South Korea, see Hegen Koo's *Korean Workers: the Culture and Politics of Class Formation* (2001), published by Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.

²¹⁴ This is percent per year during the period 1965–70.

pack of cigarettes was 450 wŏn in 1980 (Kim, K-c 2004:12). The state controlled the price of ramen by including it in the ‘basic foodstuffs list.’ The mass consumption of noodles, particularly ramen, due largely to the low price and expanding distribution networks, helped wheat become incorporated into Korea’s staple food diet. By directly and indirectly promoting the cheap wheat product, the state was able to depress the staple food cost and thus urban wages,²¹⁵ restraining the likely added increase in rice consumption when household income grew.²¹⁶

As part of its wheat consumption project, the state instituted a two-track strategy of pushing Western-style foods to the emerging middle class and noodles to the working class. That strategy would leave a lasting impression on society. Middle-class consumption of wheat foods was symbolically important even though bread had limited appeal as a meal substitute. In urbanizing Korea, middle-class consumption practices represented social distinction (Bourdieu 1984) and culinary modernity, which influenced the overall food consumption structure (Choi, Y-j and S-b Choi 2012). For example, the confectionery industry—a representative of wheat as a luxury good—was insignificant in the early 1960s, but by 2003 the sector had grown to \$1.8 billion (Kim, S-w 2004:14). Ramen, on the other hand, was crucial for wage earners and supported Korea’s industrialization. The sheer quantity of consumption placed it as the second staple food. Ramen remains popular as a snack food or a simple meal, and Korea’s per capita consumption is higher than that of Japan or China (World Instant Noodles Association 2015).²¹⁷ In a nutshell, a packet of ramen containing 120

²¹⁵ The pace of the rising working class in South Korea was swift: 1963, the year HCU was officially brought into being, there were 2.4 million wage workers. This figure grew to 3.8 million in 1970 and to 6.5 million in 1980. Wage workers constituted 31.5 percent of the total labor force in 1963 (Koo, H 2001:35) but increased to 40 percent in 1970, and to 44.5 percent in 1980 (CAY calculation based on data from NSO/KOSIS 2009; Koo, H 2001:35).

²¹⁶ When the household income increased so did rice consumption, but not wheat (Chang, H-s 1983:31).

²¹⁷ Per capita consumption of ramen in South Korea is 75 packets (Korea Times, 12/5/2007).

grams of fried noodles symbolizes both the creation of the Korean working class and the beginnings of Korea's trade relations with the U.S. and Japan. Ramen was the food that fueled Korea's cheap domestic labor, which used technology imported from Japan to manufacture goods for export to the U.S. market.

4. Reconceptualizing Food Consumption

It was not only the material transformation of Korea's dietary practices that the HCU brought about. It also contributed to a reconceptualization of social relations with food in Korea. During the HCU period, a new discourse permeated society that held that wheat had a nutritive value superior to rice. The state manufactured this discussion by first raising a host of problems associated with rice consumption as Korea's main staple, then introduced Western science into the discourse to dramatically shift the population's concepts of food and nutrition.²¹⁸

A massive campaign was launched to create a new concept that the human relationship to food was to be understood in terms of its nutritional and chemical constituents as well as its contribution to meeting physical requirements. Food would become something to be analyzed, calculated, and manipulated for optimal performance of the human body rather than as a basis for sustaining life, enjoyment, and experience. Through this process, Korea was set on a path toward "nutritionism" (Scrinis 2008:39)²¹⁹ while traditional food-related knowledge and nutritional

²¹⁸ Western nutrition was first introduced to Korea in the mid-1920s, primarily in women's colleges (Kim, S-h 1997:10). Since there were only a handful of such colleges in colonial Korea, even the basic concept of nutritional science had limited circulation. Under the American occupation (1945–48) the ideology of nutrition was incorporated into the dietary reform programs, and the first nutritional survey was carried out by the American military on Korean troops in 1956 (Williams et al. 1959:1).

²¹⁹ "Nutritionism" refers to the ideology of food which is based on the reductive approach. This focus on nutrients has come to "dominate, to undermine, and to replace other ways of engaging with food and of contextualizing the relationship between food and the body" (Scrinis 2008:39). The term nutritionism had been attributed to Harvey Levenstein (1988) in reference to the 19th-century American "New Nutritionism" social reform movement (Roth 2000:35; Scrinis 2008, footnote 1, p. 47).

understanding were de-emphasized. Rational, scientific dietary modifications were propagated, and more often than not, the arguments were made for increased wheat consumption.

A cacophony of arguments advocating nutritionism, described as ‘dietary modernization,’ echoed throughout Korean society, giving comparisons between wheat and rice and suggesting the corresponding rates of chronic diseases that would result if the nation’s rice diet were to continue. Rice represented an outdated traditional food, while wheat was associated with a modern lifestyle. A public campaign was waged to convince homemakers of rice’s inferior nutritional value (“Let’s Reform Our Diet,” Chosun Ilbo 1959). The “White Paper on Nutrition” (Chosun Ilbo 1962) declared, “Wheat flour is more nutritious than rice,” and a major newspaper editorial warned of mental deficiencies if toddlers were fed an unbalanced diet of rice (“Be Cautious of Baby Food” 1974). Nutrition advocates reinforced the argument for wheat by pointing to the results of laboratory experiments that showed that rice had lower levels of protein than wheat.²²⁰ Evidence was produced of the poor eating habits and malnutrition of children in poorer classes (Oh, Y-h 1972).

The state and scientific community colluded to form this discourse, which was supported by international organizations such as the United Nations FAO, WHO, and UNICEF.²²¹ While the state exploited the science of nutrition to achieve its policy goals, those in nutritional science also worked to push society in a certain direction and establish themselves as an important professional field. Nutritional science

²²⁰ Later, Western nutritionists abandoned their emphasis on protein, as described in Donald S. McLaren’s article “The Great Protein Fiasco,” *The Lancet*, July 13, 1974, pp. 93–96.

²²¹ UNICEF, FAO, and WHO were particularly active in providing international training and domestic support for the applied nutrition programs (Kim, S-h 1987; Mo, Sumi 2007).

emerged as a field in the mid-1960s in Korea, led by U.S.-trained scientists and home economists, and modeled after the development of the science in the U.S.

While the science developed gradually in the U.S.,²²² it was instrumental in reshaping Korea's dietary habits in a relatively short span of time. Nutritional science worked as an adjunct to the state, directly involved in executing programs to achieve policy goals, particularly, but not exclusively, during the HCU period. The number of home economics and nutrition science programs in Korean educational institutions²²³—secondary and tertiary—expanded dramatically during the HCU.²²⁴ Departments of home economics, already established at many universities, particularly women's schools, provided the institutional home in which nutrition science flourished. Tucked away in academic institutions, home economists and nutrition scientists worked tirelessly to produce studies, and their findings were reinterpreted and reproduced for mass consumption in popular media to shape the public discourse on wheat and rice.

4.1. Nutrition in Home Economics

After the war, home economics was quickly established as a reputable academic discipline by scholars who returned after training in the U.S. While it may have been a relatively small field in its country of origin, it gained prominence as a popular major for female college students in Korea. Not only did home economists teach the next generation of homemakers about the virtues of nutritionism, they emerged as an

²²² A hundred years of the development of nutrition science allowed a certain amount of public debate to occur, and however limited it might have been, there was a vetting process. See Levenstein (1988).

²²³ Most often the department of nutrition science was in the school of home economics.

²²⁴ Home economics was first introduced to Korea by American Protestant missionaries during the colonial period with the primary objective of producing a model homemaker by inculcating women with Japanese values of family life and education (Yang 1973).

important voice advocating the rationalization of the domestic sphere.²²⁵ They argued that the traditional Korean kitchen, represented as both outdated and inconvenient, should be replaced with a Western equivalent, and that traditional methods of food preparation should give way to a Western, more scientific, approach. They distributed measuring cups and spoons so that homemakers might practice a scientific method of cooking. (Yoo and Lee 1994). Facilitating, and playing a part in, the so-called scientific turn in homemaking was the wheat that nutritional scientists held up as superior to rice and as an essential part of Western, science-based cooking.

