

# Food sovereignty movement activism in South Korea: national policy impacts?

Larry L. Burmeister · Yong-Ju Choi

Accepted: 25 August 2011 / Published online: 18 October 2011  
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2011

**Abstract** The transnational agrarian movement La Via Campesina (LVC) seeks to reestablish food sovereignty authority within national borders by removing agriculture from the WTO system. The WTO is a membership organization of participating nation-states that have agreed to abide by the rules of the WTO governance regime. Nominally, at least, changes in these governance rules must be approved by the nation-state members. This paper examines the extent to which South Korean affiliate organizations of LVC, the Korean Peasant League and the Korean Women Peasants Association, have been successful in placing food sovereignty issues on the national agri-food policy agenda in South Korea that challenge the WTO's neoliberal global governance regime for agriculture. In effect, the success of transnational movements like LVC in challenging global institutions may rest on how well their member affiliates are able to play domestic agri-food politics.

**Keywords** Food sovereignty · Korean Peasant League · Korean Women Peasants Association · La Via Campesina · South Korea · Transnational agrarian movements · WTO

## Introduction

Over the last two decades, a transnational food sovereignty movement (FSM) has emerged to challenge the World Trade Organization's (WTO) global governance regime for agriculture. This movement is represented by an umbrella organization, La Via Campesina ("the way of the peasant" in Spanish, hereafter LVC) (Desmarais 2007), that brings together regional and national affiliate peasant, small farmer, and family farm organization supporters of the FSM from all world regions (see Borras 2008; Desmarais 2007; Menser 2008; Nicholson 2008). The food sovereignty movement advocates the withdrawal of agriculture from the WTO regime. In the view of movement adherents, the WTO regime has seriously undermined food production capabilities; jeopardized access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food; altered agroecological systems in environmentally damaging ways; depopulated the countryside; and threatened cultural heritages tied to local cuisines and rural lifeworlds in many world regions. The position of LVC is that reform of the WTO agricultural regime is insufficient to deal with these negative regime impacts; the withdrawal of agriculture from the WTO governance system is required.

We employ a case study of Korean LVC members to explore how transnational movement goals are translated into policy action in a national agrifood policy domain. Analysis of the "interconnectivity" of transnational and national social movements (Borras 2008; Borras et al. 2008) is especially salient in the LVC/FSM case, as governance of the WTO regime resides, at least formally, among member states. Since transnational social movement organizations (SMOs) like LVC have no institutionalized access to the WTO regime, regime change may depend on how effectively national LVC affiliates

---

L. L. Burmeister (✉)  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Ohio University,  
Athens, OH, USA  
e-mail: burmeister@ohio.edu

Y.-J. Choi  
Nonghyup Economic Research Institute (NHRI), National  
Agricultural Cooperative Federation, Seoul, South Korea

orchestrate political contestation of the terms on which national governments engage the WTO governance system. As Smith (2005) elaborates, an important dimension of globalization dynamics is the increase in the policymaking roles and authority of supranational governance regimes and the concomitant expansion of SMO fields of political action to transnational policy space in order to deal with this reality. As Sikkink (2005) notes, this poses organizational challenges for SMOs, as much transnational SMO policy action tends to privilege problem recognition and agenda setting through international educational outreach strategies, while domestic initiatives to effect policy change often depend on grassroots organizing and movement building strategies. The capability of LVC affiliate SMOs to make these “scale shifts” (Tarrow and McAdam 2005) in policy action across transnational and national policy spaces will help determine FSM policy impact.

South Korea (hereafter Korea) provides an interesting case study for an exploration of the policy impact of national level LVC affiliate organizations. Throughout Korea’s turbulent twentieth century history, episodic peasant social movement uprisings challenged oppressive socioeconomic conditions in the countryside (see Abelmann 1996). As heirs of earlier movement protests, dissident Korean peasant/farmer organizations participated in the broad civil society democratization coalition that brought an end to authoritarian rule in 1987. Current Korean organizational affiliates of the LVC, the Korean Peasant League (KPL) and the Korean Women Peasants Association (KWPA), are the product of dissident peasant/farmer group participation in the democratization struggle. These Korean LVC affiliates have continued to protest government actions that they perceive to be harmful to farmers’ and rural peoples’ interests, especially agricultural market opening agreements conditioned by Korea’s membership in the WTO and the government’s recent promotion of bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs). In the most recent high profile protest episode, Korean LVC affiliates participated in the July, 2008 candlelight mass street demonstrations against the reopening of the beef market to US imports, an important provision in the yet-to-be-ratified Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA).

### **The democratic deficit and the rise of the food sovereignty movement**

La Via Campesina was formed in 1993 during the last stages of the Uruguay Round GATT negotiations that created the WTO. A key provision that sealed the UR agreement was the Agreement on Agriculture that imposed neoliberal agricultural trade disciplines on WTO signatories. The WTO usurpation of the traditional agrifood

governance authority of national states threatened the livelihoods of farmers and the economic viability of rural regions in many countries that had to open markets to aggressive transnational agroexport companies that were often heavily subsidized by their “home” governments. The lack of transparency of closed-door UR/WTO decision-making, hence the democratic deficit appellation, resulted in the emergence of the anti-WTO food sovereignty movement under the LVC banner.

Looking at the current global political economy picture, this seems a propitious moment for the transnational FSM campaign. The neoliberal model of development is being challenged more seriously in the wake of the recent global financial meltdown, a continued threat of worldwide recession, and large-scale state economic interventions. The recent surge in world commodity prices (Piesse and Thirtle 2009; Rosset 2008) has frightened policymakers in agrifood importing countries, stimulating discussions about a return to food self-sufficiency policies. And the stalled Doha Round of WTO trade negotiations remains deadlocked, at least in part, over agricultural trade issues creating more political space for contestation of the current WTO agricultural regime.

But perhaps even more unsettling than the current world economic crisis and its policy ramifications are growing concerns about the ecological sustainability of a fossil fuel intensive global agrifood system (McMichael 2008a; Smolker 2008). A combination of energy scarcity; water shortage; biodiversity; soil, water, and air pollution; and global climate change problems are increasingly viewed as costs that offset claimed productivity benefits of a globalized agrifood system based upon fossil fuel intensive monoculture cropping and confined animal production systems.

Health and food safety critiques of the global supermarket model are also mounting. Global diets based on increasing meat and processed food consumption are cited as sources of a growing worldwide obesity epidemic. Concentration within agrifood supply chains is argued to increase the risks of widespread food-borne illness outbreaks. And the routine use of antibiotics as disease prevention measures in confined animal production systems poses worrisome public health risks.

