

**THE POTENTIALS OF NESTED MARKETS
FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT:
THE CASE OF HONGDONG, SOUTH KOREA**

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the evolution of nested markets in Hongdong Town, South Korea and their characteristics through a qualitative case study in order to open the opportunities to shape the nested markets so that they work well in regard to sustainable rural development. Specifically, this study is informed by an agro-ecological approach, and cross-disciplinary literatures in rural development, agrifood movement, and rural tourism. Data are collected via 58 in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and examination documentation. Thematic analysis yielded three significant themes that have been developed into three separate manuscripts. The first manuscript describes and analyzes the dynamics of nested markets identified in Hongdong by tracking their historical roots and changes. Four different types of nested markets are identified and their particular mechanisms are discussed. The second manuscript examines the empowerment and disempowerment factors in the different types of nested markets, focusing primarily upon the participant farmers' own experiences and interpretations. Democratic management, ideological struggle, participatory educations, and self-consciousness are underscored for a multi-dimensional approach to empowerment of small-scale farmers. The final manuscript examines the evolution of rural tourism in Hongdong, and its links to agricultural changes, and traditional small farm survival, as part of sustainable rural development. The study shows that rural tourism is neither a simple, business-oriented project nor a step-by-step process of tourism development. It emerges, together with other nested markets in responds to the negative effects of the neoliberalist agrifood market.

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

We cannot move toward a future we cannot imagine, and we cannot imagine a future we don't believe is possible. – Frances Moore Lappe (1990).

In today's economy, agricultural food products are treated as commercial commodities like any other non-food products. Crops and animals are increasingly produced on large factory-like farms. The intensive monoculture has led to growing needs for external inputs such as water, fossil energy, agrichemicals, farm machineries, institutional knowledge and outside capitals. Agricultural food products travel long distances from farms to the dining table, frequently transcending national borders. The World Trade Organization (WTO)'s multilateral trading system has facilitated rapid growth of multinational corporations in all phases of agricultural food markets.

The development of industrialized agriculture and the neoliberal market infrastructure described above have been considered the most efficient rural development strategy in order to feed a growing world population while reducing rural poverty. This approach has been extensively implemented into diverse agricultural and rural development projects throughout the world since the last century. Yet, it has actually had the opposite effect. Despite a moral imperative to “feed the world,” in practice, recently the poor have experienced one of the worst food crises in recent decades as shown in Mexico and Egypt. At present, 870 million people worldwide do not get enough to eat (FAO, 2010). Among children under 5 years old in the developing world, an estimated one third – 195 million children – are stunted, whereas 129 million are underweight due to chronic malnutrition (UNICEF, 2009). The world's 48 poorest countries have experienced deepened poverty after opening their economies to international trade with their transition to large-scale agriculture (Braun et al., 2008). New kinds of adverse effects have also emerged from the rural development strategy such as ecological destruction, global warming, health risks, food insecurity, animal

abuse, food-industry monopoly, and collapse of small-scale farmers and rural communities (Altieri, 2004; McMahon, 2002; Marsden et al., 2001; O'Connor, 2006; Shiva, 2000; Sobal & McIntosh, 2009).

New strategies and approaches have been sought at many levels to redress the failures and concerns. Some examples include alternative agro-food networks, local food systems, shorter supply chains, civic agriculture, and food justice (Allen, 2004; Feenstra, 1997; Holloway et al., 2007; Lacy, 2000; Lyson, 2004; Welsh & MacRae, 1998; Wright & Middendorf, 2008). Despite existing nuances, these represent the efforts to create more environmentally friendly, socially responsible, and economically fair “markets,” particularly by recovering close relationships between producers and consumers, addressing multifunctional agricultural roles and thus counteracting the dominance of the neoliberal global market. This dissertation focuses on such efforts, specifically relevant markets, referred to as *nested markets*.

The establishment and development of “nested markets” is identified as the core practice of the agro-ecological framework, which is a new paradigm in rural development that emerged in the 1990s (Altieri, 1989; Marsden et al., 2001; Marsden, 2003; van der Ploeg et al., 2001; Ventura & van der Ploeg, 2010; Wilson, 2001). This agro-ecological framework challenges the agro-industrial and the post-productivist frameworks. It refers to “territorially-based development that redefines nature by re-emphasizing food production and agro-ecology and that re-asserts the socio-environmental role of agriculture as major agent in sustaining rural economies and cultures” (Sonnono et al., 2008, p. 31). The agro-ecological framework challenges the global industrialized agro-food market by reconfiguring a wide range of different rural resources towards an endogenous potential and involving collective forms of social action involving multi-level actors and networks.

The development of nested markets is a “progressively unfolding set of responses” to failures of the mainstream agri-food market (Ventura & van der Ploeg, 2010, p. 322). The nested markets approach strongly reject the mainstream neo-liberal economic assumption that considers a market as a “given and unchanged entity,” which

is said to run well in a fully self-regulating system under laissez-faire policies. In contrast, the essence of nested markets is their *embeddedness* in specific historical, cultural and local resources (“common-pool resources”) governed by mutually shared rules/principles/values between producers and consumers. Nested markets are neither anonymous nor governed by the “invisible hand”; rather they are always nested in normative frameworks that are negotiated by and with all actors participating in those markets (van der Ploeg et al., 2012). Rather than solely profit maximizing, nested markets are often associated with generating common goods for sustaining society and nature (Knickel & Renting, 2000; van der Ploeg et al., 2000). A wide array of social goals including preserving traditions and biodiversity, securing safe and wholesome food, managing rural landscapes and protecting small family farmers’ livelihood are embraced in nested markets.

However, despite the emphasis on nested markets in the locally/regionally grounded sustainable framework, little detailed research has been undertaken on nested markets so far. Hardly explored is the nature and dynamics of nested markets in terms of their changes over time and space; this is essential for not only understanding how nested markets have emerged and worked but also seeking how best to restructure nested markets in order to make greater contributions to rural sustainable development. The primary goal of this dissertation, therefore, is to examine nested markets in a rural agricultural sector at the micro-level and offer insights in order to open up opportunities that will shape the nested markets to function efficiently with regard to sustainable rural development.

The setting for this research is a rural agricultural sector in Korea, specifically, Hongdong Town. In terms of the lack of the sustainability of small-scale farms and rural livelihood, the rural agricultural conditions in Korea are far more severe compared with other countries. The rapid economic growth focusing on the manufacturing-export-oriented economic development of the early 1960s through late 1970s resulted in serious socio-economic and environmental problems in Korean rural areas. Furthermore, a series of free trade policies became a disaster for Korean farmers whose average farmland is

less than 1.5 hectare per family. Many agricultural subsidies were substantially eliminated by the SAPs (Structural Adjustment Programs) of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) after the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, during which Korean farmers fell victim to the ravages of the global market.

Hongdong Town has played a crucial role in diffusing the techniques and meanings of organic farming in Korea, particularly duck-rice farming that uses ducks for weed and insect control in rice paddies. Several types of innovative agricultural and food markets have developed in Hongdong such as food cooperatives, local markets and community supported agriculture, which this study refers to as nested markets. Rural tourism has been also extensively promoted in Hongdong by local organic rice farmers since the mid-1990s, closely linked with environmentally friendly forms of farming and marketing development. The terms “green tourism” and “urban-rural exchange” are used interchangeably with rural tourism in the Korean context. This qualitative case study examines the origin and evolutionary process of these innovative markets (“nested markets”) in Hongdong from the 1950s onwards, the struggles of local/regional farmers to sustain their land and lives, and the evolution of rural tourism and its links with other nested markets. Three major research questions (together with related subsets) guided the study:

- 1 How have nested markets developed in Hongdong?
 - 1.1 What kinds of nested markets can be identified in and around Hongdong?
 - 1.2 Was there a particular local context that considerably influenced the development of the nested markets?
 - 1.3 What effective role, if any, did the state and civil society play in the development of these nested markets?
 - 1.4 How do these nested markets differ from the ideological and operational characteristics of the general commodity markets?
- 2 How do these nested markets contribute (or not) to empowering small-scale farmers?
 - 2.1 Why do the farmers join in the markets or if not why?

- 2.2 How do the participating farmers work in the markets?
 - 2.3 How do the participating farmers play a role in the decisions- making process?
 - 2.4 What benefits do they get by participating in the markets, particularly compared with the non-participating farmers?
- 3 What is the relationship between agro-tourism in Hongdong and the development of nested markets on Hongdong?
 - 3.1 How has rural tourism developed in the rural agricultural community of Hongdong, Korea?
 - 3.2 What is the relationship between rural tourism and the other rural initiatives such as the rise of “nested markets” in Hongdong?
 - 3.3 How does rural tourism contribute (or not) to sustainable development in this agricultural region of Korea?

This dissertation avails a manuscript format of organization and representation. Before presenting three independent manuscripts in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, this study offers a literature review in Chapter 2, followed by a methodological approach in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 describes and analyzes the dynamics of nested markets identified in the Hongdong region by tracking their historical roots and evolution. Chapter 5 explores the empowerment issue of small-scale farmers in nested markets in Hongdong. Finally, Chapter 6 investigates the specific interaction between rural agro-tourism and other forms of nested markets. Each manuscript contains its own introduction, literature review, methodology, and presentation and interpretation of findings. The concluding section, Chapter 7 includes a summary of the study, conclusions, contributions, and limitations and ideas for future research that emanates from the three studies.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a brief review of literature and key themes running throughout the dissertation. While each of the manuscripts (chapters 4, 5, and 6) contains its own literature review pertaining to the research topic, the purpose of this review is to provide a unifying theoretical framework and background for the dissertation. The chapter deals specifically with three key themes: (1) rural development approaches and a new sustainable direction, (2) the global industrial agrifood system and nested markets, and (3) rural tourism in a sustainable development context.