The lessons from home economists were also circulated to the public through popular journals. A 1961 *Yŏwŏn* article illustrates how their arguments were carried. Titled “First Step Toward Dietary Reform,” the article summarized its argument with the subheading “Rationalization is the first step toward a dietary reform of scientization. The use of a scale and the consumption of wheat are the basis for scientization” (*Yŏwŏn* 1961:306). The article, written as a follow-up to a food exhibition promoting wheat consumption, equated the use of a scale in the kitchen with a civic duty to protect children’s health:

We need to use scales to measure the daily intake of calories and nutrition. If we cannot purchase a scale, we can make one. It is a citizen’s duty to reform our diet, particularly to protect our children’s health. (ibid.)

Not to worry if one did not have a Western scale to measure daily calories: a picture of a homemade scale was shown to convince the reader that a metric system scale can be made easily. After detailing recipes for several different types of bread and other wheat foods, such as noodles and croquettes dishes, the article went to the trouble of

²²⁵ The literature on the domestic science movement and its attempt to rationalize the domestic world is extensive (for the U.S., see B. Ehrenreich and D. English, 2005, *For Her Own Good: Two Centuries of the Experts’ Advice to Women* (New York: Anchor Books). In the literature, the rationalization of the domestic sphere is seen as part of a general extension of ‘technical rationality’ in the modern world.

providing a commonsense description of the amounts that would correspond to 100 grams of certain foods for the recipes. This would allow those who could not quite grasp the measurements to still be able to follow the recipes and become familiar with the measurements.

Buoyed by the First (1962–66) and Second (1967–71) Five-Year Economic Plans, home economists and nutrition advocates organized food exhibitions consisting mostly of Western food and introduced household technology and appliances (Yang, M-s 1973). Their activities did not merely coincide with the state's economic development plans. These exhibitions were sponsored by educational institutions and parastatal organizations, while international organizations like UNICEF brought refrigerators and bread-making equipment to Korea (Kim, S-h. 1982). The exhibitions opened a venue where scholars and students, predominantly from women's colleges, displayed their recipes and menus that primarily featured Western-style bread and pastries.²²⁶ For example, a food exhibit for dietary reform, organized by the Korean Home Economics Association in 1962, displayed the following recipes: Best two-egg cake, Strawberry shortcake, Orange nut bread, Muffin, Jelly roll, Kaffe Kucken (coffee cake), Cream pie, Cookies, Nutritious bread, Roast chicken, Dried salted cuttlefish, Chrysanthemum rice cake, Pork rib, Fruit salad, Cocktail snacks, and Party hors d'oeuvres. Other than a few meat dishes, all were bread and pastries (Korean Home Economics Association 1960:321–27).

The food exhibition menu revealed an interesting contrast between the ideal dishes cooked by the professionals and what was actually being eaten by most of the population in the 1960s. While the exhibition displayed fancy bread and cakes, most

²²⁶ For example, a food exhibit organized by the Home Economics Association in 1962 published a list of 16 recipes: 14 were submitted by women's colleges, and two were by girls' high schools (Korean Home Economics Association 1962:321–27).

Koreans were struggling just to find enough food to survive at the time. The average caloric intake in Korea in 1962 was 1,943 Kcal for adult males, well below the 2,900 Kcal that FAO established as the Recommended Daily Allowance (Kang, In-h 1991:442). Food exhibits were promoting Western recipes and desserts for the sake of good nutrition at a time when most people were just trying to stave off hunger.

4.2. Nutrition and the Influence of Scientific Motherhood

The concept of scientific motherhood—the dominant feminine ideology in the U.S. in the early 20th century—is the belief that women need scientific and medical expertise to raise healthy children (Apple 1995a:130, 1995b:161). In Korea, it developed as part of the campaigns for family reform and an improvement in living conditions (Lee, J-k 1999). Nutrition was one of the central concerns, for the concept highlighted the importance of physical hygiene and nutrition in child rearing. As science surpassed tradition in the methods of bringing up children, mothers and grandmothers lost their status as the wellspring of traditional knowledge and became recipients of advice from medical experts, who monopolized public discussions on nutrition and family health, especially that of infants and children. Experts encouraged women to learn about nutrition so they might avoid both under- and overfeeding. They recommended various pseudo-Western menus as nutritionally balanced and healthy. Publications that dealt with scientific knowledge on appropriate nutrition grew considerably.

In the discourse on scientific motherhood, women were to practice scientific child rearing. If they were not ready to do so, they had to be educated as such. Nutritional scientists carried out studies linking the social characteristics of mothers, such as age, income, and education, to children's nutritional status (Chang, M-s 1972) or dietary practices (Hyun, K-s 1968). They offered nutrition advice not only to mothers but to women and young girls in general. The mass media, particularly women's magazines and journals such as *Yŏwŏn*, *Yŏsŏng DongA*, and *Jubu*

Saengwhal, played a critical role in popularizing the basic concept of nutrition and introducing the “scientific” approach to food preparation. *Yŏwŏn*—the magazine directed at middle-class women—ran an article that sampled age-specific daily menus with an explanation of the nutritional values of each food, as shown in Table 29 (Yi, S-a 1963). This article introduced the concept of micro and macro nutrients as a scientific way of viewing food and consumption. A list of daily menu for high school and college students was laid out as shown in Table 30. The article used tables and figures to present an argument in a seemingly scientific way: if the reader wanted her children to become intelligent, she should feed them Western food. In order to prepare Western food, she should learn to measure ingredients using Western instruments and in Western units, and to think about food in terms of its component Western nutrients.

Table 29. Nutrition Requirement for Students Preparing for Exams

	Age group and gender			
	12–14		15–17	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Energy (calorie)	2,500	2,400	2,750	2,350
Protein (gram)	95	85	95	80
Calcium (mg)	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.7
Iron (mg)	12	12	13	13
Vitamin A:				
■ carotenoids (IU)	6,000	6,000	7,500	6,000
■ Vitamin A	2,000	2,000	2,500	2,000
Vitamin B ₁ (mg)	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.1
Vitamin B ₂	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.1
Niacin (mg)	10	11	13	11
Vitamin C (mg)	65	75	90	75
Vitamin D (mg)	400	400	400	400

Source: Yi, S-a, *Yŏwŏn* 1963:379. Translation mine.

Table 30. Daily Menu for High School and College Students

	Menu	Ingredient	Amount
Breakfast	Toast	Bread	150 g
		Peanut butter	1.5 Tbsp
	Sausage salad	Sausage	20 g
		Potato	1
		Carrot	20 g
Onion		20 g	
Soup	Mayonnaise	1 Tbsp	
	Onion	20 g	
	Korean cabbage	30 g	
	Carrot	20 g	
	Milk	2 tsp	
	Wheat flour	1 tsp	
Fruit	Butter	1 tsp	
	Orange	2	
Lunch	Egg noodles	Noodles	150 g
		Fried bean curd	15 g
		Egg	1
		Spinach	130 g
	Fish & ginger	Fish	70 g
Crown daisy	Ginger		
	Crown daisy	100 g	
	Black sesame seed	0.5 tsp	
Rice	Oil	1 tsp	
	Rice	150 g	
Dinner	Hamburger	Beef	50 g
		Onion	20 g
		Egg	1/3
		Bread crumb	1 tsp
		Oil	1 tsp
		Cabbage	80 g
	Fish ball soup	White fish	50 g
Milk	Scallion	½	
	Wheat flour	2 Tbsp	
	Bean curd	1	
	Korean cabbage	100 g	
Potato	Potato	1.5	

Source: Yi, S-a, Ygh S (1963:381). Translation mine.

The article was representative of many others that included not only recipes and cooking methods but also Western standards of food measurement. A 1961 Yōwōn article, “First Step Toward the Dietary Reform,” for example, gives a list of food amounts that were equal to 100 grams (see Table 31). In the 1960s, Korea was still transitioning from the local measuring system to metric, and the article contained information on ‘modern’ measurements to get women used to the new system.

Standardization of Korean cooking began with the inculcation of quantitative measurements and with turning the knowledge into replicable “scientific” practice. The article includes drawings illustrating how to improvise a scale with a ruler and a basket.

Table 31. Standard for 100 Grams

Onion	Banana	Eggplant	Radish	Bean curd	Potato	Egg
1	1	1	4 cm x 7 cm	¼	2 (small)	2
Cabbage	Salt	Wheat flour	Milk	Apple	Plum	Fish
¼ small	½ cup	1 cup	1/3 cup	½ (large)	2	1 portion

Source: Yōwōn 7(11), 1961:307. Translation mine.