Certainly the food sovereignty movement, as articulated in La Via Campesina’s vision for an alternative agrifood system (Desmarais 2007; Patel 2008), addresses all the above agrifood system crises that critics attribute to the transnational corporate agrifood system. In addition, social justice questions regarding the plight of peasants, small farmers, family farmers, and the rural communities they inhabit, nurture, and sustain are added to the “technical” problems created by global agribusiness under neoliberal trade disciplines. FSM adherents champion a fundamental

shift in agrifood system structure toward a decentralized, democratized, environmentally-friendly, socially just alternative. As McMichael (2008b) argues, LVC has forcefully challenged the epistemological and ontological foundations of the increasingly globalized agrifood system in transnational policy space.

### The Korean context for FSM policy action

By the 1970s, it was apparent that Korea's relatively homogeneous minifarm agricultural sector was not competitive in international commodity markets. A densely populated, land-scarce countryside and the post-World War II land reform produced a farm structure of millions of owner-operated small farms (presently, the average operational farm size is just 1.45 ha [ERS-USDA 2009] in spite of two decades of government agricultural restructuring efforts). In order to maintain politically acceptable farm household income levels and to achieve a modicum of domestic food security, the Park Chung Hee regime (1961–1979) enacted protectionist policy measures, with particular focus on maintaining self-sufficiency in the country's staple foodgrain, rice. From the start of the rice self-sufficiency campaign in the early 1970s to conclusion of Uruguay Round trade talks in 1993 that resulted in the creation of the WTO, rice and other strategic commodities such as domestically produced fruits, vegetables, and livestock products were protected either through price supports, very high tariffs, and/or quantitative import restrictions. Following the signing of the WTO accords, Korea faced increasing pressures from the WTO and bilateral trading partners to open these agricultural markets. This has been a long, protracted process, with the last bastion of domestic food self-sufficiency, the rice market, scheduled for complete opening in 2014.

With the resumption of competitive electoral politics in 1987, farm household economic hardships caused by either threatened or real import competition became volatile political issues that had to be addressed periodically in presidential and National Assembly election campaigns. Trade negotiations were a flashpoint for combustible Korean farm politics. The government's response was to engage in brinkmanship negotiating stances against WTO and bilateral agricultural trade liberalization demands before caving in at the last hour. The macroeconomics of trade liberalization on other sectoral fronts that became increasingly critical for Korean economic prosperity made it increasingly difficult for the Korean government to challenge WTO agricultural trade liberalization initiatives that caused hardship for a declining (in relative sectoral terms) rural/agricultural sector. Farm politics continued to be volatile, as market openings in one commodity after

another threatened farm household incomes and local economies in agriculturally-dependent regions. In an attempt to address this nagging political problem through the WTO regime, Korea and other food importers tried to modify, without success, the WTO agricultural trade disciplines to incorporate a Non-Trade Concern (NTC) exemption for some strategic agricultural commodities in order to provide a modicum of domestic food security and to achieve a degree of socioeconomic stabilization for their threatened rural/agricultural sectors.

Given the threats of continued rural/agricultural sector displacement due to agricultural trade liberalization, the more worrisome global food security picture, and the failure of Korea and other major food import allies to secure NTC provisions within the WTO for strategic agricultural commodities, Korea seems to be fertile ground for the LVC/FSM agenda. Recent public opinion polls show continued citizen support for maintaining a viable agricultural/rural sector (Lee and Lee 2009). Yet the current conservative Lee Myung-bak government is less inclined to WTO challenges, such as the NTC initiative, than its more populist predecessors (the Kim Dae Jung [1997–2002] and Roh Moo-Hyun [2002–2007] administrations). Lee's election in 2007 has been attributed, at least in part, to his promises to improve the Korean economy. He is perceived to be aligned with major Korean corporate (*chaebol*) interests that favor increased market openings for their exports. Trade liberalization initiatives, especially the KORUS FTA, are major elements of his economic growth policy agenda. His administration is less likely than his populist predecessors to pursue food security/agricultural sector viability arguments to slow down agricultural market opening measures in WTO and bilateral trade negotiations.

### Profiling the Korean LVC affiliates within a developing civil society

In order to analyze Korean LVC affiliate political and policy action in the current domestic political environment, we situate these organizations within the developing civil society that has emerged in the post-1987 democratization period (Kim 2009, 2000c). The Korean LVC affiliates are direct offshoots of the democracy movement coalition (Abelmann 1996; Lee 2007) that coordinated mass citizen anti-government protests in the mid-1980s that culminated in the June 1987 democracy declaration, effectively ending three decades of military dictatorship. A dissident farmer movement began to stir in the 1970s in response to Park Chung Hee's draconian Yushin constitution that greatly increased authoritarian state power (see Abelmann 1996 for a concise summary of this movement history). By the

1980s, local farm activist organizations, often emerging as responses to location-specific grievances about government agricultural policies, began to coalesce into national farm movement coalitions that opposed the ruling Chun Doo-Hwan regime (1980–1987) on a broad range of democratization, social welfare, and reunification issues. The national farm movement aligned with activists in other societal sectors—student, labor, and religious groups in particular—to forge a broad-based democratization movement for regime change. One of our LVC affiliate protagonists, the Korean Peasant League (KPL [*chonguk nongmin hoe* or *chonnonng* in Korean]), a national union of regional and local farmers' groups, traces its origin to farmer/peasant group participation in the democracy movement coalition. As part of the coalition process, a national farmers' committee was formed to coordinate that societal sector's participation in democracy movement mobilization efforts. This coordination resulted in the founding of the KPL in 1989.

The KPL predecessor farm movement organizations and their democracy movement allies framed their regime challenge in *minjung* (translated as masses or common people) political-ideological terms. While the historical and cultural foundations of *minjung* ideas are quite complex with a mix of nationalist, anti-American, pro-unification, and socialist threads (see Abelmann 1996 and Lee 2007 for exemplary treatments), one fundamental tenet of *minjung* ideology framed the democratization struggle as a campaign to end exploitation of the masses, namely farmers and workers, whose labor underwrote the authoritarian regime's forced-march development project (Hart-Landsberg 1993). Peasants/farmers, in particular, were seen as authentic bearers of true Korean culture and, as a result, held a privileged position within *minjung* ideology.