Rural Development Approaches and New Sustainable Direction

Rural Development Approaches

As *Gesellschaft*-type large urban cities have expanded, people have been more and more concerned with the loss of *Gemeinschaft*-type agrarian towns (Toennies, 1887). Agriculture, rural villages, and small-scale family farmers have often been nostalgically idealized in the form of a glorification of the past by the modern people who have sought to escape from the anomie and harsh life in an urban-industrialized society (Creed, 2006; Deflippis et al., 2006; Joseph, 2002).

On the contrary, modernization theorists such as Marx, Spencer, and early Durkheim described the social transition from rural communities to modern cities as a result of social progress that liberated humanity from the coercive and limiting world of the past (Agrawal & Gibson 1999). These romantic and pessimistic discourses have largely shaped the policy, practice, and theory of rural development throughout the last two centuries. These ideas have appeared in several rural development frameworks including agrarianism, agro-industrialism, post-productivism, and new agrarianism and will be discussed below.

Agrarianism

The romantic sentiments toward rural communities and small-scale independent farmers deeply rooted in agrarianism that thrived in the United States around from the late of 1700s to the post World War II period (Berry, 2003; Danbom, 1991; Inge, 1969). Thomas Jefferson regarded independent family farmers as the most vigorous and virtuous citizens needed for national political and economic development. The American transcendentalist Thoreau's life and essays also largely facilitated the proliferation of a romantic discourse about rural life by addressing spiritual benefits from ecological lifestyle in rural areas. Likewise, rural or farm-related matters such as land, seeds, farmers, associated natural phenomena, and fertility gods were politically and culturally celebrated in most countries, particularly in China and Korea where Confucianism ruled the nations.

Agro-industrialism

The agro-industrial approach of the 1960s primarily focused on technologically advanced, competitive agricultural products and state-driven projects along with free market access (Marsden, 2003; Wilson, 2001). Under the moral imperative of saving people from severe famine and poverty in the context of worldwide population growth, the Green Revolution introduced high-yield varieties of grains, heavy use of irrigation, and great use of hybridized seeds, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers to the farmers from developing countries in the 1960s. The international agricultural free market system has been extensively established throughout the world with the completion of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Critics have contended that the agro-industrialism has endorsed the concentration of the world's food market into the hands of a few multinational corporations, resulting in the collapse of small-scale family farms (Lyson, 2004; Shiva, 1991, 2000).

Post-productivism

Post-productivism emerged around the mid-1980s, thriving in northern Europe where the social and economic value of agricultural production declined due to its relatively low contribution to GNP (Marsden, 2003). Wilson (2001) characterized the post-productivism as the loss of the central position of agriculture in a society, associated with a loss of the ideological and economic sense of security for farmers. Under the discourse of “consumption of countryside,” rural spaces have increasingly tied to the provision of goods and services that have catered to the tastes and desires of urban populations. Marsden et al. (2001) asserted that environmental regulations and consumer-driven politics, which were closely associated with consumers’ concerns about food safety and environmental issues, continuously distanced small-scale family farms and rural dwellers more generally from their natural and cultural heritage.

New agrarianism

A new version of agrarianism was revived, counteracting the highly industrialized global food system and neoliberalism. Contemporary agrarian thinkers such as Wendell Berry and Scott and Helen Nearing have inspired people with ideas such as “simple, spiritual, and independent living,” leading to the back-to-the-land movement during the 1960s and 1970s in the United State. Adhering to the values of simplicity and anti-consumerism, many younger people migrated from cities to rural areas and often engaged in the organic farming movement. Both social justice and ecological sustainability tended to equate with small-scale family farming in the new agrarianism; however, these small-scale farms increasingly replicated what they opposed over time as Guthman (2004) observed in the California organic sector.

Despite their different perspectives and implementations as reviewed above, rural development approaches tended to marginalize or romantically idealize agriculture and rural areas as the ‘production place’ (agro-industrialism), ‘consumption object’ (post-productivism), or ‘independent community’ (agrarianism and new agrarianism). Regardless of the way rural development is idealized, either romantically or

pessimistically, it is problematic. While the romanticism disguises “structural divisions, blurs political sides and interests, and eliminates dissenting voices” (Defilippis et al., 2006, p.676), the pessimism prevents people from recognizing the potential contributions of the agricultural sector in achieving a more sustainable society for both the rural and urban areas and for humans and nature.

New Sustainable Rural Development

Recently, there has been increasing attempts to perceive rural problems and solutions in different ways from the previous rural development approaches. The Wageningen actor-oriented rural sociology has called for escaping from the rigidities of structuralist political economy and its inadequate treatment of human agency, and has suggested a new theoretical framework for rural development studies (Goodman, 2004; Marsden et al., 2001; O’Connor, 2006; van der Ploeg *et al.*, 2002). This new framework, often referred to as the “agro-ecological framework,” is defined as a “territorially-based development that redefines nature by re-emphasizing food production and agro-ecology and that re-asserts the socio-environmental role of agriculture as a major agent in sustaining rural economies and cultures” (Sonnino et. al., 2008, p. 31). While the agro-industrial agricultural approach of the 1960s primarily focused on technologically advanced, competitive agricultural products and state-driven projects along with free market access, the agro-ecological approach to rural development pays greater attention to “sustainability” and recognizes the role of agriculture in promoting “common goods” (van der Ploeg & Marsden, 2008). It also responded to the adverse post-productivism of the mid-1980s that shaped rural communities and resources to be “attractive and lucrative to aspiring ex-urban groups” (Marsden, 2003, p.11).

The agro-ecological approach challenges the global industrialized agro-food market by creating of endogenous potentialities and reconfiguring a wide range of different rural resources and developing collective forms of social action. Key terms related to this agro-ecological approach include the following: crisis of modernity, co-evolution, local farmers’ knowledge systems, endogenous potential, collective forms of

social action, systemic strategies, ecological and cultural diversity, and sustainable societies (see Marsden et al., 2001, pp.79-81, for more details). The concepts *rural web* and *multifunctional agriculture* illustrate this new approach to rural development.

Rural web

The rural web is defined as “a complex set of internally and externally generated interrelationships that shape the relative attractiveness of rural spaces, economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally” (van der Ploeg & Marsden, 2008, p. vii). Both the density and the quality of internal and external interactions of different rural spaces affect the pathways and velocity of rural development trajectories. The key dimensions of the rural web are endogeneity, novelty production, sustainability, social capital, new institutional arrangements and the governance of markets (Marsden, 2010, see van der Ploeg & Marsden, 2008, pp. 9-14 for more details):

- Endogeneity: The degree to which rural economies are (i) built upon local resources, (ii) organized according to local models of resource combination, and (iii) strengthened through the distribution and reinvestment of produced wealth within the local/regional constellation;
- Novelty: New insights, practices, artefacts and/or combinations of resources, technological procedures, bodies of knowledge, etc. that carry the promise that specific constellations function better;
- Social capital: The ability of individuals, groups, organizations, or institutions to engage in networks, cooperate and employ social relations for common purpose and benefit;
- Market governance: Institutional capacities to control and strengthen existing markets and/or to construct new ones;
- New institutional arrangements: New institutional constellations that solve coordination problems and support cooperation among rural actors;
- Sustainability: Territorially based development that redefines nature by re-

emphasizing food production and agro-ecology and that reasserts the socio-environmental role of agriculture as a major agent in sustaining rural economies and cultures.

These dimensions of the rural web together describe the regionally available social and natural resources and present the specific way in which the resources are interrelated, interact, and performed by forming actor-networks. The rural web is a dynamic entity and is multidimensional. It is viewed as consisting of key conceptual building blocks, which are located in the dynamic context of the responses to the economic squeeze on rural resources, especially conventional agricultural production. Moreover, the rural web is involved fundamentally with the local and regional level, but also interconnected with higher levels of networks such as those at the national and global level. Multiple actors are involved in the rural web. The actors include both human and nonhumans such as farmers, consumers, land, animals, machines, institutions, enterprises, state agencies, and social movements. The rural web is not a fixed setting; rather it is an ongoing process greatly representing heterogeneity, complexity, and mutuality.

Multifunctional agriculture

The other key concept to frame the agro-ecological approach is *multifunctional agriculture*. While the previous approach to rural development tends to ignore the function of agriculture beyond providing food and fibre products, the new approach recognizes the potential benefits that agriculture can generate, which are referred to as ‘multifunctional agriculture.’ The OECD (2001) defined it as follows:

Beyond its primary function of producing food and fibre, agricultural activity can also shape the landscape, provide environmental benefits such as land conservation, the sustainable management of renewable natural resources and the preservation of biodiversity, and contribute to the socio-economic viability of many rural areas. Agriculture is multifunctional when it has one or several functions in addition to its primary role of producing food and fibre (p. 5).

Multifunctional agriculture is the attempt to reintegrate agriculture resources into

collective efforts for sustaining a society and nature by addressing a number of benefits from agricultural development. The benefits include managing rural landscape, sustaining rural communities, preserving traditions and biodiversity, educating younger generations, and securing safety and wholesome foods (Knickel & Renting, 2000; Sonnino & Marsden, 2006; van der Ploeg et al., 2000). These are common societal goods, which are beneficial to communities and cities, producers and consumers, human and non-human well-being, and current and future generations.