As these journals and the mass media helped diffuse the scientific knowledge of food, nutritional science became a fundamental part of the ideology of food and a determining factor in reconceptualizing Korean society. Dietary choices based on classifying and quantifying nutrients as a main framework through which food was viewed, and decontextualizing the human relationship with food, brought about a reconceptualization of food consumption and contributed to the broader program of scientizing Korean society. Prior to the dominance of Western nutrition science, food was considered in its entirety—rice was rice, meat was meat, and so on—rather than by its component parts. People consumed food as a source of vitality and life and perceived consumption as a practice of the community and relationships. The scientific nutrition approach helped to redefine food and people. As an opportunity to bring in new foods to Korea, it also transformed people’s relationships to food and to each other.

It is particularly noteworthy that the rise of the scientific motherhood discourse fed into the increase in wheat consumption. The aforementioned Yōwōn article, for example, suggested in its introduction to the daily menu for high school and college

students that consuming rice would result in a lack of vitamins, and thus it would be important to consume “bread-meals” (Western) twice a day (Yi, S-a 1963:379).

5. Conclusion

The Korean state implemented its HCU policy to shape food consumption and dietary practices in support of its industrialization project in the 1960s and 1970s. Its food policy was a constitutive element of Korea’s industrialization that was driven by a cheap labor force. The policy accomplished its goal of controlling grain consumption but in doing so gave rise to far-reaching changes in Korean food culture that ushered in a diet transition, however unintended this might have been. The state regulated the food supply and advocated Western nutritional science in support of a particular ontology and epistemology about food. This chapter showed how socioeconomic forces, science, and state policy interacted to refashion the Korean diet.

Changes in the Korean diet are closely linked to the development of the food industry, which is, in turn, situated in the larger context of capital accumulation. As Korea’s economy grew and capitalism consolidated, the commodification of food, as well as rationalizing, scientizing, and quantifying (numericalizing) of food deepened. Korea’s per capita gross domestic product grew from \$87 in 1962 to \$1,597 in 1980 and to \$10,160 in 2001. The rise of wage workers, particularly women, increased the demand for commercial foods,²²⁷ a demand that was met by the expansion of supermarkets and department stores. The commodification of food and the rise of the wage worker fed off of each other.

Science played a central role in reshaping the public discourse on food. People could be provided with a new grain but they had to be taught the cultural and human

²²⁷ Commercial foods here include ready-made, take-out, processed, convenience, and eating-out foods.

capital of how to process, prepare, and eat it. Furthermore, they needed to be assured that the new grain was a superior alternative to the rice they were used to, and that eating the alternative would be a sophisticated thing to do. Nutritional science produced new knowledge that denigrated traditional Korean foods and promoted the adoption of Western consumption practices. This new knowledge did not result from the mere diffusion of international norms and practices as a result of their pure value and efficacy alone. It was deeply implicated in the hegemonic power of the state and the discursive power of American-trained nutrition experts who had constructed the idea that focusing on nutrition and consuming wheat was practicing modernity (Knorr-Cetina 1981; Haraway 1989). In Korea, the science of nutrition was an integral part of the state's image of social engineering and control, as in other "high-modernist" states that often deploy scientific knowledge to render local complexity controllable and to facilitate efficient management of the population (Gupta 1998; Scott 1998).

The process of transforming Korea's food production and consumption had been completed by the end of the 1990s. On one hand, its agricultural productivity had been mortally wounded. Korea no longer produced wheat in any significant quantity, and its agricultural productivity was limited to rice cultivation. Even its ability to grow rice had been seriously weakened. On the other hand, Koreans had gradually moved away from rice consumption and embraced wheat and wheat products in their newly constituted diet. The parallel, and paradoxical, process of the cessation of wheat production and the explosion of wheat consumption could not, and did not, occur naturally. It was facilitated by the heavy hand of the interventionist state. And the state intervention was made possible and mediated by the food aid. The wheat provided by the U.S. both ended Koreans' wheat production and started their wheat consumption.

CHAPTER 6:

CONCLUSION: WHEAT'S END

This dissertation explores the historical and social processes involved in the transformation of Korea's agro-food system and diet. It examines how food—wheat in particular—has served not only as a mechanism to bring about dietary changes in Korea but also as a conduit for transforming the country from an agrarian society to an industrial one. Furthermore, it examines the ways in which this transformation facilitates, and is facilitated by, the movement towards national development centered on industrialization, and the critical role played by the state in terms of its relations with the global political economy and in reconfiguring the domestic agro-food system to be part of a global food regime. It engages the literature on Korea's development and food regimes, and makes the following four contributions.

Noting the contradictory phenomenon of rapid Korean wheat consumption mirrored by a precipitous fall in domestic production, this study seeks to understand the reasons and the processes behind these changes and how they were able to achieve compressed industrialization. These questions take the inquiry beyond Korea's borders and into the global processes that were both constraining the range of Koreans' choices and encouraging the particular decision to import American wheat and to eat it. These processes constitute the second food regime—the hierarchical global structure of power that shapes food production and consumption throughout the world of which Korea is a part. How did Korea, a constituent part of the Japan-centered regional food regime in the first half of the 20th century, become incorporated into the global food regime, which had the U.S. at its center? To answer the question, this study focuses on the state as the main agent of economic, political and cultural change. “[T]he nation-state working with and through capitalist and military organization” (Albrow 1996:7) was the main agent of change in the modernity project aimed at

human control over space, time, nature, and society in Korea, as in elsewhere. The state in Korea was, furthermore, an authoritarian developmental one that controlled the people's food choices at the dinner table as well decisions made on farmland use as part of its industrialization drive. It flexed its power vis-à-vis society to reorganize food consumption and production in a way that contributed to the construction of the second food regime.

What, then, mediated between the second food regime and the Korean state? This study demonstrates that wheat played a vital role not only in transforming Korea from an agrarian society to an industrial one but also in constructing the second food regime. The Korean state was able to transform society thanks to wheat provided as aid, and that transformation was a constituent part of the global food regime because the wheat was provided by the U.S.

The growth of wheat consumption was not an outcome of Korea's economic development but rather a constituent part of its modernization. The cheap wheat provided under PL480 made rice cultivation uncompetitive and rural communities unsustainable, contributing to massive migration to industrial areas. The cheap labor, thus created in urban centers, was then sustained by the wheat as it worked Korea's industrial machines.

The wheat that fueled Korea's industrialization was not grown domestically, however, but was instead imported, thereby linking Korean society to the U.S.-centered global agro-food system. That the wheat was provided by the U.S., not Japan or the former Soviet Union, reflected Korea's position in the global political economy and constrained Korea's transformational possibilities. That American wheat producers needed an outlet for their excess products turned the constraint into a knot that tied Korea's transformation to the second food regime. All in all, the American wheat was the critical link between Koreans' food choices and the global food regime.

In short, this study makes four main contributions. First, it intervenes in the literature on Korea's modernization by highlighting the vital role of wheat. The literature, even after thirty years of development, remains limited in its understanding of the role of food and agriculture in the country's modernization. Second, it situates Korea's development within the global food regime rather than focusing only on Korea, as most of the existing literature on its development does. Third, it complements the literature on the food regime by demonstrating how the global regime is constituted by the top down and bottom up, and how the state in the Global South plays a critical role. And finally, this study not only takes the spatial issue of the global food regime to task, but also it makes extensive analysis of consumption as a critical component of the second food regime.

1. Changes in Wheat Consumption

While the main body of the study shows how wheat consumption has grown in Korea, it must be noted that the consumption itself has undergone significant changes. When wheat began balancing the grain deficiency in the earlier decades of Korea's transformation, it was a grain unfamiliar to Koreans. First it was consumed in a form that had been known to them in noodles. Later, plain noodles were then processed into a deep-fried instant noodle, known as ramen, contributing to the expansion of wheat consumption. It took time, state intervention, and the rise of the food processing industry for breads, cakes, and other baked goods—wheat products associated with the U.S. and the West—to gain popularity, as chapters 4 and 5 show.