From its inception, the KPL became involved in domestic and international struggles over policy issues privileged in the food sovereignty movement. On the domestic front, the KPL has led protests against Korean government policies that it feared threatened the rural/agricultural sector, in particular Korean government agricultural policy accommodations to multilateral and bilateral neoliberal trade agreements that threatened protectionist agricultural subsidies and import barriers. For example, in the fall of 1990 the KPL organized the first nationwide rally to protest the Korean government's participation in the Uruguay Round negotiations on agricultural trade liberalization, fearing the government would agree to terms that would harm farmers' economic interests. Following the 1995 World Food Summit, the KPL, in concert with other national farm organizations, developed food security concepts tied to sustaining the domestic production system. A major initiative was to join an

international campaign to broaden UNESCO's International Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Contents to incorporate food and agriculture as protected cultural diversity assets to legitimate removal of agriculture from WTO trade liberalization disciplines. In 2003, the KPL organized a general strike in protest against the National Assembly's ratification of the Korea-Chile Free Trade Agreement. This agreement opened the market to Chilean fruit imports, threatening domestic producers. An impressive convoy of 19,000 vehicles loaded with farm machinery was mobilized to block traffic in Seoul as part of the general strike activity. In the course of these protest and policy advocacy activities, the KPL justified its actions by adherence to major LVC food sovereignty movement tenets.

The other Korean organizational affiliate of the LVC is the Korean Women Peasants Association (*chonguk yeos-eong nongmin hoe* in Korean) (KWPA). Women activists, who played important roles in the peasant social movement during the 1980s, decided that rural women needed an independent voice to press for action on a host of gender rights issues in Korean rural society (interview with KWPA Policy Director, July 10, 2010). The literature on gender issues in the Korean democracy movement era (see Lee 2007 and Abelmann 1996) reveals tensions over traditional patriarchal patterns of authority that were often reproduced within movement organizations. However, public airing of these issues within the movement was often muted, as women activists were reluctant to push a distinctive women's agenda during the protracted struggle to overturn the authoritarian regime (interview with KWPA Policy Director, July 10, 2010). The emergent democratic regime provided political space for sustained attention to rural women's issues.

As an LVC affiliate, the KWPA is committed to LVC's ongoing efforts to incorporate gender equity as a core value and policy priority within the food sovereignty movement (Desmarais 2007: Ch. 6). The KWPA has participated, in coordination with the KPL, in many international and domestic protest activities that target the WTO system and bilateral agricultural trade initiatives that are perceived as threatening to Korean agriculture. KWPA is an active LVC partner in the coalition's transnational campaigns, such as the international seed saving initiative to preserve indigenous germplasm and to prevent multinational corporate control of genetic resources. KWPA participation affirms that Korean women farmers, like their compatriots in other countries, are pivotal actors in the construction of the FSM alternative to the globalizing corporate agrifood system.

Perhaps the most dramatic event that garnered worldwide attention for Korea's LVC affiliates was the suicide of KPL leader Lee Kyung Hae at the Fifth Ministerial of the WTO at Cancun in the summer of 2003. Lee's action,

according to his suicide statement, signified the role of the WTO in the “killing” of peasants and farmers in Korea and elsewhere. Such dramatic actions to bring public attention to grievous social wrongs perpetrated upon the powerless are part of Korea’s social movement legacy, with the self-immolation of labor activist Chun Tae-il in 1970 that marked the beginning of the labor movement as the most striking example (Kim 2008). Lee’s suicide certainly enhanced the KPL profile in transnational LVC policy space. The LVC celebrates the anniversary of Lee’s ultimate movement sacrifice annually, providing rich symbolic opportunities to reaffirm FSM commitments to anti-WTO actions.

In the wake of the 1987 democracy declaration that opened the Korean political system, *minjung* SMOs faced dramatic changes in their organizational fields of action, with a proliferation of new citizen (*simin* in Korean) social movement and public interest organizations (Kim 2009). These organizations formed to voice reformist advocacy on a range of issues of concern to their largely middle-class membership base. Among the most important representatives are the Citizens for Economic Justice (CCEJ), the People’s Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD), and the Korean Federation of Environmental Movements (KFEM). Their political strategy has been to enter into routine political deliberations with state officials to exercise interest group or public advocacy influence on government policies. They have tended to be less confrontational vis-a-vis the state in their political strategy than *minjung*-oriented groups, although they have engaged in aggressive actions such as the campaign to blacklist “corrupt, unsavory” National Assembly candidates in the 2000 elections, and they have also participated in mass mobilizations against government policies such as the aforementioned anti-government beef import protest. These civil society organizations have addressed high profile corporate governance, clean government, environmental, and national security law reform issues among others, with some success (Kim 2009: 876).

The access of *simin* organizations to policymaking venues is facilitated by the middle- and upper-middle class membership bases of these organizations. Their leadership cadres, in particular, are drawn from professional and academic circles. As a result, leaders are likely to have social networks, based upon elite school ties and professional credentials, that include state bureaucrats. In a polity where administrative policy initiatives still overshadow policy initiatives from legislative or other political society channels, access to state policymaking venues such as policy commissions, public hearings, and research and consulting for government ministries favors *simin* over *minjung* organizations that may lack this social capital.

A vigorous debate has emerged within Korean intellectual circles about the relative efficacy of civil society organizations with *simin* or *minjung* roots (Kim 2004, 2000a; Kim et al. 2008). The latter organizations, it is argued, have remained oppositional in their approaches to dealing with democratically elected governments in the post-1987 polity. They regard the post-democracy era regimes as a problematic procedural democratic compromise with a still extant state-big business power bloc that ruled during the authoritarian era. While the new procedural democratic processes provide citizens with opportunities to exercise voice in ways that were foreclosed by the earlier military dictatorship, the *minjung*-rooted groups have continued to emphasize mass mobilization political action to achieve substantive democracy through the incorporation of the relatively powerless societal sectors (farmers, labor, etc.) into the political and economic life of the nation. Some argue that this anti-state gravitas impedes *minjung* organization effectiveness in this new political environment that privileges the *simin* reformist, working within the system approach. Observations by prominent analysts of *minjung* SMO activities in the 1980s (Abelmann 1997; Lewis 2002) noted a general weariness with the disruptive (both collective and individual) dimensions of protest politics. And the political currency of *minjung* ideas waned as the counterhegemonic power of *minjung* ideology was blunted by domestic democratic reforms and the collapse of socialism internationally, and the “new social movement” issues associated with the growth of a capitalist consumer culture replaced class-based social welfare concerns in public consciousness. Furthermore, the *minjung* ideology focus on reunification makes it easy for the state and conservative groups to question the normative legitimacy of *minjung*-oriented groups in Korean political and civic life. After all, the ideology of the authoritarian regime, a strident anti-communism that treated any unauthorized civil society contacts with North Korea as treason, remains influential in Korean political culture. Hence, ongoing *minjung* organization efforts to promote reunification through autonomous civil society initiatives has tended to marginalize them as radical or pro-communist fringe actors, making invitation to formal policymaking venues less likely.