Synergy is created when a wide range of different and often reconfigured rural resources are combined and flow into a set of new activities, interactions, transactions and networks (Knickel, 2001; Knickel & Renting, 2000; Marsden, 2010). Agriculture plays an important role in activating a new *virtuous circle* (Miele & Pinducciu, 2001) in which multiple activities such organic farming, direct selling, specialized shop business, agro-tourism, craft activities, and care services are mutually connected, resulting in a new trajectory of rural development.

Three key features of sustainable rural development have been established (van der Ploeg et al., 2000). First, sustainable rural development is a realignment of agriculture to meet the rapidly changing needs and expectations of society at large. Second, it is a response to the squeeze on agriculture. Third, it implies a redefinition, recombination and/or reconfiguration of rural resources (pp. 392-393). In addition, “newly emerging nested markets” are identified as the fourth feature of rural development (Ventura & van der Ploeg, 2010; Ploeg et al., 2012), which will be presented in a later section.

Global Industrialized Agrifood Market and New Nested Markets

Feature and Issues of the Industrialized Global Agrifood Market

Despite many worldwide drivers over the past hundred years, “industrialization” and “globalization” have had the most significant influence on the formation and evolution of the contemporary dominant agrifood market. They have shaped the

lifespans of agriculture and food from origin to plate, including the growing, harvesting, processing, packing, transporting, marketing, consumption, and disposal of food and food-related items.

The industrialization process of the agrifood market has occurred and manifested itself through three major agricultural revolutions based on the US agricultural history (Lyson, 2004), which are the *mechanical revolution* in the early 1900s, the *chemical revolution* in the after the World War II, and the *biotechnology revolution* in the 1980s. As a result, the current agrifood system takes on two particular characteristics. First, in terms of economy, it is “a thoroughly commercialized, capital-intensive and highly specialized form of production, involving the commodification of agricultural inputs supplied and controlled by agri-food corporations and the market exchange of produce through national and increasingly global markets.” Second, in terms of technology, it is highly industrialized promoted “by the development and use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers; hybrid and chemically-dependent seed varieties; publicly-funded breeding programs; monocultural cropping systems; mechanized farm labour and irrigation systems; and intensive animal production practices” (Scrinis, 2007, pp.113-4).

Furthermore, the current mainstream agrifood market has been globalized by multi-dimensional processes and toward complex directions. Braun et al. (2008) list what means that an agrifood market are globalizing as follows:

- when internationally traded foods—either in the form of raw materials or processed goods—increase as a proportion of production;
- when traded agricultural inputs and transborder investments expand across countries;
- when the science, knowledge, and information contents of the agrifood system become goods that are more international in scope;
- when standardization and the related regulatory institutions increasingly reach across borders—whether in the case of corporate organizations such as multinational companies or public organizations such as the World Trade Organization;

- when consumers' tastes, and the industries attending to them, show growing similarities across nations and regions;
- when the health and environmental externalities related to agrifood systems have transnational or global impacts; and
- when social policies related to hunger and poverty reduction become global.

The combination of “industrialization” and “globalization” has significantly re-structured the world agrifood market and our everyday lives. Despite its complex and dynamic effects over time and space, the industrialized global agrifood market has been the subject of many concerns and criticisms as summarized below through a relevant literature review.

Environment problems

Industrialized farming has negatively affected the ecosystem in myriad ways, for example, by polluting the air, surface water, and groundwater, degrading soil quality (e.g., erosion, salinity and nutrient depletion), over-consuming water resources, energy and oil, and accelerating the loss of biodiversity (Altieri, 1999; Scialabba & Williamson, 2004; Pimentel, et al., 2005; Scrinis, 2007). Along with the growing use of chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, the applications of genetic breeding technology and nano-technology have been the subject of debate regarding both known and unknown risks on humans and ecosystems (Altieri, 2004; Scrinis, 2007). Increasing meat consumption and food miles (the miles food travels from the origins to consumers) have been concerned in terms of major contributors to climate change (Weber & Matthews, 2008).

Hunger, nutrition, and food safety

At present, 870 million people worldwide do not have enough food to eat; 195 million children under the age of 5 are stunted due to chronic malnutrition (FAO, 2010; UNICEF, 2009). The hunger and poverty actually deepened on the world's 48 poorest

countries when they opened their economies to international trade with the transition to large-scale agriculture (Braun et al., 2008). Moreover, food-related public health problems have been a rapidly increasing public concern. Childhood obesity has become a national epidemic in richer countries, such as the United States and England and in some developing nations. The combination of the fast food industry, global free trade policies, postindustrial work patterns, and a sedentary lifestyle has widely spread the “globalization of obesity” (Sobal & McIntosh, 2009). A number of food contaminations and malnutrition issues caused by the overuse of agricultural chemicals, antibiotics, hormones, and genetically modified (GM) foods as well as diseases such as mad cow disease (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, BSE) and avian influenza have all raised the fear of food poisoning and therefore greater attention to food safety and health issues (Halweil, 2007; Blay-Palmer, 2007).

Dominant power of transnational corporations

Another growing criticism has involved the rapid growth of transnational corporations (TNCs) that have extended their control over the agrifood production and consumption beyond their home base countries, mostly Western Europe or the United States. During the last several decades, a handful of food-chain clusters—the three most advanced food chain clusters are Cargill/Monsanto, ConAgra and Novartis/AND (Braun et. al., 2008)—have controlled from “*gene to supermarket shelf*” (Hendrickson & Heffernan, 2002, p. 350). They have abused their power over the agrifood sector by playing an active part in shaping international trade agreements, such as the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (Shiva, 2000). The introduction of intellectual property rights (i.e., IPR or Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights—TRIPs) of protection for plant varieties and biotechnology products has been used for serving the interests of TNCs as shown in increasing lawsuits between the Monsanto and

individual farmers.¹ As several documentary films (e.g., Kenner, 2008; Robin et al., 2008) showed, the “revolving door” between the Monsanto and the US’s FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) has further contributed to the reinforcement of TNCs’ power over the agriculture and food markets.

Livelihood of small-scale farmers

Despite the gradually decreasing number of farming population, about half of the world population lives in rural areas, particularly in Africa, Asia, and some of Latin America where hunger and poverty are still prevalent (World Bank, 2011). Many of them are small-scale family farmers whose average farm size is less than 2 hectares. Neoliberal free trade markets and structural adjustment policies have negatively affected the small-scale farmers, particularly in developing countries. They have fewer opportunities to access land, credit, and agricultural markets than those of the large-scale farmers in the United States and European Union who have high levels of public subsidies (McMichael 2005, 2006). Agricultural technologies promoted by global development projects (e.g., the Green Revolution and Gene Revolution) have often disrupted the livelihoods and survival of small-scale farmers (Altieri, 2009; Shiva, 2000, 2009). Farmers’ privilege and agency over farming and marketing (e.g., seed choices, land use, farming technique, selling price, packing and delivery) have been significantly threatened by TNCs’ profits driven marketing strategies.

Disempowering citizens

The industrialized global agrifood market has gradually disintegrated the relationships between producers and consumers. The distant and anonymous market

¹ In 1998, Monsanto sued Percy Schmeiser for patent infringement. Monsanto claimed that he was benefiting from illegally obtaining Roundup Ready canola seeds, while the farmer argued that he never purchased the seeds because he has saved his seeds from his harvest since the 1950s. He argued the possibility that canola seed had been blown onto his land from crops in neighbor lands. In 2004, the Supreme Court of Canada made a decision by a vote of five to four for Monsanto. Schmeiser had infringed on Monsanto’s patent by the fact that Roundup Ready canola was growing in his field, regardless whether intentionally or not.

conditions have led to consumers being unable to act responsibly and effectively in case of any change or crisis. Lacy (2000) stated that “people are separated not only from their food, also from knowledge about how and by whom their food is produced, processed, and transported... ultimately this distancing disempowers” (p. 19). That is, as the current agrifood market becomes highly industrialized and globalized, people are losing their control over their foods.

Gender issues

Gender disparities and inequalities in current agrifood production and consumption have been the subject of criticism. Although women have contributed tremendously to agricultural output, particularly in subsistence agriculture and have taken primary responsibility for feeding family members, their roles have been often unrecognized in agricultural development policies (McMahon, 2002; World Bank, 2011). Many agricultural development projects focused primarily on the large-scale export oriented farming have often largely destroyed the ways that women have traditionally secured food resources (e.g., by water and firewood collection, kitchen gardening, and collecting wild vegetables). For example, the extensive implementation of irrigation systems in developing countries did not take into account the everyday life of women who then had to carry water for drinking and cooking over greater distances (Curtin, 1997). Shiva (1993) asserted that the global industrial food system created a new form of poverty for all, but more significantly for women and children through privatizing lands and expanding cash crops.

New Emerging Nested Markets

As previously mentioned, the creation and development of innovative agrifood markets, specifically referred as to “*newly emerging, nested markets,*” are identified as the key practice of the new rural development approach. In other words, the current rural development phenomenon can be characterized as a series of responses to the negative effects caused by the functioning of the industrialized global market. In this dissertation,

the term ‘nested market’ is used instead of alternative agrifood system, alternative food circuits, or short food circuits. Van der Ploeg et al. (2012) indicate that an extensive body of literature about *alternative* food system (circuits or chain) is “very much about morality and voluntarism” in which the initiatives of “the morality of consumers” from the richer parts of the globe are given much more attention than those issues affecting agricultural producers and their struggles. Such focus and analysis tends to result in dichotomies of “ethically ‘good’ versus ‘bad’ products” (p. 141). Thus, using “nested markets” attempts to turn off any priori normative framing and then conceptualizes the newly emerged markets as co-existing alongside other markets such as conventional free markets. At the same time, as distinctive markets, nested markets are institutionally regulated and embedded in historical and cultural resources.