Throughout the HCU period, and up until the early 1980s, the structure of the Korean diet was characterized by predominantly plant-based foods, constituting over

90 percent of total consumption in calories.²²⁸ Of these, cereals constituted approximately 82 percent of the total caloric intake in 1961 (FAOSTAT 2015). Of cereal grains, rice and barley were staples, and wheat consumption was promoted as a substitute for rice. At the advent of the HCU policy in 1961, the breakdown of rice/barley/wheat consumption stood at 65 percent / 23 percent / 11 percent (1% other grains) of total grain consumption. At the termination of the HCU policy in 1977, those figures read 62 percent /16 percent /18 percent (4% other grains), with wheat already exceeding the consumption of barley. By 2001, the proportions had been reconstituted to 51 percent / 5 percent / 23 percent (21% other grains).²²⁹ The structure of the national diet shifted to increased amounts of animal-based foods, incorporating wheat as the second staple grain; and the consumption of rice, while still the main cereal grain, is declining overall.

To examine the period closely, the percentage of plant-foods declined from 97 percent of the total food intake in 1969²³⁰ to 80.1 percent in 2001; of plant-foods, in 1969, cereals constituted 54.6 percent, whereas in 2001, that figure had dropped to 29.5 percent. The decrease in cereal consumption did not equate to lower requirements in the overall grain supply, nor to higher demand for wheat in particular. In the concomitant period, the consumption of animal-foods rose over eightfold, with the most significant shift occurring between 1984 and 1987²³¹ (2005 National Nutrition Survey: 126–28). The rise in animal-foods intake, particularly meat, meant a greater

²²⁸ Except in 1979, when plant-based food composed 88.1 percent.

²²⁹ In terms of annual per capita consumption, barley consumption was more than twice the amount of wheat in 1961 (barley at 47 kg and wheat at 22 kg). In 1977, wheat slightly outpaced barley, but in 2001, wheat consumption was five times that of barley consumption (PSD Online 2008).

²³⁰ The year 1969 was chosen rather than 1961 because there is no existing data prior to 1969. This was the first year the comprehensive national nutrition survey was conducted.

²³¹ While intake of animal-foods remained under 10 percent in the 1970s, the most significant increase took place in the 1980s: 12.0 percent in 1983, 14.2 percent in 1984, 17.4 percent in 1985, 16.9 percent in 1986, and 20.2 percent in 1987. Since 1987 the proportion has remained in a similar range.

demand for feed grain, which sharply raised Korea's total wheat requirement, as Figure 9 illustrates.

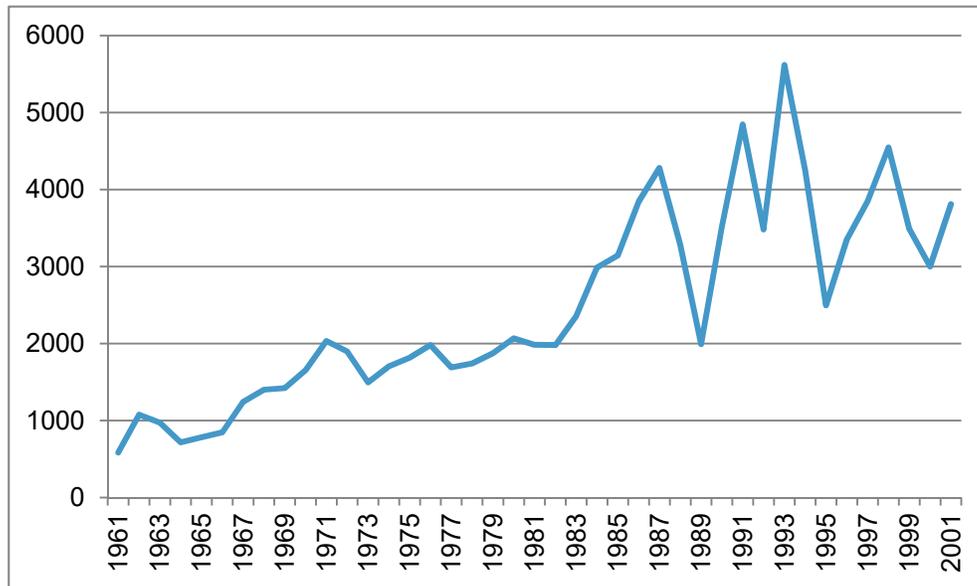


Figure 9. Total domestic wheat consumption (in 1,000 MT) in South Korea, 1961–2001

Source: Extracted from USDA/FAS PSD Online, November 2015.

Feed wheat, as a secondary feed grain to corn, grew from 22,000 MT in 1961 to 1.5 million MT in 2001. Between 1961 and 1973, the rise in feed wheat was steady, but insignificant in absolute terms, ranging from 22,000 MT to 40,000 MT (PSD Online 2008). Between 1974 and 1982, Korea's consumption of feed wheat plunged due to the combination of an international wheat price hike²³² and a domestic political change that led to agricultural policy changes.²³³ However, feed wheat consumption

²³² South Korea's wheat import was almost entirely from the U.S. in the form of food aid during this period. During the 1970s food crisis, the U.S. curtailed food aid, and South Korea was one of its highest food aid recipient countries.

²³³ South Korea's annual per capita wheat consumption dropped to 43 kg in 1973 and 48 kg in 1974, most likely due to the world food crisis. Feed wheat, on the other hand, remained constant in 1973, but dropped in 1974. However, the precipitous drop in feed wheat between 1979 and 1982 could be

experienced a meteoric increase to 476,000 MT in 1983, when the state initiated support programs for livestock farmers to increase domestic meat production.²³⁴

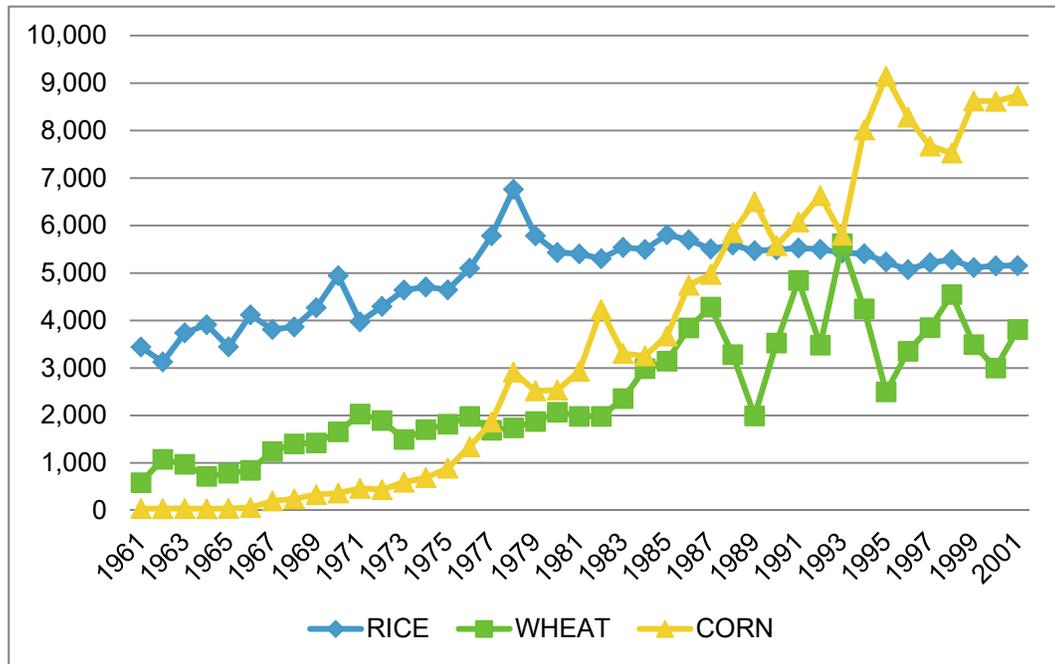


Figure 10. A comparison of total domestic consumption (in 1,000 MT) of rice, wheat, and corn in South Korea, 1961–2001

Source: Extracted from USDA/FAS PSD Online, November 2015.

Beginning in 1985, feed wheat consumption reached over one million MT annually, and combined wheat consumption for food and feed totaled 3.81 million MT in 2001, after reaching a high of 5.62 million MT in 1993 (ibid.).

attributed to the domestic agricultural policy change by the new regime of Chun Doo Hwan that came into de facto power in the fall of 1979 after the assassination of Park Chung Hee in October.