At first glance, a recent KPL policy document implies that *minjung* organizational adaptation problems remain. In a recent statement by their Policy Director entitled “Thesis on the Concept of Food Sovereignty and a Framework for Its Realization” (J. Choi n.d.), no mention is made of how FSM initiatives might be shepherded through regular policymaking channels. Rather, emphasis is placed on the development of a nebulous “People’s Agricultural Network.” The implication is that mass movement action outside routinized political channels, similar to what



happened in the anti-government democracy movement, is the KPL political strategy. Yet, in the next section, we explore KPL and KWPA policy action that suggests more robust adaptations to the current political opportunity structure in their efforts to further the FSM agenda. In light of their social movement identities as LVC/FSM affiliates and their pre-LVC SMO histories, a strategic adaptation perspective (Wong 2005) derived from social movement theory is used to analyze KPL/KWPA policy action, with attention directed to interrelated political opportunity structure, organizational field, and framing variables that tap both the external environment and internal organizational dimensions of KPL/KWPA policy action in the Korean agrifood policy domain. Recent analyses of adaptive SMO responses to fluid democratization processes in post-authoritarian polities have been especially suggestive in terms of how to think about recent KPL and KWPA policy action (Coe 2009; Wong 2005).

### **KPL and KWPA policy action in multilevel policy space**

To facilitate analysis of KPL and KWPA policy advocacy, we note the utility of Sikkink's (2005) two-level political opportunity structure framework to assess the political conditions SMOs face in interactive transnational and domestic policy spaces. SMOs like the KPL and KWPA, organizations that inhabit both policy spaces, face relatively open or closed opportunities that condition political/policy action possibilities in both spaces. In the trade policy arena, the LVC confronts a very closed transnational policy environment when dealing with the WTO. Actors from an emergent transnational civil society have no status within WTO decision-making circles. This exclusionary political opportunity structure means that external disruption of WTO ministerials and other official meetings is the only way the LVC has to confront the WTO with their demands. The Korean LVC affiliates are primed for this social movement activist role, as they entered the LVC coalition with several years of organizational practice in orchestrating social disruption and civil disobedience to bring democracy movement claims to the attention of the closed authoritarian political regime of Chun Doo Hwan and the general public. Their expertise has been on prominent display in the disruptive events at the WTO ministerials in Hong Kong and Cancun that brought LVC/FSM challenges to WTO governance to the world stage. The Korean LVC affiliates are recognized as one of the most effective national contingents in terms of their strategic planning and mobilization tactics skills. Within the transnational policy space in which LVC advocacy plays out, the KPL and KWPA are invaluable affiliates.

Accordingly, their organizational status within the LVC is high, as shown by the LVC leadership roles assumed by the Korean LVC affiliate members.

As noted in the last section, the political opportunity structure has changed for the KPL and KWPA in post-1987 Korean domestic policy space. In the more open domestic political environment, opportunities arise for more routinized policy action if the KPL and KWPA can find ways to gain entry into the agrifood policy network. This poses interesting organizational questions for the KPL and KWPA. Can they develop a balanced, adaptive policy action strategy that moves back and forth between transnational and domestic policy spaces in ways that are effective at the national policymaking level? This question drives the following analyses of KPL and KWPA agrifood policy initiatives.

As a result of political liberalization, new policy players have emerged in political society as well as in civil society. Perhaps the most successful KPL/KWPA policy action has occurred in the wake of the previously mentioned U.S. beef import controversy. The catalyst for this controversy was the discovery of BSE ("mad cow" disease) in a Washington state feedlot in 2003 that prompted the Korean government to close its domestic market to U.S. beef imports. In early 2008, the Lee Myung-bak government decided to reopen the market to U.S. beef, a point of heated contention for the U.S. during negotiations to finalize the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement. A wide array of civil society organizations denounced the government's decision to reopen the market, claiming that adequate safeguards in the food safety and inspection regime were not in place to guard against purported BSE contamination risks of imported U.S. beef and charging that the government was abdicating its "quarantine sovereignty" rights to protect the nation's food supply. Initial political action on this issue consisted of mass street demonstrations against U.S. beef imports organized by a broad umbrella coalition of civil society groups, with the KPL and KWPA as important coalition members. This mass mobilization campaign harks back to the confrontational strategy that characterized the democracy movement initiative in the 1980s in which dissident farmers' groups, forerunners of the KPL and KWPA, were heavily involved. But the KPL and the KWPA then moved the issue from political confrontation to routinized policy action through an alliance with the Democratic Labor Party (DLP), a new actor in political society. The DLP, founded in 2000, aims to construct a political alliance of "workers, peasantry, urban poor, small businessmen, students and progressive intellectuals" (DLP, n.d.) to further a progressive political agenda. DLP ideological proclivities coincide with the *minjung* orientation of the KPL and KWPA, facilitating an alliance with this particular political society partner. Although still a small

minority presence in the National Assembly, the DLP has representation in National Assembly committees, allowing its representatives to bring legislation to the floor. As agricultural policy advisors to the DLP, the KPL and KWPA provide the party with sectoral expertise that can be used to work agrifood policy issues in the legislative arena. As a result of this policy collaboration, the KPL/KWPA/DLP alliance has been able to put several food sovereignty issues on the legislative docket.

According to DLP sources (interview with DLP legislative staff, July 3, 2009), the KPL/KWPA/DLP alliance had “some” success in prodding the government to enact stricter food safety protocols that limited U.S. beef imports to animals under 30 months of age (see Jurenas and Manyin 2010 for more details). These animals are deemed less likely BSE risks than older cattle. In this case the KPL and KWPA have found an LVC/FSM agrifood policy issue, i.e., quarantine sovereignty, that resonates widely in Korean political culture. Several prominent food safety scares have been associated with American imports that have followed aggressive American marketing opening campaigns, similar to what has happened during the course of the KORUS FTA negotiations. Furthermore, Korean-American trade confrontations, among other contentious issues such as those stemming from the American military presence, have stoked a rise in anti-Americanism (Jhee 2008; Lee 2005) that helped fuel the beef import protest. A further factor in the food safety regulation policy “success” is that within the ministry that has regulatory authority over food imports, the MiFAFF (the renamed Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries; formerly the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries [MAF]), it is likely that policy initiatives that strengthened its food safety and import regulatory capacity were looked upon favorably. After all, the recent renaming of the ministry suggests new priorities placed upon food consumption issues in a ministry that historically was production-oriented. As Korean agriculture continues to contract and government intervention in production agriculture decreases, new governance tasks need to be found to sustain the agrobureaucracy. In summary, this is a case where a KPL/KWPA policy initiative that coincides with food sovereignty tenets gained domestic political traction because of the cultural resonance of the issue, was worked through routinized policy channels as a result of an alliance with a political party whose elected representatives could initiate legislative action, and found a relatively receptive state response (at least that part of the state that governs the agrifood sector).