Nested markets cannot be understood through the lens of neoliberalist free-markets that consider agricultural products as the same as other commodities to be exchanged in fully self-regulating markets under laissez-faire policies, aiming for maximization of profits and utilities. Rejecting the belief of the “invisible hand” and abstract forms of markets, the essence of nested markets is the feature of socially constructed and embedded in a special set of institutions. The uniqueness and strength of nested markets come primarily from the fact that a nested markets is generally grounded in the idea of a common-pool resource (CPR), or is “*in and by itself* a CPR” (Schneider et al., 2014, p. 194). CPRs are essentially *non-material*, which is an important difference with most of the CPRs discussed by Ostrom (e.g., irrigation water, common pasturelands, and joint parking spaces). The CPRs of nested markets are characterized to be (a) grounded in a commonly shared set of rules. This set of rules (b) links specific producers and consumers (through shared expectations, quality definitions, specific infrastructures, reputations, trusts, etc.). It (c) specifies resource use (also beyond the nested markets) and thus, (d) allows for the transaction involving specific products (ibid. p. 195). This explains why, despite being made more vulnerable by the exiting mainstream markets, nested markets can resist the takeovers of large corporations.

Based on comparative case study of the European Union, China and Brazil, van

der Ploeg et al., (2012) assert that nested markets appear with different features in different nations, reflecting specific and varying social backgrounds in which they are embedded. Creation and development of nested markets in European nations have been largely influenced by European rural development policies that focus on “securing positive externalities” (e.g., the maintenance of quality of landscape, protection of biodiversity and animal welfare, improvement of food quality and rural livelihood). While such goals have also informed nested markets in China and Brazil, in these countries the markets have been profoundly adjusted in accordance with social justice issues and peasantry movements. Nested markets in China have developed through the efforts of defending Chinese small-scale farming from the global free markets, fundamentally aiming to create harmony between city/industry and countryside/agriculture. In Brazil, nested markets have been initiated by strong social movements, which aimed to reduce poverty, strengthen family farming, and protect ecology especially from deforestation. Agro-tourism, care facilities, nature and landscape preservation, regional specialties, bio-energy can be seen as examples among many nested markets in European nations, China, and Brazil as identified from the van der Ploeg et al.’s (2012) study.

Despite the diversity of nested markets observed in different nations, three key features, *specificity*, *connectedness* and *rootedness* are common across all the cases albeit in various degree (for more on this, see van der Ploeg et al., 2012, pp.148-153, pp.157-159). Specificity refers to the specific quality of the product (or service), which is widely recognized by consumers and translates into a premium price and a durable reputation. Due to the specific nature of resources and relevant artisanal techniques, a nested market is barely industrialized and can risk being taken over by the mainstream markets. Connectedness involves often a short and decentralized circuit that links producers, processors, distributors and consumers in a horizontal, web-like way. In addition to its inner-connectedness, nested markets tend to interact and intertwine with other nested markets while creating synergies and contributing to their robustness at the farm level as well as regional level. Rootedness denotes that both product and pattern are grounded in

common pool resources by low levels of external inputs, and often they strongly contribute to individual and regional identities. These three features are not always strongly presented, but together they create boundaries that delineate the nested market and sustain their particular dynamic. Ventura & van der Ploeg (2010) summarize a set of common as well as strongly interrelated features of the nested markets:

- (1) The special quality of the product (or service) is widely recognized by consumers and translates into a premium price and a durable reputation.
- (2) The definition of quality is commonly shared by producers, processors, distributors and consumers and based upon flows of communication that go backwards and forwards.
- (3) Production and processing are based on artisanal techniques and a highly skilled labour force.
- (4) Production is characterized by low levels of external inputs.
- (5) Production, processing and consumption are linked through short and decentralized circuits (while short in terms of the number of links they can be long in the geographical sense).
- (6) The value added per unit of product is high (especially at the level of primary production) (this strongly links with points 1, 4 and 5).
- (7) The links between producers, processors, distributors and consumers are patterned in a horizontal, web-like way that contrasts strongly with hierarchical patterns.
- (8) The pattern as a whole allows for flexibility and further internal differentiation.
- (9) From a socio-economic point of view the patterns as a whole represent a coalition of interests and prospects; from a cultural point of view both product and pattern strongly contribute to individual and regional identities.
- (10) Product and pattern are institutionally defended (through consortiums, joint service units, protocols that specify the production and processing techniques and labels, etc.).
- (11) It is difficult for outside interest groups to “take over” these products and

patterns (especially due to points 3 and 7).

- (12) Both product and pattern are grounded on a common pool resource, i.e. the capacity to elaborate and distribute a distinctive product.
- (13) The different elements that make up a nested market cannot be industrialized; the artisanal techniques and the specific nature of the resources involved are resistant to scale enlargement and standardization.
- (14) The processes of production and processing (see 3, 8 and 13) are built on open source technologies that allow for collective learning processes.
- (15) Concentration ratios are low.
- (16) Nested markets tend to interact and intertwine with other nested markets, thus creating synergies and contributing to their robustness; this occurs at the farm enterprise level as well as at the level of the territory.

Rural Tourism in Sustainable Development Context

Definitions and Types of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is usually defined as “a demand for touristic use for a rural area” (Gartner, 2004, p. 153) or an activity in “non-urban territory where human activity is going on, primarily agriculture” (Dernoi, 1991, p. 4). For this reason, the concept of rural-urban continuum has long been used to identify rural areas or rurality by addressing ‘rural’ as a contrast to the urban (for detail see Lane, 1994). However, it is not that all non-urban activities can be qualified to be rural tourism because of the limited activities involving in the rural world (e.g., recreational activities in national parks, forest, theme parks and holiday villages). Lane (1994) introduced the ‘purest’ form of rural tourism, which is i) located in rural areas, ii) functionally rural (e.g., small-scale enterprise, contact with nature and heritage), iii) rural in scale (both in terms of buildings and settlements), and iv) traditional in character, reflecting the complex pattern of rural environments, economies, histories and locations. Nevertheless, this purest form

also only ideally exists as a concept because of the multi-faceted characteristics of rural tourism in practice.

More recently, defining rural tourism has tended to focus more on sustainable approaches as a counterexample to the traditional packaged tourism or a mass tourism than previous geographical concepts (Hall et al., 2003; Lane, 2010; Macleod & Gillespie, 2010; Sharpley & Roberts, 2004). Sharpley and Roberts (2004) assert that “rural tourism is seen to be synonymous with sustainable tourism development, with all that is implied for the nature, scale, character and ownership of tourism development” (p. 121). There is some common ground in concepts and practices between rural tourism and other forms of sustainable tourism including ecotourism (e.g., learning about nature with first-hand practices), heritage tourism (e.g., celebrating traditional life styles), fair-trade tourism (e.g., concerning wages and working conditions in tourism industries), and community-based tourism (e.g., addressing community participation, benefit sharing, local ownership, leadership, and collaboration).

Farm tourism, farm-based tourism and agri (agro or agricultural) tourism (hereafter referred as to “agritourism”) are often used to refer to the same or similar settings and activities of rural tourism. While rural tourism refers to a wider concept encompassing a variety of different forms of tourism activities taking place in rural areas, agritourism is more specifically farm or agriculture-based tourist activities (Clarke, 1999; Lane, 1994; Philip et al., 2010). Rural tourism takes place in farm settings or agricultural activities, but it does not necessarily refer to only agricultural or farm-based tourism. It includes activities such as walking, riding, adventure, sports, hunting and fishing, as well as activities related to agriculture and farms.

Rural Tourism Studies in the Sustainable Rural Development Context

Rural tourism came to the fore from the 1970s onwards as an attractive strategy for the revitalization of rural areas. It has been hailed—perhaps too strongly—“as a panacea for rural development for thirty years” (Butler et al., 1998, xi). Beside the “internal” need to revitalize rural areas, external market factors have encouraged the

development of rural tourism, including new transport and communication technologies, rising levels of disposable incomes, longer paid holidays, shorter working hours, a mature travel market, and changing tastes and preferences (Alexander & McKenna 1998; Lane, 1994).

Research on rural tourism has also grown in the recent past. In 1994, in an effort to clarify the range, scope, opportunities and weaknesses of tourism in rural areas, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) published a definition of the phenomenon, and a discussion of the policy issues involved. Many later studies have reported the potential of rural tourism as a sustainable development strategy to revitalize rural economies, as well as contributing to the conservation of rural environmental and cultural resources (Butler et al., 1998; Hall et al., 2003; Lane, 1994). Sustainable forms of rural tourism have been explored, such as slow travel (Dickinson et al., 2011) and eco-organic rural tourism (Choo & Jamal, 2009). New concepts have also emerged such as integrated rural tourism (IRT) (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008; Saxena & Ilbery, 2008), second-generation rural tourism (Lane, 2012), rural governance (Sharpley, 2005), and community capital (George et al., 2009). Linkage with specialty food products and regions produced new attractions such as rural food trails, gastronomic tourism, and wine tourism (Everett & Aitchison, 2008; Hall, 2003; Sims, 2009).