²³⁴ The likely reason for the spike in the feed grain imports in 1983 was due to a new policy of “Improvement of Diversified Farming,” which included loans to livestock farms for the purchase of calves so that farmers could enlarge their herds. Additionally, the government imported calves, which required feed grains. However, the government also increased beef imports, which together with the increased supply of calves resulted in the precipitous drop in price of domestic livestock below the cost of production. This set off the farm crisis (“cattle crisis”) of the mid-1980s, and ensuing protests from farmers. The government suspended beef imports in 1985 (Huh et al. 1991:3). An overview of the feed grain imports (wheat and corn) and Uruguay Round Agreement can reveal more of an accurate understanding of the unstable pattern of wheat imports in the 1980s and 1990s. Since this is beyond the scope of this study, I do not elaborate further here.

The relative importance of wheat consumption against rice consumption can be expressed more clearly if the combined food-feed wheat consumption is compared to that of rice consumption, as in Figure 10.

2. To Eat Wheat as a Staple Food (but Not Barley)

Although wheat grew as the second staple grain thanks to state food policies during the HCU period (1960–80), how do we explain the continued growth of wheat consumption after the HCU was terminated? First, the HCU left a lingering imprint on the younger generations. Second, while the state did not impose any explicit food policy to directly promote wheat consumption in the post-HCU period, it did implement indirect policies that helped incorporate wheat into people's diets. Third, socioeconomic changes—urbanization, income growth, and an expanded female labor force—fueled the processes by which wheat products gradually replaced traditional rice and barley foods. While these reasons offer a plausible explanation and are consistent with the existing literature, this dissertation adds that they are incomplete to the extent that they fail to explain the divergent paths taken by wheat and barley.

In a span of two decades covering the HCU period from 1960 to 1980, the urbanization rate in Korea doubled as the population increased by approximately 50 percent. During the same period, Korea's labor force in the mining and manufacturing industries grew from 5.4 percent to 22.5 percent, and the number of workers employed in the SOC sector increased as well. GDP per capita grew from US 1,110 dollars to US 3,358 dollars (constant 2000 USD).

That the urbanization was accompanied by an increase in women's participation in the labor force contributed to the continuation of wheat consumption. As industrialization deepened, the female share of the labor force grew in Korea, as studies on other societies show (Pampel and Tanaka 1986; Semyonov and Shenhav 1988). Women's participation in the labor force increased steadily from 37 percent in

1963 to 42.8 percent in 1983, and to 48.9 percent in 2003 (KOSIS 2015). As women moved into the labor force in greater numbers, their role at home began to shift in a way that facilitated the rise of convenience foods such as noodles and ramen. Much of the wheat products during Korean industrialization were inexpensive convenience foods, which enabled women to invest less time in meal preparation for themselves as well as for their families (Mo, S-m 1994).

Studies, in general, cite two closely related socioeconomic factors of income growth and urbanization as the main determinants in diet transition. Household income growth spurs demand for diet diversification, and increased urbanization facilitates changes in lifestyle that create demand for different types of consumption (Perisse et al. 1969; World Health Organization, and Food and Agriculture Organization 1973; Pelto and Pelto 1983; Grigg 1995; Poleman and Thomas 1995; Drewnowski and Popkin 1997; Sobal 2000; Popkin 2002; Lee and Sobal 2003).²³⁵ More recently, the influence of growing globalization and migration have been attributed to impacting diet transformation and food culture (Popkin 1999; Sobal 2000; Regmi and Dyck 2001).²³⁶ These structural changes, together with population growth

²³⁵ The conventional wisdom in the correlation between incomes and diet structure has assumed income growth with a rise in diets high in fats, usually from animal-foods such as meat and milk products. This direct relationship between the GNP per capita and diet structure was documented most famously by Perisse et al. (1969) in their analysis of food balance sheets from the FAO for 85 countries in 1962, which showed that high GNP levels were associated with greater percentages of energy derived from vegetable and animal fats. This view, however, has been modified by Drewnowski and Popkin (1997). Drewnowski and Popkin argue that with the globalized diet system, this classic relationship has been uncoupled due to global availability of cheap vegetable and animal fats. Popkin (2002) reported that by 1990 even the poor nations had access to a relatively high-fat diet, and that fat consumption is less dependent on GNP than ever before. At the same time, there is still a linkage, although not as strong as before, between the availability of animal fats and income (2002:120).

²³⁶ Pingali (2006:282) categorizes the main determinants of diet changes in East Asia into two “stages,” and argues that the first stage is income-induced diet diversification and the second stage is diet globalization and Westernization. Pingali argues as though diet transformation takes place as a natural process in which once a society achieves the first stage, it evolves into the second stage. This line of argument overlooks the political and economic factors that enable those changes in the context of the growing globalization and the power relations of the international political economy.

and changes in age demographics, elicit the development of food technology and processing (Lee and Sobal 2003), the delocalization of food production and distribution (Pelto and Pelto 1983), which prompts less locally produced plant-foods and the consumption of more imported and processed animal-foods, and the uncoupling of food preparation from food consumption (French et al. 2001; Lee and Sobal 2003). Some even argue that the rising value of time can be a determinant of food consumption patterns toward ready-made, convenience food (Senauer et al. 1986). The food industry and state intervention in promoting the consumption of wheat and animal protein affect the form and the pace of diet transition, and socioeconomic transformations associated with urbanization bring changes in women's roles; for example, a higher female participation in the workforce means different time allocation, promoting processed foods and eating out (Kennedy and Reardon 1994; French et al. 2001; Regmi and Dyck 2001; Lee and Sobal 2003).²³⁷

While these studies make valuable contributions to understanding the structural factors that facilitated changes in the diet and the pace of those changes, they stop short of explaining how the substance of the diet changed from one to another. In other words, those factors fail to explain why Koreans changed their preference for a rice-based diet to adopting wheat as second staple, and, furthermore, why this occurred in the absence of any significant local wheat production. In other words, why is it that Koreans did not simply consume more rice but instead dropped their favorite grain in favor of one foreign in taste and origin?

When massive amounts of American wheat were infused into Korea (see chapters 3 and 4 for details), it was a relatively 'new crop' in the sense that it had traditionally been consumed in very limited amounts as a supplement to other

²³⁷ Lee and Sobal (2003) is a good source of a brief overview of transitions related to socioeconomic and dietary practices.

foodstuffs for special occasions. In the midst of the socioeconomic disorder that followed decolonization and the Korean War, people consumed wheat foods out of necessity, not out of preference (Lee, C-h et al. 1988:400).²³⁸ Nevertheless, a level of familiarity was established during this time thanks to the massive amounts of wheat available for a prolonged period of time when other foods were scarce. Coercive intervention by the state then took over for the following twenty years.

The availability of wheat and socioeconomic changes alone, however, were not sufficient to establish it as a new crop for a staple food. While both barley and wheat were promoted to limit rice consumption, and, moreover, barley had a head start as the second staple for many decades prior to the implementation of the HCU policy, the two grains moved in opposite directions after the HCU, as Figure 11 shows. The consumption of wheat rose or remained the same in the absence of state intervention, while barley dipped. As the Korean economy grew and society became modernized, Koreans continued to consume wheat but abandoned barley. The structural explanations alone cannot explain this divergence.

The consumption of both wheat and barley grew during the HCU period, reflecting state intervention to promote them as a replacement for rice. But after the HCU policy was terminated, the daily per capita consumption of barley began to fall, dropping from 176 grams in 1961 to 30 grams in 1980, and then continued to spiral down to 17 grams in 2001. In contrast, wheat sustained its previous level of consumption, as Figure 11 shows. Barley dropped further, down to a negligible 17 grams a day by 2001 and wheat, since 1978, has replaced it as the second cereal staple.

²³⁸ Lee et al. (1988) reports that due to hunger and malnutrition, Koreans consumed wheat, dairy products, cookies, and canned food that were distributed as relief food for the first time, and the cookies in particular became popularized with the establishment of industrial processing facilities following the Korean War. This resulted in the disappearance of Korean cookies made from rice (ibid. 400).