In assessing the effectiveness of potential policy allies, Amenta (2005) emphasizes how state officials are often key actors in the fate of policy initiatives from civil society actors, as they are in the structural positions to advance or

block policy initiatives based upon whether or not they coincide with state officials’ administrative agendas and/or ideological predispositions. This point regarding policy action is especially salient in the Korean case, where policymaking is still more of an administrative than a legislatively orchestrated process. The KWPA has had some success in putting women’s issues on the policy radar using state channels. During the 1990s, KWPA officials lobbied the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) to establish a separate women’s policy department within the ministry. According to KWPA sources (interview with the KWPA Policy Director, July 10, 2010), their lobbying efforts were instrumental in accomplishing this goal with ministry establishment of the department in 1998. Given the increasing international and domestic profiles of the women’s movement during this period and the corresponding need for the Korean government to show a progressive face on women’s issues to both audiences, this is another case where Korean LVC/FSM affiliate policy initiatives found a receptive audience within the state bureaucracy. One concrete policy outcome of the institutionalization of women’s issues within the MAF was a provision within the Basic Law on Agriculture that mandated similar policy representation for women within provincial and county government units.

As argued by Kimura and Nishiyama (2008), effective transnational SMO engagement in national agrifood policy domains often requires national affiliates to cultivate important allies in civil society who share FSM assessments of agrifood system problems and have similar ideas about policy solutions. In the Korean case, both intra-sectoral and cross-sectoral alliances offer possibilities for mobilizing policy action. Yet, as noted by Borras et al. (2008), the literature on transnational agrarian movements often fails to analyze the complicated class, production system, and/or political ideology differences within rural/agricultural sectors. Cross-sectoral alliances are at least as complicated in this regard.

Although the Korean minifarm sector remains relatively homogeneous in cross-national comparative perspective, increasing farm differentiation has occurred in response to state programs aimed at rationalizing production agriculture to achieve greater economies of scale (Kim and Kang 2006). Farmers judged to be in a better position to expand the scale of their farm operations have been favored in recent subsidy allocations. These farmers have organized into groups such as the Advanced Korean Farmers’ Association (*han nong*). Although the KPL seeks alliances with *han nong* and other farm interest groups in particular policy campaigns and alliances have been successfully mobilized on issues such as rice market opening (Lee and Lee 2009), such farm size- or commodity-specific organizations, the result of an increasingly differentiated agricultural sector,

may provide intra-sectoral opposition to core elements of the KPL/KWPA/LVC policy agenda. For example, greater emphasis on supporting small farmers, a key LVC/FSM policy position, threatens the interests of *han nong* members who are selectively favored in current subsidy allocations because they are identified by state officials as having the resources to restructure their farm enterprises into larger, more competitive units.

There are also action strategy differences within the alternative agriculture movement in Korea that may limit national level food sovereignty mobilization potential in line with KPL/KWPA/LVC goals. Abelmann's (1996) analysis of 1980s peasant social movement activism highlights the historical role of the Catholic Farmers Union (CFU or *katollik nongminhoe*) as a major agrarian protagonist in dissident mobilization campaigns in the 1970s and 1980s against the military dictatorship. At present, the CFU is engaged in promoting local level agrifood system development as a bottom-up strategy to enhance domestic food production and reinvigorate small farm enterprises. Increasing consumer interest in food safety, healthy eating, and environmentally-friendly farming practices has spurred CFU promotion of organic farming and direct farmer-to-consumer marketing farm enterprise strategies that prioritize practical farm-level adaptation over national anti-government political action as the path to a revitalized Korean agrifood system. As mentioned earlier, this indicates how *minjung* national mobilization strategies against government policies may be waning in influence, as some farm groups have decided that grassroots local action may be a better strategy in response to globalization of the Korean agrifood system.

As for cross-sectoral civil society alliance possibilities, many social movement theorists note that social identities based upon consumption and other lifestyle choices, rather than on class or ethnic status, are the positional loci for participation in many contemporary social movements. The possibilities for capitalist consumer social identity formation are especially strong in Korean society due to rapid increases in national income, producing a sizeable middle- and upper-middle class stratum. Citing these socioeconomic trends, S. Kim observed, "From the mid-1980s, various types of consumer cooperatives, such as the *Hansalim Kongdongche*, *Saenghyup Undong*, and *Urimilsaligi* movements, have emerged in a quest to build a 'prosumer' (producer + consumer) community" (Kim 2000c: 77). The profile of the participants in the 2008 U.S. beef import protests, with heavy participation reported for urban women and students, suggests potential for FSM alliances between producers and consumers around food safety and food quality issues.

The KWPA's kitchen garden (*toet bat*) (KWPA 2010) initiative is an attempt to build such a prosumer alliance.

The focus is on the promotion of the direct marketing of regional, seasonal specialty crops produced by women farmers. Promoted crops are traditional varieties of vegetables and fruit, as well as traditional processed foods such as tofu and red pepper paste that are widely recognized in Korean food culture as "healthy" foods. The campaign emphasizes the dangers of losing components of traditional healthy Korean cuisine with the onslaught of unhealthy imported foods. This theme has a familiar ring, as it harks back to earlier promotional campaigns by both SMOs and the government to try to dampen the economic impact of agricultural market opening measures since the conclusion of the Uruguay Round. In addition, a connection is made with the KWPA/LVC international seed saving initiative, as consumption of these regional specialty foods, produced with traditional crop varieties, saves indigenous germplasm. A final explicit theme focuses on how women farmers, together with urban housewives, can reconnect rural areas with urban areas in a mutually beneficial relationship that simultaneously supports Korean agriculture and more healthy food consumption practices. As in many other non-western countries, increasing concerns with obesity linked to changes in food consumption practices that mimic western diets gives this campaign a modicum of consumer culture resonance.

In terms of the broader FSM agrifood system transformation agenda, alliance activity between well-established Korean environmental organizations that challenge the agroecological fundamentals of the global agrifood system has not emerged. While the LVC's model of ecologically sound agricultural production systems (see Menser 2008: 33–35) seems to mesh with the goals of the environmental movement, our KPL informants describe an alliance with environmental groups as nonexistent at present. The Korean LVC affiliates have not been able to develop a working relationship with environmental groups that focus on the agroecological footprints of *how* food is produced. The Korean environmental movement remains preoccupied with higher profile nuclear waste and "natural area" environmental degradation issues, issues that resonate with their urban-based, middle- and upper-middle class membership. In this instance, the class membership base differences between the KPL and KWPA and *simin* environmental organizations may present barriers to alliance building.