Nevertheless, a number of scholars have concerns about mainstream rural tourism studies. Tourism phenomena in the mainstream tourism studies have often been explored informed by a dualistic framework in which several dichotomies are reproduced such as everyday/extraordinary, home/away, profane/sacred” (Franklin, 2004) or “hosts/guests, production/consumption, economy/ culture, industrial producers/post-modern consumers” (Johannesson, 2005). The dualistic approach frequently describes rural areas to be static territories and containers of attractions, while romantically idealizing farming, rural life style, and communities for catering “the postmodern quest for an antidote to the anomie of wealth and urban life” (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008, p. 317).

In addition, overly economic driven and tourism-centric approach do not take

adequate account of the sustainability issues of rural areas (Cater & Cater, 2011; Jamal et al., 2003; Sharpley, 2003; Sharpley & Roberts, 2004). Rural tourism studies need to pay more attention not only to economic benefits, but also to environmental, cultural, educational and socio-psychological synergic benefits (e.g., Canavari et al., 2011; Knickel, 2001; Miele & Pinducciu, 2001).

Taking account of these concerns, the modern rural tourism phenomena needs to be examined more holistically and integrally than the previous fragmented and economic oriented ways in order to respond fully to rural sustainable development issues. The agro-ecological framework explored above offers a holistic, place-based, local people-centred approach to investigate rural tourism in relation to sustainable development, such as through the development of small-scale organic farming and localized food systems.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design and methodology for this study including (1) Research Design, (2) Research Setting, (3) Gaining Entry and Building Rapport, (4) Data Collection Methods, (5) Data Analysis Methods, and (6) Quality and Trustworthiness.

Research Design

A researcher's philosophical assumptions guide the research questions as well as the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the research (Crotty, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Research design involves a clear understanding of what is the nature of reality (ontology), how we know what we know (epistemology), what way of viewing is valuable in researching the world (theoretical perspective), and how we find what we want to know (methodology). My philosophical assumptions are (a) ontology: relative materialism; (b) epistemology: constructionism; (c) theoretical perspective: critical tradition and Actor Network Theory (ANT); (d) methodology: a qualitative case study.

Relative Materialism

Ontology is the study of being (Crotty, 1998). I believe that things exist regardless of whether we are conscious of their existence. At the very least, I am a realist against idealism that proposes what is real is only confined to what is in the mind. accepting that a world or things exist independently of our consciousness does not imply that there are general laws/truths to be discovered by pure observation and objectivity. A world and things becomes meaningful only when we make sense of it, reflecting our own cultural experiences, worldviews, social norms, and so on—"Ontological issues and epistemological issues tend to emerge together" (Crotty 1998, p. 10). From this stance, I am a relativist. What is important is how individuals make their own meanings of things,

and how the meanings are transferred into public interpretation and sometimes, social norms. Relational ontology asserts that the essence and existence of entities are only understood as the temporary outcome of interconnecting human relations based on particular time and place.

Actor network theory (ANT) extends the ontological structure, suggesting the need for considering the ontological status of non-human beings in the meaning-making process (Callon 1986a, 1986b; Latour 1997, 1999; Law, 1992, 1999). ANT highlights that non-human beings are equally important to knowing and being in the world because they also, like human beings, have their own “actantiality” (potential for action) that are presented through the relationship with other entities. In other words, ANT considers all entities as agents (or actants) regardless of their ontological status as humans or non-humans: their existences are only meaningful within their relationships, rather than the concept of essence or reality. Thus, ANT challenges what is taken for granted—superiority of human beings over non-human beings by allowing nature/materials to be actors (actants) beyond understanding them as just socially constructed factors. This approach inspired me to endeavor to understand not only how non-human beings such as animals, seeds, land, weather, farming techniques, and traditional knowledge were used in nested markets for human needs, but also how farmers and residents engaged in nested markets had to adjust to and negotiate with non-human beings in order to realize their goals.

Constructionism

Epistemologically—how we know what we know, I am situated in constructionism (Burr, 2003). Burger and Luckman (1966) argue that all knowledge is derived from and maintained by social interactions. That is, all knowledge is constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and it is developed, habituated, and eventually institutionalized. In these processes, meaning is embedded in a society. From this stance, I aim to neither discover the fixed and static reality (objectivism) nor believe the existence of an object depends solely in someone’s

subjective awareness of it (subjectivism). As a “passionate participant” researcher who aimed to facilitate “multi-voice reconstruction” (Lincoln & Guba, 2005, p. 196), I strived to understand the particular meanings which were generated by the interaction between me and the persons who participated in my study. Being consistent with relative materialist ontology, I was particularly interested in networks in which people “make meaning about, within, through, and as embodied parts of the material world—human, nonhuman, and hybrid” (Clarke, 2005, p. 7). I attempted to capture the roles of non-human beings such as discourses, knowledge, techniques, agricultural products, foods, animals, and land in constructing social meanings through networking, particularly in this study, creating and maintaining nested markets.

Critical Tradition

My dissertation study draws upon a critical inquiry. The critical inquiry seeks to not only understand socially constructed meanings, but also challenge and take a view of conflict and opposition to bring about change. Esterberg (2002) explains that the research goal of each theoretical position is different, stating “whereas the goal of positivist research... is to predict and control and the goal of interpretive research is to understand and interpret, the goal of critical social research is to work toward human emancipation” (p. 17). Likewise, I hoped that my dissertation would assist the efforts of establishing markets that are ecologically sound, economically viable, and socially just by empowering small-scale farmers and citizens resisting the growing power of neoliberalism. My approach and passion was deeply embedded in my experience particularly from 1992 to 2005 when I worked for NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) in Korea.

During that time, I had the opportunity to examine closely how neoliberalism restructured the Korean society, particularly the agricultural food sector. A series of free trade policies became a disaster for Korean farmers whose average farmland is less than 1.5 hectare per family. Many agricultural subsidies were substantially eliminated by the SAPs (Structural Adjustment Programs) of the IMF (International Monetary Fund) after

the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997. The Korean farmers were not able to compete with the European and US farmers whose average farm size is 13 times and 140 times, respectively. They expressed their anger and deep despair at the open market policies through street demonstrations, torching their crops, and some committing suicide. However, the Korean people seemed to feel that the open market was inescapable in order to secure national development in the neo-liberalism era. People increasingly seemed to embrace the norm and lifestyle of neoliberalism. Those of us who opposed its assumptions about human nature and the approach of the rational-choice framework felt powerless and alone. There seemed to be no ways to challenge the discourse and institutions committed to accelerating neoliberalism, which legitimized the imperial power of market and blinded our morality and agency over the market and our own well-being. The only option we had seemed to either adapt to the given market system or be excluded from the society.

Such an experience led me to have interests about the issues of alternative agriculture and food markets; theoretically, I was fascinated by the theories and concepts in the critical traditions including postmodern, poststructuralist, and postcolonial perspectives. Among many, the works of Foucault, Latour, ecofeminists, Giddens, and Beck have guided me to design this dissertation study, despite their nuances in some degrees.

Foucault's (1976, 1980) discussion on *disciplinary form of power* asserts that power is not the possession of some people who wield it over others, dominate or constrain, but rather power is relational and productive. Power is ubiquitous situated in social relations as a disciplinary form. Power strengthens and disperses by the inter-related relationship with knowledge; power both produces and constrains knowledge/truth, at the same time, knowledge/truth contributes to both create and constrain power. Thus, it is valuable to attempt to deconstruct what we believe, where our beliefs come from, and for what and to whose benefit, particularly through historical investigations. This approach offers me more spacious room to imagine alternatives to the mainstream global free market by allowing me to recognize that any current

institutions are not the outcome of the rationally inevitable, but the result of human's struggles and negotiations over power and thus changeable by human's conscious intentions and struggles.

ANT helps me to investigate power issues in social relations. ANT conceives power as “a result of a process and not a reservoir, a stock, or a capital that will automatically provide as explanation” (Latour, 2005, p. 64). Power is a relational capacity created through ongoing negotiations conducted by multiple actors involved. Power can be grasped only by concentrating on how everyday practices are transmitted into wider processes of social transformation (Latour, 1986). Drawing from this actor-network approach, I attempted to understand power plays in everyday lives, carefully examining who is actually involved in nested markets, how actors (including nonhuman beings) come to be associated, how they speak, act, represent, and negotiate with others within markets for delivering their initial goals.

In addition to the issues of power, I approached my dissertation research from an ecological viewpoint. Both ANT and ecofeminism find the current ecological crisis emerges from modernization projects driven by the Western-scientific ideology. Latour (1993) argues that the modern “Constitution” has tried to divide world into two “pure” territories, “Nature” and “Society” clearly separated, and the purification has been used as a rule to control the thoughts and actions of modern life. However, this purification project has ironically created “mixtures between entirely new types of beings, hybrids of nature and culture” (ibid, p. 10). As a result, countless hybrids (e.g., global warming and ozone depletion) have surrounded our actual lives.

Similarly, ecofeminists find the causes of ecological crisis in dualistic, hierarchical thoughts in western-driven modernization (e.g., Griffin, 1980; Merchant, 1980; Spretnak, 1990; Warren & Erkal, 1997). The dualistic thoughts facilitate and justify relationships of domination and subordination, particularly domination of men/society/reason and subordination of women/nature/emotion. Ecofeminists not only investigate academically the root of domination ideology but also participate in grass-root movements to create new social, economic and political orders. Mies and Shiva

(1993) define ecofeminism as the “connectedness and wholeness of theory and practice. It asserts the special strength and integrity of every living thing” (p. 14). Both approaches of ANT and ecofeminism reject dualist/essentialist/rationalist frameworks that result in oppressive/reductive knowledge-making processes. They led me to seek alternative ways of knowledge creation process such as “situated knowledges” (Haraway, 1991) grounded in local and everyday lives, and a better society where human and nonhuman being harmonically co-exist together.