Koreans on average consumed 8 times as much wheat as barley by 2001 (Figure 11).²³⁹

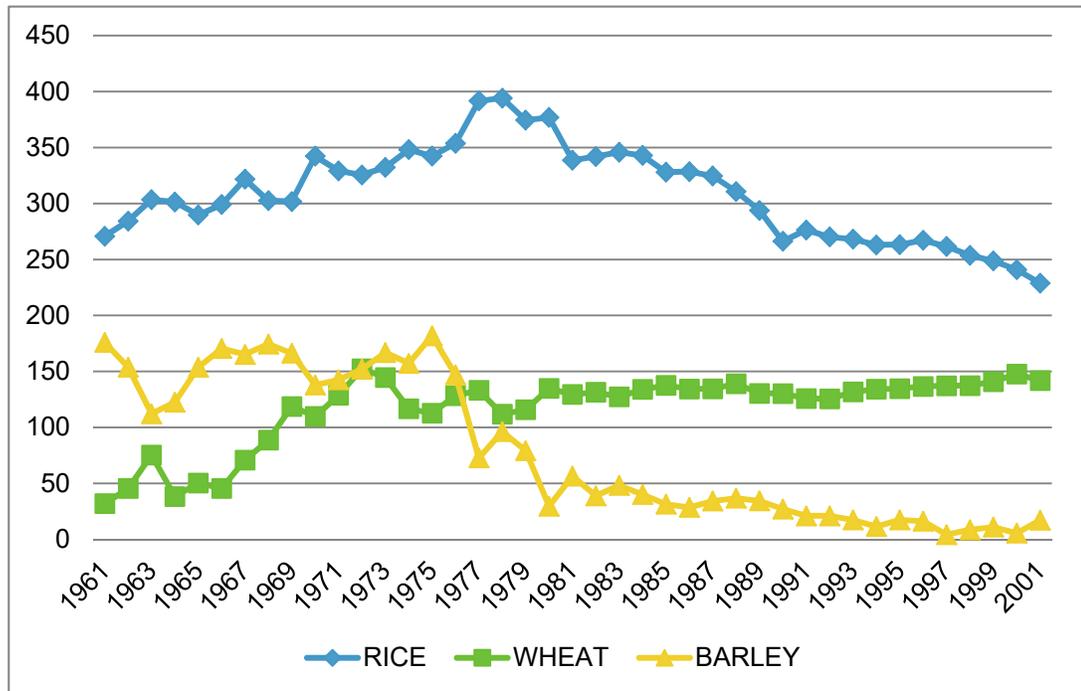


Figure 11. Daily per capita consumption (grams/capita/day) of rice, wheat, and barley in South Korea, 1961–2001.

Source: Extracted from FAOSTAT, November 2015.

Food taste and preference, and their expression in practice (consumption), are constructed from a complex interplay of diverse biopsychosocial forces of change and innovation, including power, symbolic meanings, availability, and accessibility, as well as the gustatory properties of the food itself. For a crop to become a staple food in

²³⁹ Trends in rice and wheat consumption continued similarly beyond 2001, which indicates that while rice continues to decline, wheat may be plateauing at a daily per capita average of 130g. See the following for trends in rice and wheat consumption from 2002 to 2014.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Rice (g)	224	209	211	208	217	210	215	225	229	234
Wheat (g)	141	140	141	139	139	140	133	143	150	142

Source: Extracted from FAOSTAT, November 2015.

a society, it requires both political economy and cultural meanings shared by its members. Mintz (1985) refers to this process of food consumption as “*inside*” (micro-cultural) and “*outside*” (structural) meaning; inside meaning has to do with the daily life conditions of consumption, and outside meaning has to do with environing economic, social, and political conditions (Mintz 1996:20–22). Inside meaning unfolds within the constraints of outside meaning, while outside meaning is already underway (ibid. 20). Mintz proposes that the dynamic between inside and outside meanings of new foods determines how they change, and that the “interior embedding of significance in the activity of daily life” (ibid. 21) leads to the accommodation of broad economic and political changes.

It is important here to remember the dissertation’s earlier argument that the state promoted wheat consumption not only by controlling the availability of wheat and rice but also by shaping public discourses about food. Popular magazines and academia too participated in this process to stimulate the desire to consume wheat by constructing it as a symbol of modernity at a time when modernity and modernization were conflated, as detailed in chapter 5.²⁴⁰ The notion of modernization was synonymous with Westernization, and Westernization meant prosperity and status. Since the West was the first to modernize, it—and more specifically the U.S. as its representative—defined the modern for Koreans. Wheat was received as an American staple, and wheat products such as breads were promoted and embraced by the Korean elite as a ‘modern’ food. In fact, the elite were the handmaidens in the project of Westernization and of Western modernity in general (Abelmann 2003:286–87). Wheat products such as breads and cakes were desired first as a symbol of the West and

²⁴⁰ Certainly I am not positing that the modernization is synonymous with modernity nor Westernization with modernization.

modernization by the Korean elite, and later as a symbol of an elite food by the masses, as discussed in chapter 5.

The public response to barley was the opposite, because the inside meaning ascribed to the grain was the opposite. While Korean consumption of barley grew during the HCU period due to economic necessity and coercive state policy, it declined precipitously following the termination of the HCU policy, as Figure 11 shows. Barley did not carry the same symbolic meaning as wheat, at least partly because it was associated with former colonial power Japan. Barley was forced on Koreans as a replacement for rice by the Japanese colonial authority; therefore, it was associated with the poverty under the colonial rule. Korean sentiment moved away from barley, and Koreans removed it from their staple diet as soon as they could afford to, and as soon as it was no longer forced on them by the state.

Although the incorporation of wheat as a second staple into the Korean diet cannot be attributed entirely to the HCU policy, some of the factors can indeed be traced to the transformation of Koreans' tastes and preferences that resulted from the state's actions, whether or not the state intended such a transformation. In addition, the contrasting fates of barley and wheat show that there is much more involved than just the state. Not only do they follow those of the past metropole and the contemporary one, but they also illustrate how it was much more convincing to ascribe the inside meaning of wheat as a food superior to barley.

The dissertation contributes to the debate by demonstrating that the divergent paths taken by wheat and barley in Korea cannot be explained in structural terms alone and that they can be more satisfactorily explained in terms of the inside meanings ascribed to the grains. It details the ways in which the state and societal actors produce and reproduce inside meanings of foods.

3. Food Security versus Food Sovereignty

The U.S. has been the main source of South Korea's agricultural imports for decades, and this relationship began at the time of Korea's decolonization from Japan in 1945 and the arrival of American grain, particularly wheat. Wheat, a quintessentially American and formerly European farm product, arrived in Korea in May 1946 first as an emergency relief good, and then under PL480 throughout the 1960s and 1970s. By 1981, when the final food aid shipments were delivered, Korea was a top commercial market for U.S. farm products, and wheat topped the list of agricultural imports.

As a result, Korea's food self-sufficiency has suffered. It had a high sufficiency rate in the early postcolonial days—94.3 percent in 1946, 98.1 percent in 1949, 100 percent in 1950 with a surplus export of 90,000 MT, and 94.5 percent in 1954 even after the devastating war (1950–53) (Moon and Ryu 1977:153–56)—but its ability to feed the nation has steadily declined. Korea's food self-sufficiency rate had declined to 80.5 percent by 1970, but in 2010, the rate had dropped to 27.6 percent²⁴¹ (mostly grain) (Agriculture Statistics YBK 2015:296). Despite a national policy of grain sufficiency since 1956 (Martin and McDonald 1986:316), only rice was self-sufficient in 2010. However, the self-sufficiency rate has dropped since 2010, to 89.2 percent in 2013 (Agriculture Statistics YBK 2015:296). Wheat and maize production together make up less than 0.9 percent of consumption (*ibid.*)²⁴²

Certainly, food dependency does not result only from the diet transformation to imported food staples. But if imported food becomes a mechanism to dissolve an agricultural sector of a national community, and if such food is imported from one or two countries or mediated by one or two privately owned corporations, then the issue

²⁴¹ The latest figure, which is for 2013, puts the Korean self-sufficiency rate at 23.3 percent.

²⁴² The ratio is for overall food consumption requirement; if feed is excluded, the ratio for 2010 is 1.9 percent for wheat, and 3.8 percent for maize (Agriculture Statistics YBK 2015:297).

of self-sufficiency and national food sovereignty becomes critical. Moreover, if the impetus for food dependency originated largely from a country that exercised unequal power to intervene politically and economically, the issue of food self-sufficiency becomes that of food dependency or food sovereignty. Food dependency does not simply mean the import of food from abroad. Even if a country can afford to import the food it needs, the livelihoods of farmers who depend on producing food may be destroyed, and food security may be threatened for those who depend on domestic supply. Food dependency may render a country vulnerable to international market conditions, which are affected by national and interstatal politics and economics.