In summarizing KLP/KWPA policy action on LVC/FSM issues, there is evidence of ongoing attempts to broaden strategies from anti-governmental mass demonstration tactics to alliances with other actors that have routinized access to policymaking venues. So, contrary to pessimistic appraisals of *minjung*-oriented civil society actors' ability to adapt to changes in the domestic policy environment, there is evidence of organizational learning



on the part of the KPL and KWPA. Interesting questions remain, however, about the organizational capacities of the KPL and KWPA to achieve a balance of policy action strategies that combine educational outreach activities that focus public attention on issues, the type of political action associated with transnational SMOs, with nuts-and-bolts grassroots organizing that is needed to bring issues into national level policymaking venues where policy agendas are set, decisions are made about policy options, and implementation of policy occurs.

The KWPA, in particular, seems to reflect the “leaders without members” syndrome that plagues many Korean civil society organizations (Kim 2009). While KWPA leaders are effective in educational outreach activities in transnational policy space and are able to play the same role domestically, as evidenced by their campaign to teach urban and suburban women about the benefits of consuming traditional foods, whether they are able to orchestrate grassroots mobilization among the rather invisible farm women base to effect policy action at local, regional, and/or national levels is uncertain. KWPA leaders are, in fact, playing prominent roles within LVC. The extent to which this role is more rewarding to the leadership (in terms of social prestige, professional relationships, future career opportunities, organizational resource acquisition, etc.) and deflects organizational focus away from grassroots activities that energize action in domestic policy space is an organizational problem that faces all SMOs that are active in both transnational and domestic policy space. The educational backgrounds and life experiences of KWPA leaders seem removed from their membership base, exacerbating the “leaders without members” syndrome.

Organizationally, the KPL leadership seems more organically linked to the membership base, as leaders have emerged from grassroots campaigns over the course of at least three decades. But, as mentioned earlier, their membership may be less connected to official ministry policy channels than key *han nong* leaders who have been favored in government farm restructuring schemes. Added to this disadvantage is the aforementioned normative legitimacy problem for the KPL vis-à-vis other farm organizations in the agrifood organizational field. This stems primarily from their *minjung* history as an anti-government organization which may limit their representation in official policy deliberation councils and may also reflect their reluctance to compromise their political stance vis-à-vis the state and coopted civil society organizations. This is a familiar challenge to all SMOs, as decisions must be made in the course of movement history about how to engage the “powers that be” to achieve movement goals.

The issue of state cooptation of civil society during the course of the post-1987 democratization process has generated considerable controversy given the efforts of the

Korean state to steer civil society development (Kim 2009, 2000c; Kim et al. 2008). Not unexpectedly, given the legacy of state corporatism in the authoritarian period, the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs established an NGO Cooperation Division within the ministry to provide financial support to fledgling civil society organizations. As a result, civil society development has been critiqued by both ends of the political spectrum. Progressives have lamented the cooptive emasculation of civil society by the state; conservatives have complained that the state is funding “radical” civil society organization activities that are often illegal, such as the aforementioned 2000 NGO “blacklisting” campaign against allegedly corrupt and compromised (supporters of the previous authoritarian regime) politicians. Recently, prominent civil society organizations have come under fire for a range of alleged financial mismanagement and corruption practices, leading to a considerable decline in the general public’s perception of their institutional credibility (Kim 2009). Even though both the KPL and KWPA have long histories of participation in anti-government campaigns, they, too, have received financial support from the government. The KWPA and KPL, for instance, have received support from quasi-governmental organizations like the Korea Rural Economics Institute and the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation for several LVC/KWPA/KPL joint international symposia in Korea on FSM agenda topics. Interesting questions revolve around the impact this support has on KWPA/KPL domestic policy work and organizational capacity building. These questions are now being asked across the Korean civil society organizational spectrum.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we reflect on two different views about transnational SMO efforts to “scale down” their campaigns to national level policy action through their national affiliate organizations. Tarrow (2005: 219) declares that the transnational activism of such networks as LVC “will have its most visible impact on domestic politics.” McMichael (2008b), on the other hand, while lauding LVC challenges to the epistemological and ontological foundations of the neoliberal corporate agribusiness project in transnational policy space, hesitates to predict its policy impact at the national level. What light does the South Korean case study shed on these suppositions?

The KPL and KWPA LVC affiliates have had the most success in the Korean agrifood policy arena when their policy initiatives are aligned with the preferences of state officials. As stated earlier, this is not surprising in the Korean context, where the policymaking process still

privileges administrative channels. However, in the case of the beef import issue, a mass mobilization of public opinion against the government's position was also instrumental in prodding state officials to tighten the beef import regulatory system, even though the Lee Myung-bak government sought to avoid such trade disputes to ensure quick ratification of the KORUS FTA. The "democracy of the street," the legacy of *minjung*-oriented political activism that the KPL and KWPA have deployed in both transnational (through LVC) and domestic policy space, remains potent in the Korean polity where weak connections between civil society, political society, and the state often fail to generate routinized policymaking responses to issues of widespread public concern.

If the KPL and the KWPA are to mount a broader FSM challenge to the terms of Korea's participation in/compliance with the WTO agricultural governance regime, they must enlist both intrasectoral and cross-sectoral civil society support as happened in the beef import protest episode. An interesting example of an opportunity to frame the LVC/FSM challenge to the WTO regime that might enlist such support is the KWPA's initiative within the LVC to shed light on the Korean government's behind-the-scenes food outsourcing moves. In 2007, Daewoo Logistics, a subsidiary of the Daewoo industrial conglomerate, negotiated with the government of Madagascar to lease a large tract of land to raise food for the Korean market. In effect, Daewoo's plan envisioned a corporate "outsourcing" solution to Korea's future food needs, a solution that is gaining currency among food deficit countries with resources to make investments in foreign agricultural land and overseas food production infrastructure (GRAIN Briefing 2008; *The Economist* 2009). While Daewoo's efforts were thwarted by domestic opposition in Madagascar that helped overthrow the government that negotiated the deal, the current Korean government continues to explore offshore food production solutions to global agrifood market insecurities (interview with KPL policy staff, July 3, 2009). This initiative is occurring simultaneously with ongoing government policy initiatives to restructure the Korean agricultural sector to be a competitive player in global agrifood markets.