I paid particular attention to the role of civil society in the issues of sustainable development. Giddens (2002) and Beck (2006) argue that the government sector informed by scientific knowledge and bureaucratic power is not efficient to solve the modern ecological crisis, which Beck (1992) symbolically calls “world risk society.” One of alternatives to the limited government roles could be revitalizing civil society where reflexive, conscious citizens have responsibilities of their own lives and the world. However, this does not mean that governments may have no responsibilities or roles: rather, it means that formal (or traditional) institutional structures and authoritative decision making are not efficient in current modern (reflexive) society. In this vein, the concept of governance provides a useful framework to explore the complex structure and inter-relationship between the public, private and voluntary organizations involved in nested market development in rural areas.

Qualitative Case Study

I employed a qualitative research approach for empirical understanding of the development of nested markets in Hongdong, and the markets’ potential contributions to sustainable rural development. Marshall and Rossman (2006) state that qualitative researchers challenge “the historic assumptions of neutrality in inquiry and assert that *all* research is interpretive and fundamentally political” and “these critical perspectives have developed research strategies that are openly ideological and have empowering and democratizing goals” (p. 4). Merriam (1998) also notes that despite many different types and approaches, all forms of qualitative research have some essential common

characteristics as follows:

- the focus is on interpretation and meaning people have constructed;
- the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis;
- research activities involves fieldwork;
- the process is primarily inductive; and
- offer a rich description characterizing the end product.

Several research strategies such as ethnography, phenomenology, ground theory, action research, and case study are the types of qualitative research commonly found in social studies. Among these, a case study was deployed as the most suitable strategy to investigate the rise and changes of nested markets and their contributions to sustainable rural development in Hongdong. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) maintain that a case study is suitable when the study focuses on specific institutions, programs and practices, and which tracks their progress over a period of time (cited in Merriam, 1998). Yin (1994) also notes that “although case studies and histories can overlap, the case study’s unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence—documents, artifacts, interviews, and observation—beyond what might be available in the conventional historical study” (p. 8).

Merriam (1998) asserts that a qualitative case study can be defined in terms of the process of actually carrying out the investigation, the unit of analysis (the bounded system, the case), or the end product. She states that the uniqueness of a case study lies in the fact that knowledge learned from the case study is different from other research knowledge in four important ways. According to Stake (1981), case study knowledge is:

- More concrete—case study knowledge resonates with our own experience because it is more vivid, concrete, and sensory than abstract.
- More contextual—our experiences are rooted in context, as is knowledge in case studies. This knowledge is distinguishable from the abstract, formal knowledge derived from other research designs.

- More developed by reader interpretation—readers bring to a case study their own experience and understanding, which lead to generalization when new data for the case added to old data.
- Based more on reference population determined by the reader—in generalizing as described above, the reader has some population in mind. Thus, unlike traditional research, the reader participates in extending generalization to reference population (pp. 35-36, cited in Merriam, 1998, pp. 31-32).

Research Setting

Site Selection

The case of this study, Hongdong, South Korea, was chosen through the preliminary fieldwork in 2011. During the 10 weeks in Korea, I met diverse groups of people including farmers, social activists, professors, and officials who were familiar with the research topics of this dissertation. They recommended ten sites where various attempts of sustainable rural development had been taking place with mixed results. I followed up on four candidate cases: the *Wanju* County’s Local Food, the *Unni-ne Tetbat & Gguremi* (“Our Sister’s Garden & Package”), the *Jinan* County’s Best Village project and the Hongdong Town case. I engaged in informal conversations with residents and key actors and observed what occurred on and around these sites, attending several events and gathering documents. The brief summary of the cases are below:

- The *Wanju* County’s Local Food: many local farmers who own 0.5 hectare or smaller farms are organized through several local government projects that aim at establishing a local cooperative-style economic system. These projects include the vegetable delivery box program (“*Wanju Gguremi*”), local farmers’ stores, and farm-based tourism programs (“The Farm Bus”).
- The *Unni-ne Tetbat & Gguremi* (“Our Sister’s Garden & Package”): *Gguremi* is an operation that delivers agricultural produce and foods to urban shareholders

through a nationwide delivery system. The *Unni-ne Tetbat & Gguremi* particularly aims to link local women farmers and urban consumers to ensure a sustainable healthy food supply while preserving the rights of women small-scale farmers. The Korean Women's Peasant Association (KWPA) coordinates this distribution program connecting with the Native Seed Campaign, which focuses on native seed preservation through woman farmers' knowledge and networking throughout the country.

- The *Jinan* County's Best Village project: the Best Village project is part of the rural village revitalization program led by the *Jinan* County government. The project aims to conserve village cultures and natural resources by developing village festivals and community-based tourism programs through grass-roots initiatives.

Hongdong was chosen for a more in-depth case study due to its richer and dynamic history compared with the other three cases, which were either government-led projects (e.g., Wanju Local Food and Jinan case) or a social movement-led project (e.g. Unni-ne Tetbat & Gguremi). All cases were recently developed. By contrast, the Hongdong case extends to diverse actors such as long-term established resident farmers, new residents from urban areas, multiple small and large food co-ops, schools, and various levels of governments along with a history of organic farming and co-op movements, which trace back to the 1950s. The details of the practical and scholarly reasons of the selection are as follows:

- Organic farming: about 30% of the farmers in Hongdong (41% based on rice farms) shifted to organic farming (eco-friendly farming) in the span of the last 20 years. In particular, the rice-duck farming technique for organic farming was first introduced in Korea in 1994.
- The Poolmoo co-op: the Poolmoo co-op founded in Hongdong in 1969 has played an important role in fostering organic farming and started a direct marketing by creating close ties to other consumer co-ops in urban areas.

- Diverse grass-roots organizations: there are many different types of organizations and activities engaged in rural sustainable development, in terms of economy/markets (e.g., local economy workshops, local co-ops, on-line marketing, and community owned food processing factories), environment (e.g., solar system and duck-rice farming) and social-culture (e.g., the local choir, public school improvement programs, and the senior care program).
- Tourism: Hongdong is well known in Korea for developing successful rural tourism initiated by local organic rice farmers in 1994. About 20,000 people per year visit the Hangdog areas, including groups from schools, co-ops, associations and individuals such as families, researchers, and occasionally foreign tourists.
- Returning young farmers: there has been a large influx of new residents/farmers who recently migrated from the city to this region; they have actively participated and promoted various activities and organizations.
- Government support: a significant amount of central and local government grants, subsidies, and consulting opportunities have been offered to Hangdog.
- My experience: my previous work experience in this region influenced my selection. When I worked for NGOs in Korea during 1992-2003, I was involved in several local/regional events such as the Duck-Rice Event (1995), harvest festivals (1995, 1996), and several workshops and events related to organic farming and anti-FTA movements.
- Research participants: Several leaders and farmers in Hongdong reacted positively to my proposed research; they willingly consented to participate in the ensuing interviews and offered me open and free access to local events and the sites.

Description of Hongdong

The administrative structure of Hongdong is referred as a *Myeon* (“Township”), located within Hongseoung *Gun* (“County”), Chungcheongnam *Do* (“Province”).² Hongdong-*myeon* contains 14 *Ri* (“village”) including *Wolhyeon-ri*, *Unwol-ri*, *Woncheon-ri*, *Hongwon-ri*, *Hwasin-ri*, *Geumbyeong-ri*, *Mundang-ri*, *Gujeong-ri*, *Singi-ri*, *Suran-ri*, *Geumdang-ri*, *Daeyoung-ri*, *Hyohak-ri*, and *Palgwae-ri*. The region can be reached within a ten-minute car ride from nearby urban areas or two hours by road from the capital, Seoul.

Hongdong has a population of 3,916 in 2010 with 1,619 households. Most of the population is engaged in farming; 2,616 of the population (66.8 % of total population, 1,046 households) farm for a living. The majority of the farming population is older: 19.3% are in their 60s and 26.9% are their 70s or older. The average farm size is c. 1.4 hectares per household; 84% of the farmers cultivate less than 2 hectares; in contrast, only 0.67% cultivates over 10 hectares (Statistics Korea, 2010).

Rice is the most important cultivated crop in Hongdong: land use distribution shows rice paddy (54.5%), dry paddy (42%), orchard (0.6%), and pasture (2.9%) (See Figure 3.1). Other crops cultivated frequently include barley, millet, soybeans, and potatoes. Vegetables and fruits include cabbage, radishes, red peppers, ginger, garlic, onions, mushrooms, apples and strawberries. The region is renowned in Korea as one of the best Korean cattle stockbreeding areas (“*Hanwoo*”).

² Korean official administrative levels are divided into four: Shi/Do (Municipality/Province), Shi/Gun/Gu (City/County/District), Eup/**Myeon**/Dong (Township), and Ri (Village), and generally, rural areas mean Eup and Myeon.