Between 2006 and 2008 the world witnessed global grain prices rising to historic highs, reaching levels more than 60 percent above prices from two years earlier (Trostell 2008). In the concomitant period, the world financial market was in turmoil and on a rapidly descending path. National concerns over inflation and prices led some countries to reduce food exports. This presents a grim picture for not only poor countries importing food grains but also many better-off countries that have sacrificed their food production in pursuit of export-oriented development strategies.

Korea belongs to the latter group. Whereas it was predominantly an agricultural, food-exporting country 60 years ago, it now imports 60 to 70 percent of its domestic food supply (Phillips 2005:5). In 2014, Korea imported \$6.9 billion of agricultural goods from the U.S.;²⁴³ of which grains and feeds occupied over 2.1 billion dollars (U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau 2015). This has made Korea the U.S.'s sixth largest export market for farm products (ibid.). In 2013,

²⁴³ The total amount of Korea's agricultural imports in 2014 from the U.S. is different between the U.S. source and the Korean source. The U.S. Department of Commerce reports \$6.9 billion, whereas the U.S. Agricultural Trade Office in Seoul, based on a Korea Trade Information Service database, reports over \$8 billion in 2014 (see "Exporter Guide" *GAIN Report* No: KS1547). Possibly the difference in the amounts may be attributed to how the reported amount is calculated. The Korean source includes the cost of insurance and freight (CIF value).

Korea's coarse grains requirement was 13 million MT; of which 99 percent was imported (Min, B-y 2014).²⁴⁴ Korea is the U.S.'s third largest market for corn (ibid.). Korea has remained one of the world's top ten wheat-importing countries since 1981 ("Wheat Imports by countries by commodity," FAOSTAT 2008).²⁴⁵

The risks associated with food dependency were shown all around the world in 2008 when the price of wheat on the world market spiked. Many countries that were importing wheat bore the brunt of the price hike, and it was the poorer nations who suffered the most because they could not afford to pay the increased price of wheat products. The social impact of the wheat price spike was most dramatically demonstrated in the Middle East, but Korea did not escape it either. As wheat became more expensive on the world market, the price of those foods made of wheat also increased sharply in Korea. The increased price of ramen posed serious difficulties for people on low incomes because it is an essential staple for the poor. Similarly, the different types of noodles sold at Chinese restaurants, *Tchajangmyŏn*, for example, became more expensive, and thus less available to those on low incomes.

Contrary to the mainstream assumption that food security ceases to be a problem once a country becomes wealthy enough to import food (Timmer 2005), Korea is food insecure (Hartsell and Kim, C-k 2011). FAO (2015) defines the concept of food security thus: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" based on the agreement reached at the 1996 World Food Summit. According to such a definition, if food is available, regardless of the type, method, and/or location of production, a national

²⁴⁴ Coarse grains are for feed (78%), corn milling (15%), and alcoholic beverages (4%).

²⁴⁵ Except in 1983 and 1995 South Korea ranked 11th.

community or an individual household is food secure. Certainly, increased technology inputs and international trade have been at the core of national and global food security strategies. The concept of food sovereignty challenges the notion of food security as defined by the FAO. According to the 2007 Declaration of Nyeleni,²⁴⁶ food sovereignty means

[t]he right of peoples, communities, and countries to define their own agricultural, labor, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and to food-producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and their societies. Food sovereignty means the primacy of people's and community's rights to food and food production, over trade concerns.

At its core, the concept of food sovereignty is rooted in the desire of ordinary people to attain control over food production, consumption, and trade. It is a double-movement against what McMichael (2009c, 2013) termed the third corporate food regime. This study shows how Korea, a country that once was able to feed itself, has been transformed into one that faces food dependency and that falls short of achieving food security even with its economic growth.

4. Agenda for Further Research

This dissertation takes a structuralist approach, which is both a contribution and a limit. A future study may supplement the structuralist account with a close analysis of multiple frictions and fissures that the state has produced with society as well as the

²⁴⁶ The Declaration of Nyeleni is a statement on the rights to food by people, reached by the participants at a food sovereignty forum in Nyeleni Village in Selingue, Mali, in February 2007. The conference were attended by “more than 500 representatives from more than 80 countries” representing various civil society sectors and social movements (Declaration of Nyeleni, February 27, 2007). Downloaded from <http://www.nyeleni.org/spip.php?article290> on November 30, 2015.

diverse ways in which societal actors have resisted, undermined, and opposed the state's initiatives such as the HCU. While the state is the most salient and most powerful actor that led the transformation of Korea's agro-food system and diet, it never exerted complete control over society, leaving room for societal actors to resist or refract the state's initiatives. Stories abound about students who cheated the lunchbox regulations, teachers who skipped the required lunchbox inspections, restaurant owners who served rice behind inspectors' backs, and so forth. Farmers followed the government's directives about what to plant and what not to plant most of the time, but they also opposed them—sometimes in organized groups and by means of protests. These, and many more, are all important stories essential to a complete rendering of the transformation studied by this dissertation, even if the state's policies and actions were more directly and more causally responsible for the transformation of Korea's food choices.

These stories have a significance that goes beyond the historical one. They offer possibilities of a future different from the present by demonstrating that the present system is not inevitable. Examining the various alternatives attempted by farmers on the margins of and in the gaps in state power would point to alternative futures that may be constructed on the foundation of the current regime. It would also help gauge the feasibility of the proposals to increase self-sufficiency or create an organic agriculture within a locally sustainable economy (Hartsell and C-k Kim 2011:132).

The significance of the dissertation goes beyond Korea. USDA's wheat propagation project unfolded in many countries on different continents. What occurred in postwar Korea's diet transition also occurred elsewhere in the Global South. In Asia, where rice has been the traditional staple, the Westernization of dietary practices included the growth of per capita consumption of wheat-based foods while rice

consumption has seen either reductions or negligible increases. Whereas wheat is viewed as “an inferior good and a decline in per capita consumption with income growth is observed, in Asia wheat is fast becoming the preferred staple” (Pingali and Rosegrant 1998). Indonesia is a classic example. It is not a wheat-producing country, but the country’s wheat consumption has risen rapidly. Annual per capita wheat consumption rose from 1.65 kg in 1961 to 25.45 kg in 2013 (FAOSTAT 2015), as demonstrated in Figure 12. It ranks as the second largest wheat-importing country in the world, importing 7.5 million MT in TY 2014/15, with its imports representing 4.6 percent of the world import market (PSD Online, November 2015). Indonesia, with no flour-milling capacity prior to 1971, now owns one of the largest flour mills in the world (Fabiosa 2006). Indeed, some of the rice-producing countries in Asia, such as the Philippines and Thailand, have now become large wheat importers, and traditional grain-exporting countries such as China are now importing wheat (ibid.).

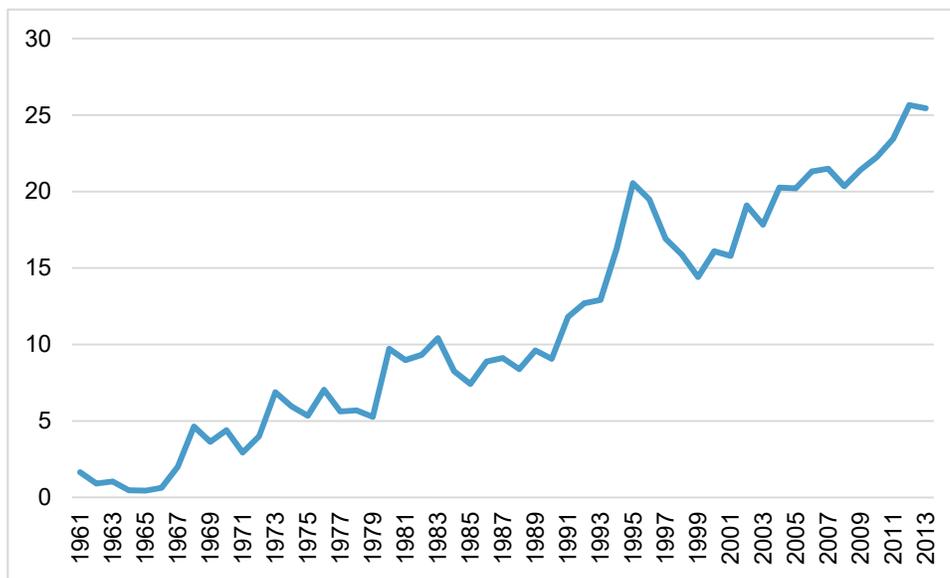


Figure 12. Annual per capita wheat consumption (in kg) in Indonesia, 1961–2013.
Source: Drawn from FAOSTAT, November 2015.