From the LVC/FSM anti-WTO campaign perspective, it is hard to imagine a more effective policy foil than the recent food outsourcing initiatives of relatively rich countries such as Korea, China, Saudi Arabia, etc. In the Korean agrifood policy context, the Korean government's actual commitment to restructuring a competitive domestic agriculture is put into serious questions. How will Korea's small farm agriculture, with its high land and labor costs, compete against low-cost outsourcing competitors? Is this another case of the lack of Korean government agricultural policy follow-through, wherein high profile sectoral

adjustment programs, designed to placate (buy off) a restive rural/agricultural sector, are undercut by contradictory policy moves to enhance global integration of the Korean agrifood system? The threat of further displacement of the domestic agricultural sector by outsourcing would seem to be a unifying intrasectoral issue around which many farm and rural community organizations could coalesce.

Some of the same food quality and food safety concerns that catalyzed Korean consumers in the beef import protest episode are also at play in a food outsourcing scenario. Regulatory systems in many outsourcing production areas are likely to be weak. Cross-border regulatory protocols are always more complicated than monitoring domestic production. Will food quality and food safety regimes be turned over to agribusiness integrators of outsourced production, the same actors that LVC/FSM holds responsible for many of the world's agrifood system woes?

The environmental ramifications of the proposed Madagascar land deal should roil the transnational environmental movement and their Korean affiliates. The area scope (1.3 million ha) of the land lease was staggering in one of the most ecologically sensitive countries on earth. The potential threat of large-scale plantation agriculture schemes to the often unique, endangered flora and fauna of countries like Madagascar provides the environmental movement with poster-perfect ammunition for FSM environmental critiques of large-scale food outsourcing projects. The whole range of environmental issues targeted by the LVC alternative agrifood system argument—global climate change, biodiversity, water conservation, etc.—could be folded into an FSM-affirming, anti-food outsourcing discourse to bring environmental movement allies into a national FSM, anti-WTO coalition.

The food outsourcing issue reveals the challenges of moving issues from transnational to national policy space. LVC educational outreach, coupled with the efforts of other SMO and research groups working in transnational policy space, has shed light on a series of rather secretive government and private sector food outsourcing transactions (von Braun and Meinzen-Dick 2009). These transactions to supply food to relatively rich countries on terms they dictate raise many of the fundamental political control, environmental balance, and social justice critiques of the globalizing agrifood system that have motivated the FSM challenge. Yet in spite of all its FSM issue framing potential, it appears that the KWPA has not been able to "scale down" its educational outreach effectively from the transnational (LVC) to Korean domestic policy arena. During research visits to Korea in 2009 and 2010, one of the authors of this paper was astonished by the lack of public attention to the scuttled Daewoo-Madagascar land deal and the Korean government's promotion of other food outsourcing schemes to deal with import supply threats in

an increasingly unstable global agricultural commodity market. It is likely that the KWPA lacks the media connections of more prominent civil society organizations (Kim 2009; Kim and Hamilton 2006), but internal organizational capacity factors are also important mitigating factors in the “scale down” failure.

When thinking about the internal organizational capacity as an explanatory factor for KPL/KWPA policy efficacy, we note continued emphasis in the literature on Korean civil society development on the lack of strong membership bases in many civil society organizations. Organizational emphasis on grassroots projects that engage the membership base is one strategic way to address this weakness. The KWPA’s aforementioned kitchen gardens initiative is an example of attempts to grow an alternative agricultural producer-urban/suburban consumer network that challenges the global agrifood system by building regional and local alternatives. While our research did not focus on parallel KPL efforts, KPL members are presently involved in a variety of local/regional organic farming, direct marketing, and other producer value-added ventures. Many KPL members are also members of the CFU (Catholic Farmers Union), which is especially active in the promotion of grassroots alternative agricultural projects. An important challenge for the LVC and its national affiliates is foster local grassroot campaigns that make connections with larger policy issues in order to mount challenges from below to national agricultural policies that work against the FSM agenda. In the Korean case, food outsourcing threats to current local agrifood system development efforts would seem to be an effective policy connection that could put the FSM agenda on prominent display in the agrifood policy domain. The reinstitutionalization of local government autonomy in the mid-1990s—i.e., the election of county and provincial executives and legislative bodies—provides a more favorable opportunity structure for “scale shift” synergies between LVC and Korean LVC-affiliate policy action that build grassroots challenges to national policies.

Our analysis has not produced a definitive answer to the question of the “scale down” policy impact of transnational SMO action posed at the outset of this conclusion. Our case study of Korean LVC-affiliate policy action is an attempt to understand how fluid multilevel political opportunity structures interact with changing SMO organizational fields to shape FSM challenges to WTO-driven global agrifood system restructuring processes in national policy space. As implied in our analysis, policy success will depend on how national SMO affiliates deploy their resources, how their resources are enhanced through alliance-building and internal organizational adjustments, how they construct policy rationales from ideas that resonate with the wider cultural milieu in which policy action

occurs, and how they adapt to ever-changing transnational and domestic political environments. In the Korean case, where the institutionalization of a more responsive political system is still a work in progress, KPL/KWPA organizational learning will occur through sustained policy action that reveals new political opportunities (and constraints). One of the LVC’s most important functions will be to diffuse knowledge of effective policy action strategies in particular country cases throughout its affiliate network, enhancing LVC’s capacity to move the FSM agenda into national policy spaces. While this is a very preliminary study, we hope that it encourages others to explore the “scale shift” dynamics of SMOs working in the multilevel (transnational and domestic) agrifood policy arena in other country-specific or comparative contexts, and that it stimulates additional research on the complexities of the Korean case that we could only partially illuminate.

**Acknowledgments** The authors would like to acknowledge Stephen Scanlan and four anonymous reviewers for their helpful revision comments.