Figure 3.1 Hongdong rice field and landscape



Organic farming practice

Compared with other rural areas, a large number of farmers have subscribed to organic farming in the last 20 years. About 41% of rice paddies and 15% of dry fields are cultivated by organic agricultural practice (Interview data). Organic agricultural practices in this region were introduced in the 1970 through the efforts of the Poolmoo High School for educational purposes. The idea of duck-rice farming was adopted as an organic agricultural method in 1993. Takao Furuno, a Japanese farmer, was invited to teach the duck-rice farming to teachers of the Poolmoo School and associated farmers. After Ju Hyeong-Ro, a graduate of the Poolmoo School harvested rice successfully utilizing this method in 1994, the duck-rice farming started to spread throughout the region: 19 farmers adopted the duck-rice farming in 1995, and the number increased to 183 farmers in 2001. The town's entrance sign, "*Hongdong where people and nature live together in harmony,*" shows the town's pride as a town where the rice-duck farming technique was first introduced in Korea (See Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 Entrance sign of Hongdong



Other organic rice-farming methods have also developed, including the Apple Snail farming, Rice Bran farming and Winter Flooded Rice farming. Summaries of the four organic rice-farming methods are presented below (Rutz & Zingerli, 2009; Interview data).

- *Duck-Rice Farming*: About 15 day-old ducklings are released to rice paddy fields a few days after transplantation until the flowering stage about 2 months later. The number of ducklings is about 35-40 per 0.1 hectare. The field is fenced to protect the ducklings from predators. Shelters where the ducklings can rest and stay overnight are also required (see Figure 3.3). The ducklings help farmers manage insect and weed control by either eating both insects and weeds, or packing down sprouts and softening soil with their feet and bills. By adopting this method, the farmers are able to grow the rice without using pesticides or herbicides. This duck-rice technique had been most prominent until 2009 when avian influenza broke out in Korea.

- *Snail Farming:* Apple Snails are notorious for being pernicious pests of aquatic crop-plant species, including rice, and are particularly dreaded by Vietnamese rice farmers. In Hongdong, however, these snails are bio-weeders in rice fields, much like the ducks. The snails were first introduced to Korea in 1983 for human food consumption, and have since 1995 become an important part of organic rice farming. Within one week after transplanting rice, two or three-month-old snails are spread at a rate of 3-4 kg per 0.066 hectare (661 m²). This practice is effective in weed control only, but not in pest control. However, a growing number of Hongdong farmers prefer to use snails instead of ducks because there is no need for fences nor shelters and feeding ducks twice daily, and bird flu is a non-issue.

Figure 3.3 Duck rice farming in Hongdong



- * Left photo: ducklings released in rice paddy field
- * Right photo: shelters where the ducklings can rest and stay overnight
- * Source: Mundang village's photo collection. Published with Mundang village's consent

- *Rice-Bran Farming:* This practice uses the natural properties of rice bran to inhibit weed sprouting. As rice bran deteriorates, it generates organic acids

darkening the water and generating a unique oily substance, which prevents the sprouting and rotting of weeds. Before the transplantation of rice seedlings, 200kg of powdered rice bran or rice bran pellets in every 0.2 acre of field are applied. In the Hongdong region, this method is used in conjunction with the snail method, because rice bran cannot control all varieties of weeds.

- *Winter Flooded Rice Farming*: This method is intended to control weeds through managing water. To inhibit germination of spring weeds, the paddy fields are flooded in winter instead of allowing the fields to dry. Weeds are controlled by deep flooding during the summer, the rice-growing period. After harvesting in the fall and prior to flooding, organic fertilizers are applied to stimulate biological activity. Besides controlling weeds, this approach provides a habitat for migrant winter birds and enriches the biodiversity in the rice paddy system. Very few farmers, especially the teachers of the Poolmoo School and a handful of ecologically conscious farmers ever use this method.

Public and grass-root organizations

Hongdong have several administrative and autonomous grassroots organizations. Each of the 14 villages in Hongdong has its own government-supported organizations such as village committees, *Saemaul* (“New Village Movement”) associations, and women’s associations. Traditional organizations such as the *Sangyeo kye* (*kye* means “mutual assistance society”) and the *Daedong key* are also continue in most of the villages. To exchange farming skills and marketing information, usually 5-10 farmers also form the *Jakmok-ban* (“crop interest group”) based on their crop interests at the village level. At the town level, the majority of farmers are at least the member either of the Poolmoo Cooperative (hereafter, the Poolmoo Coop) or the Hongdong branch of the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF or “*Nonghyop*,” hereafter, the Hongdong Nonghyop).

For education, in addition to the public middle and primary schools, there are the Poolmoo Agricultural High School (See Figure 3.4) and the Poolmoo Ecological

Agricultural Course. Since being founded in 1958 and 2001 respectively, these private boarding schools have profoundly influenced many agricultural and village development activities in this region. Many alumni of these schools have participated in organic farming and community development activities, launching diverse organizations and businesses including the Poolmoo co-op, the Organic Farming Producers' Association, the Gakgol Nursery, the Hongsung Newspaper, the Poolmoo Credit Union, and other diverse cultural and entertainment clubs. Table 3.1 shows some examples of relevant organizations that exist in Hongdong.

Figure 3.4 The Poolmoo School and the School Store



* Above photo shows the Poolmoo students and teachers taken in 1975 when a Japanese leader of the organic movement, Kodani Junichi visited the school. This served as momentum for starting organic farming in Hongdong. The house on the left in the background of the above photo has now been renovated to become the local store that is shown on the below photo (Photo source: Mundang village's photo collection. Published with Mundang village's consent)

Table 3.1 Public and grass-roots organizations in Hongdong

Categories	Organizations & Foundation years
Farming (production, processing, distribution)	Poolmoo Farmers' Cooperative Society (1969) Hongdong Branch of the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (70) Poolmoo High School Co-op (1977/1993/2009) Hongsung Organic Farming Products Association (1994) Manure factory (1995) Milsarang (Microbial fertilizer factory) (1996) Mondang Farmer Cooperative of Environmental Farming Village (1999) Poolmoo People Co. (food processing company) (2001) Center of Hongsung Woman Farmers (2001) and its own direct shop (2008) Poolmoo Milk Farm Cooperation (2003) Dasalim Food Processing Co. (2005) Organic Rice Processing Complex (2007) Hongsung Poolmoo Co. (2008) Hongsung Poolmoo Cattle Co. (2008)
Credit Union	Poolmoo Farmers Credit Union (1969)
Education & Institution	Poolmoo Private Agriculture Technical High School (1958) Hongdong Public Elementary (1922) and Middle School (1971) Gakgol Private Child Care Center (1993) Mondang Environmental Farming Education Hall (2000) Poolmoo Ecological Agriculture Course (2001) Balmak Library (2010)
Welfare	Euntoi Farm (Senior care farm) (1995) Garden of Growing Dreams (2009) Hanul Community
Cultural activities	Hosgsung Newspaper Mondang Village Agricultural Relics Museum (2002) Gmulko Publishing Company (2005) Netimanu ("zekova tree") Used Book Store (2005) Poolmoo Sewing shop (2007) Gakgol Carpenter (2007) Hongdong Cuckoos' Choir (2009)
Environmental activities	Recycles soap shop (1994) Centre for Energy Alternative (2000/2009)
General	Center for Community Revitalization and Livelihood (2011) Hongsung Community Business Center (2011)

Tourism

Hongdong is a renowned rural tourist destination in Korea. About 20,000 people per year visit the Hongdong area, including groups from schools, cooperatives, unions and associations and individuals such as families with children, researchers, and occasionally foreign tourists. The majority are day excursionists, but some are overnight visitors who stay at the Mundang Agricultural Education Center or at individual farms. The Mundang Village and Poolmoo Co-op have played leading roles in operating tourism since 1994 and a few farms launched tourism businesses at the individual level after around late-2000s. Four popular themes characterize the rural, community-based tourism of Hongdong: agriculture, cultural and heritage practices, nature-based activities, and community/volunteer activities.

Most popular programs are associated with organic farming activities such as the pick-your-own fruit and vegetable programs, duck-release experience, hand-rice planting, and guided tours tailored to highlight the organic history, farming philosophy and products.

Culture/heritage related activities are another type of tourism. It includes traditional cooking classes (e.g., traditional way of pounding rice and making rice cakes, handmade *tofu*, *kimchi*, soy sauce, and a fermented wild greens beverage), games (e.g., *Jekichagi*, *Jachiki*, Kiting, *nulttuiki*, *yutnori*, *bisukchiki*, top spinning, ice slide, *Didil-mil*) and craft classes (e.g., natural dyeing, pressed flower making, straw mat weaving) that highlight their ancestors' eco-friendly lives.

Ecological nature-based programs such as observing living organisms in the ponds and rice paddies were developed as a result of improved biodiversity along with the development of organic farming.

Lastly, diverse community learning programs increased, responding to the growing number of people, including young urbanites, government officials, researchers, and practitioners, who visit Hongdong for research/learning purposes. Volunteering programs such as the *Noghwol* (working on farm program) and the MacGyver Camp (working on village program) are also a special form of tourism found in Hongdong. In

addition, the Hongdong Cherry-blossom Festival (April), the Hongdong Harvest Festival (October) and the Hongdong Street Festival (November) are held every year.

Gaining Entry and Building Rapport

Fieldwork began in June 2012, following the pilot study in 2011. I moved into one unit of a three-plex house located near the center of the Hongdong town.³ I spent a busy first day organizing my new life in Hongdong, i.e., installing internet service, purchasing essentials, and so on. The following afternoon, I pondered upon how to start my research. Where should I go and whom should I meet? With determination, I headed for the community cooperative bar, “*Tteul*” (“garden”).