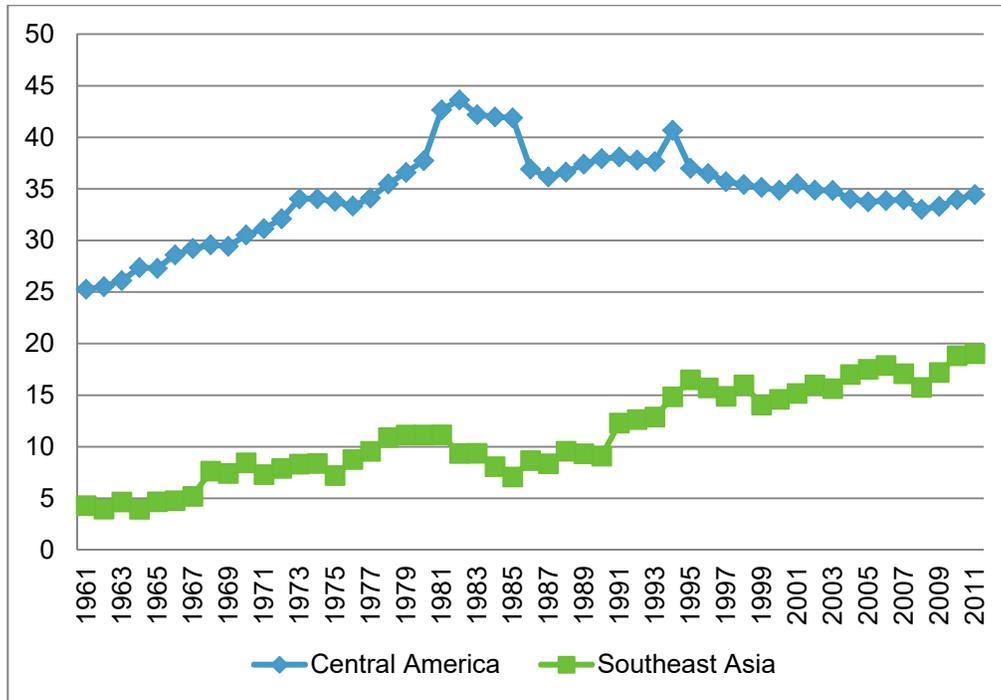


Figure 13. Wheat consumption (kg/per capita/year) increase in Central America and Southeast Asia, 1961–2011.

Source: FAOSTAT, November 2015.

The transition is not limited to Asia, either. Central American countries also are experiencing a grain shift from corn to wheat (Pena and Crusium 2015), and these transitions vary within Latin American countries. It is interesting to note the similar trajectories between Central American and Southeast Asian countries in wheat and wheat-based products from 1961 to 2011, as seen in Figure 13.

The transformation of Korea’s agro-production and diet is, in fact, representative of a wider global phenomenon, in terms not only of what occurred under the second food regime but also of the impact it has had on people’s lives. This dissertation details the roles played by the Korean state and U.S. food aid, as well as the processes by which the transformation of the agro-food system and diet reached a level where wheat consumption became self-sustaining. It is suspected that similar processes are at work where similar actors play similar roles to bring about similar

outcomes in the Global South. The current study offers close scrutiny of Korea as a case study that illustrates the local/global processes at work as well as a suggestion that future research examine these processes in other localities.

**APPENDIX: THE BANK OF KOREA'S SUMMARY OF U.S. ECONOMIC AID
RECEIVED BY SOUTH KOREA, 1945-81**

(UNIT: IN THOUSAND U.S. DOLLARS)

YEAR	TOTAL ⁽¹⁾	USA				CRIK ⁽⁴⁾	
		GARIOA	ECA/SEC	PL 480 ⁽²⁾	ICA/AID ⁽³⁾	SUN/SKO	UNKRA ⁽⁵⁾
1945	4,934	4,934	0	0	0	0	0
1946	49,496	49,496	0	0	0	0	0
1947	175,371	175,371	0	0	0	0	0
1948	179,593	179,593	0	0	0	0	0
1949	116,509	92,703	23,806	0	0	0	0
1950	58,706	0	49,330	0	0	9,376	0
1951	106,546	0	31,972	0	0	74,448	126
1952	161,323	0	3,824	0	0	155,534	1,965
1953	194,170	0	232	0	5,571	158,787	29,580
1954	153,925	0	0	0	82,437	50,191	21,297
1955	236,708	0	0	0	205,815	8,711	22,182
1956	326,669	0	0	32,955	271,049	331	22,334
1957	382,897	0	0	45,528	323,266	0	14,103
1958	321,272	0	0	47,896	265,629	0	7,747
1959	222,204	0	0	11,436	208,297	0	2,471
1960	245,394	0	0	19,913	225,237	0	244
1961	199,245	0	0	44,926	154,319	0	0
1962	232,310	0	0	67,308	165,002	0	0
1963	216,446	0	0	96,787	119,659	0	0
1964	149,331	0	0	60,985	88,346	0	0
1965	131,441	0	0	59,537	71,904	0	0
1966	103,261	0	0	37,951	65,310	0	0
1967	96,933	0	0	44,293	52,640	0	0
1968	105,856	0	0	55,927	49,929	0	0
1969	107,264	0	0	74,830	32,434	0	0
1970	82,636	0	0	61,708	20,933	0	0
1971	51,217	0	0	33,651	17,566	0	0
1972	5,089	0	0	0	5,089	0	0
1973	2,146	0	0	0	2,146	0	0
1974	982	0	0	0	982	0	0
1975	1,155	0	0	0	1,155	0	0
1976	1,740	0	0	0	1,740	0	0
1977	948	0	0	0	948	0	0
1978	169	0	0	0	169	0	0
1979	224	0	0	0	224	0	0
1980	361	0	0	0	361	0	0
1981	236	0	0	0	236	0	0
TOTAL	4,424,707	502,097	109,164	795,631	2,438,393	457,378	122,049

Note: (1) Total: This table includes retroactively to March 1956 hitherto excluded figures of surplus agricultural commodities imported under PL 480, and the totals have been revised correspondingly. The total figure excludes development loans, PL 480 Title I repayable in dollars, Title 2, Export-Import Bank loans and the Peace Corp Program; (2) The portion of proceeds used by the U.S. from sales of surplus agricultural commodities imported under PL 480 (Title I) cannot be regarded as foreign aid

received, but for convenience it is included here to illustrate the total imports under the same law; (3) ICA/AID includes project and non-project funds. Project funds support technical assistance and administrative expenses of the aid agency, and non-project assistance include agricultural commodities, material and equipment support; (4) CRIK consisted of 92 percent of the U.S. contribution; (5) UNKRA consisted of 65 percent of the U.S. contribution.

Sources: 1945–1957: the Annual Economic Review 1958, pages 111–234, with the original sources from ECA (GARIOA and ECA), Office of Supply (SEC and CRIK), UNKRA (UNKRA), and Office of Economic Coordinator (ICA and PL 480); 1958–1960: Annual Economic Review 1962, page 227, with the original sources from UNKRA (UNKRA), USOM/K (for ICA and PL 480); From July 1960 figures for ICA non-project and PL 480 are based on data of Foreign Dept. and Foreign Fund Operations Dept of the Bank of Korea; 1961–1967: Economic Statistics YBK (formerly AER) 1968, page 360, with the original sources from the Bank of Korea, Korea Exchange Bank and the USOM/K (AID and PL 480); 1968–1972: Economic Statistics YBK 1973, page 214, with the original source from the Bank of Korea, Korea Exchange Bank, and USAID; 1973–1981: Economic Statistics YBK 1982, page 245, with the origin of the source from the Bank of Korea, Korea Exchange Bank, and USAID.

ACRONYMS:

AID:	Agency for International Development
CRIK:	Civilian Relief in Korea (92% US)
ECA:	Economic Cooperation Administration (US)
GARIOA:	Government Appropriations for Relief in Occupied Areas (United States military government's aid arm).
ICA:	International Cooperation Agency (US)
SEC:	Supplies Economic Cooperation
SUN:	Supplies, United Nations
SKO:	South Korean Organization
UNKRA:	United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (65% US)

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