## References

- Abelmann, Nancy. 1997. Reorganizing and recapturing dissent in 1990s South Korea: The case of farmers. In *Between resistance and revolution: Cultural politics and social protest*, ed. Richard G. Fox, and Orin Starn, 250–276. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Abelmann, Nancy. 1996. *Echoes of the past, epics of dissent: A South Korean social movement*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Amenta, Edwin. 2005. Political contexts, challenger strategies, and mobilization: Explaining the impact of the Townsend plan. In *Routing the opposition: Social movements, public policy, and democracy*, ed. David S. Meyer, Valerie Jenness, and Helen Ingram, 29–64. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Borras, Saturnino M., Jr. 2008. La Via Campesina and its global campaign for agrarian reform. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 8(2 and 3): 258–289.
- Borras, Saturnino M., Jr., Marc Edelman, and Cristobal Kay. 2008. Transnational agrarian movements: Origins and politics, campaigns and impact. *Journal of Agrarian Change* 8 (2 and 3): 169–204.
- Choi, Jae-kwan. n.d. *Thesis on the concept of food sovereignty and a framework for its realization*. Seoul, Korea: Korea Peasants League.
- Coe, Anna-Britt. 2009. ‘Being in spaces where decisions are made’: Reproductive rights advocacy and policy influence in two regions of Peru. *Social Movement Studies* 8(4): 427–447.
- Desmarais, Annette Aurelie. 2007. *La Via Campesina: Globalization and the power of peasants*. Ann Arbor, MI: Pluto Press.
- DLP, n.d. *The Democratic Labor Party: An introduction*. Seoul, Korea: Democratic Labor Party.
- ERS-USDA. 2009. South Korea briefing room. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/view.aspx?Subject=CountriesRegions>. Accessed 21 Oct 2010.
- GRAIN Briefing. 2008. Seized! The 2008 land grab for food and financial security. <http://www.grain.org/go/landgrab>. Oct.

- Hart-Landsberg, Martin. 1993. *The rush to development: Economic change and political struggle in South Korea*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Jhee, Byong-Kuen. 2008. Anti-Americanism and electoral politics in Korea. *Political Science Quarterly* 123(2): 301–318.
- Jurenas, Remy and Mark E. Manyin. 2010. U.S.-South Korean beef dispute: Agreement and status. *CRS Report for Congress* (January 26, RL 34528). Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service.
- Kim, Euiyoung. 2009. The limits of NGO-government relations in South Korea. *Asian Survey* 49(5): 873–894.
- Kim, Eun-Gyoo and James W. Hamilton. 2006. Capitulation to capital? *OhmyNews* as alternative media. *Media, Culture and Society* 28(4): 541–560.
- Kim, Hyojoung. 2008. Micromobilization and suicide protest in South Korea, 1970–2004. *Social Research* 75(2): 543–578.
- Kim, Hyuk-Rae. 2004. Dilemmas in the making of civil society in Korean political reform. *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 34(1): 55–69.
- Kim, Hyuk-Rae. 2000a. The state and civil society in transition: The role of non-governmental organizations in South Korea. *The Pacific Review* 13(4): 595–613.
- Kim, Jeong-Ho, and Hye-Jung Kang. 2006. Structural change and bipolarization of Korean agriculture. *Journal of Rural Development* 29(4): 53–72.
- Kim, Seung-Kuk. 2000b. Changing lifestyles and consumption patterns of the South Korean middle class and new generations. In *Consumption in Asia: Lifestyles and identities*, ed. Chua Ben-Huat, 61–81. New York: Routledge.
- Kim, Sunhyuk. 2000c. *The politics of democratization in South Korea: The role of civil society*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Kim, Sunhyuk, Chonghee Ham, and Jiho Jang. 2008. State-society relations in South Korea after democratization: Is the strong state defunct? *Pacific Focus* 23(2): 252–270.
- Kimura, Aya Hirata, and Mima Nishiyama. 2008. The *Chisan-Chisho* movement: Japanese local food movement and its challenges. *Agriculture and Human Values* 25: 49–64.
- KWPA. 2010. *Our kitchen gardens (uri toet bat)*. Seoul: Korea Women's Peasant Association.
- Lee, Jeong, and Insung Lee Lee. 2009. Retaining the quota system in the South Korean rice market. *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 39(3): 440–462.
- Lee, Kang-ro. 2005. Critical analysis of Anti-Americanism in Korea. *Korea Focus* 13(2): 74–98.
- Lee, Namhee. 2007. *The making of Minjung: Democracy and the politics of representation in South Korea*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Lewis, Linda S. 2002. Commemorating Kwangju: The 5.18 movement and civil society at the millennium. In *Korean society: Civil society, democracy, and the state*, ed. Charles K. Armstrong, 165–186. New York: Routledge.
- McMichael, Philip. 2008a. The peasant as 'canary'? Not too early warning of global catastrophe. *Development* 51(4): 504–511.
- McMichael, Philip. 2008b. Peasants make their own history, but not just as they please ... *Journal of Agrarian Change* 8(2 and 3): 205–228.
- Menser, Michael. 2008. Transnational participatory democracy in action: The case of La Via Campesina. *Journal of Social Philosophy* 39(1): 20–41.
- Nicholson, Paul (in conversation with Isabelle Delforge). 2008. Via Campesina: Responding to the global systemic crisis. *Development* 51(4): 456–459.
- Patel, Raj. 2008. The unthinkable in pursuit of the eatable. *Development* 51(4): 442–449.
- Piesse, Jenifer, and Colin Thirtle. 2009. Three bubbles and a panic: An explanatory review of recent food commodity price events. *Food Policy* 34: 119–129.
- Rosset, Peter. 2008. Food sovereignty and the contemporary food crisis. *Development* 51(4): 460–463.
- Sikkink, Kathryn. 2005. Patterns of dynamic multilevel governance and the insider-outsider coalition. In *Transnational protest and global activism*, ed. Donatella della Porta, and Sidney Tarrow, 151–173. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
- Smith, Jackie. 2005. Globalization and transnational social movement organizations. In *Social movements and organization theory*, ed. Gerald F. Davis, W. Doug McAdam, Richard Scott, and Mayer N. Zald, 226–248. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Smolker, Rachel. 2008. The new bioeconomy and the future of agriculture. *Development* 51(4): 519–526.
- Tarrow, Sidney. 2005. *The new transnational activism*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tarrow, Sidney and Doug McAdam. 2005. Scale shift in transnational contention. In *Transnational protest and global activism*, eds. Donatella della Porta and Sidney Tarrow, 212–147. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
- The Economist. 2009. Buying farmland abroad: Outsourcing's third wave. *May* 23: 61–63.
- von Braun, Joachim and Ruth Meinzen-Dick. 2009. "Land Grabbing" by foreign investors in developing countries: Risks and opportunities. *IFPRI Policy Brief 13 (April)*. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.
- Wong, Joseph. 2005. Adapting to democracy: Societal mobilization and social policy in Taiwan and South Korea. *Studies in Comparative International Development* 40(3): 88–111.

### Author Biographies

**Larry L. Burmeister** has a Ph.D. in Development Sociology from Cornell University. He is currently Professor in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology at Ohio University. His research interests include globalization of the agrifood system, social movement responses to globalization, agrifood policy in the post-WTO era, and local-level rural development initiatives in South Korea.

**Yong-Ju Choi** has a M.A. in Sociology from the University of Kentucky. He is currently a research fellow in the Economic Research Institute at the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (South Korea). He continues to be involved in research on South Korean rural and agricultural development issues.