Community Cooperative Bar, Tteul

The community cooperative bar, *Tteul* reopened in the winter of 2010 after the only bar in town closed due to financial difficulty. A group of local residents had pooled money and volunteered to keep *Tteul* as a venue for community social gatherings. I hoped to encounter someone from the days I had volunteered during my summer visit in 2011. Fortunately, I came across some familiar faces, and soon began informal conversations with them and with other patrons of the bar. These conversations updated me in on what had transpired around the town since my preliminary fieldwork in 2011. During the conversations, I expressed my interest in the research study and asked them if they would participate in interviews, and perhaps introduce me to residents who would be fit for my study. I felt that they seemed to be a bit wary of giving some information to me; but some initial hesitation gradually disappeared whenever I visited the bar and volunteered in serving the tables and cleaning dishes, and talking with others over a beer after work. I was introduced to other guests in the bar and my contacts volunteered to

³ The house owner, Mr. Lee had recently migrated from Seoul to Hongdong because of his 20 year old son’s health problem. The next two units had been occupied by a female in her middle 50s and a young couple. They were all newcomers to Hongdong in that summer.

bring their own acquaintances to participate in my interviews. Since *Ttul* was a venue for many local events and social gatherings, I was able to introduce myself to the locals and have opportunities to observe local events that helped me to enlarge my insights and number of research participants. For the duration of my fieldwork, *Ttuel* was an endless spring for establishing rapport with residents, recruiting participants, and deepening my insights, as well as building strong bonds with new friends that I met in the town.

Figure 3.5 Community cooperative bar, Tteul & the researcher (myself)



Gatekeepers

Since the patrons and volunteers at *Ttuel* were relatively of a young generation or comprised mostly the returned farmers, rather than an old generation or native residents, I used “gatekeepers” in order to augment of my recruiting scope (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Patton, 2002). A majority of farmers were members of either the Hongdong Nonghyop or the Poolmoo co-op, and I tried to contact knowledgeable residents who might be able to throw more light upon the organizations, and who may introduce me to other co-op members.

I found Mr. Joo and Mr. Seo both most qualified for my research. While Mr. Joo, as a pioneer of organic farming in this region, had held multiple leadership positions in several organizations including the Hongdong Nonghyop, Mr. Seo has been working for

the Poolmoo co-op for the past 10 years. In addition to offering valuable insights and information, they referred me to people who became my research participants. More importantly, with the assistance of Mr. Joo and Mr. Seo, I was able to gain access to several events and internal meetings where I may not have been able to attend without formal membership. These opportunities helped me to learn a great deal about people and places in natural contexts.

Female Participants

I found that recruiting female participants was much harder than male participants. Because of the patriarchal family culture in Korea, mostly men took leadership positions, the women were difficult to bring on board to help in my research – most seemed unwilling to accept formal interviews. To combat such hesitation, I became involved in women’s affairs and cultural activities. An example was the day when I attended a provisional general assembly of the Hongseoung co-op. In the morning of the assembly meeting, some female co-op members were very busy in preparing meals to serve all the attendees; in contrast, male members were sitting at the tables talking with other men or glancing through the meeting handouts. After the formal meeting, compared with the men who continued to discuss the meeting agendas with others while waiting for their food, the women were still busy serving food and washing dishes. In such a situation, I copied the women rather than men.

By working together with them as one of them, I was privy to the conversations among the women. There were discussions on issues of particular interest to them, and the extent of their involvement in the organization. Through spending such times, they seemed to air very candidly their thoughts offering insights into their lives and led to allowing me to conduct formal interviews with them. During the course of fieldwork, I tried to do my best to work together with residents in farms and village events and this in turn created greater rapport for me and better access to local activities while creating trust between my participants and myself.

Data Collection Methods

For data collection, I deployed participant observation, in-depth interview, and document analysis techniques in a “very interactive and holistic” way (Merriam, 1998, p. 148). That is, I observed something on-site that I then asked about during interviews or something that I read in documents was manifested during participant observation and informal conversations, and vice versa.

Interviewing

As an interviewer, I identified myself as a “traveler,” adopting Kvale and Binkmann’s (2009) two metaphors of the interviewer, a *miner* and a *traveler*. While as the miner metaphor suggests, the researcher aims to unearth knowledge existing in the interviewee’s interior, as the traveler metaphor suggests, the researcher understands interviewing as a process of knowledge construction (or a special form of conversation) by “walking along with the local inhabitants, asking questions and encouraging them to tell their own stories of their lives” (p. 48). For the traveler’s approach, I utilized in-depth, semi-structured interviews to facilitate the participants to freely express their ideas, impressions, and experiences without being overly interrupted and guided by my intentions. Nevertheless, I do not deny that my opinions might have influenced the process of generating interview data. The following description is the general interview process I followed during the fieldwork, which drew upon the interview guides of Emerson et al. (1995) and Jacob and Furgerson (2012).

Prior to each interview meeting, I developed an interview protocol reflecting recurring concepts from the earlier interviews, observations made in the field, and secondary data such as town magazines, newsletters, and Internet data. In the interview protocol, I included interviewing procedures and scripts of what I would say before the interview and specific interview questions as well. At the beginning of the interview, I shared with participants a description of my study and information related to the informed consent. I usually started with the basic background questions about the

participants, e.g., resident duration, average farm size, and farming methods, and memberships. When the participants continued to elaborate on their answers to the basic questions I had asked, I allowed them to do so. By doing so, I could get basic data that I had not yet asked about or after the scripted interview was over, I asked them to talk about questions to which I did not get an answer.

As a rule, I encouraged the interview participants to take my questions in several directions. I often used the phrase “tell me about” rather than many detailed questions (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). For instance, I preferred asking, “Tell me about the time when you converted to organic farming?” rather than asking, “What year did you convert to organic farming? What was the motivation for the conversion? How did your family react to your decision?” I realized that often such a broad question allowed the participant to talk uninterrupted and in turn, it gave me an opportunity to listen to their ideas, impressions, and concepts that I had not expected to hear but often became one of essential points of my research. As the interviews progressed, in many instances, there were pop-up and probe questions I asked, but I was also cognizant of not letting the interviews digress too far from my main subjects and questions that I had prepared. By doing this, I tried to construct “useful knowledge,” which as Kvale and Binkmann (2009) described, “neither inside a person nor outside in the world, but exists in the relationship between persons and world” (p. 53). In other words, I focused on listening to the stories within the participants’ own contexts, e.g., how they have negotiated around circumstances such as family demands, natural conditions, neighborhood relationships, and political situations when they adopted organic farming or decided to become a member of certain organizations to sell their products.

Since the native language of participants and myself was Korean, the interviews were conducted in Korean and audio taped with the participants’ consent. I also took written notes during the interviews, not only in the case when a participant refused to be taped or the circumstance was not possible to taped, but also in the course of the audiotaped interviews. I kept a research journal in which I recorded interview observations, reflections, and other pertinent information that emerged during the

interview process. At the end of the interview, I scanned the interview protocol to check whether there were unanswered or misunderstood questions that remained prior to finishing the interview, and I requested a permission to contact the participant for a follow up interview, if needed. My interview data comes from the 58 participants in this part of my research.

Participant Observations

Participant observation provides a deeper understanding of “what the people in some particular place or status ordinarily do, and the meaning they ascribe to what they do, under ordinary or particular circumstances, presenting that description in manner that draws attention to regularities that implicate cultural process” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 68). During the fieldwork, the participant observations took place in the form of attendance of a variety of meetings/gatherings/workshops organized by farmers, residents, or organizations in village/town-level, as well as occasionally at the city-level. This work also included visits to farming fields/local shops/ agro-tourism sites and active participation as a volunteer in farming and post-harvest activities such as vegetable packaging and delivery. I was able also to have informal conversations with residents and the occasional visitor who was travelling through Hongdong.

In the initial stages, the scope of participant observation was kept broad in order to become familiar with the setting; later it was narrowed down to focus upon the research questions. During the fieldwork, I took many still photographs as “means of remembering and studying detail that might be overlooked if a photographic image were not available for reflection” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 143, cited in Merriam, 1998, p.119).

The data collected from these participant observations were recorded in the form of field notes and/or my reflexive research journals, including a daily schedule of my activities. In order to encompass all the possible meanings and insight from given contexts, I endeavored to extensively describe what I observed using “thick description” (Geertz, 1994). Acknowledging that I was the primary instrument for data collection and

analysis, I maintained a research journal with daily detailed notes of my experiences, observations, and reflections on methodological, theoretical, and personal insights on my research.

Secondary Sources

Documentary data offer good sources for a qualitative case study because the data source provides contextual richness and helps to ground an inquiry for an investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Merriam, 1998). I was fortunate to be able to gather various types of such documents that pertained to my research during the fieldwork.

Off-line local documents

For a better understanding of Hongdong, I spent my time searching for historical and archival documents in the local library (*Balmal* library), the local used bookstore (*Neutinamu*), and the bookshelves of the several local organizations. A variety of documents gathered helped me to get a broader understanding of the background of Hongdong. For example, a book series called the Poolmoo School Collection, which I found in the *Balmal* library, included several invaluable documents that provided vivid information relevant to both the Poolmoo School itself, and to other local organizations, including the history of organic farming in this region. The material collected included i) public records such as statistical data, association manuals, program documents, and reports; ii) newspapers and magazines; iii) brochures and posters; and iv) images and films.

On-line data sources

The documents, texts, images, and films from on-line sources proved very useful in understanding the local context and people in Hongdong. Most organizations that I investigated for this study operated their own internet websites. They also provided access social networking such as Facebook or the Daum on-line café. For instance,

Mondang village has its own website to promote tourism at the village level. This website provided comprehensive information about tourism programs, accommodation and cost, as well as visitors' basic profiles with weekly updates, an online-products shopping site, and included visuals of tourism programs.

Data Analysis Methods

The data analysis process of this study began simultaneously with the data collecting. According to Wolcott (1994), if the researcher waits to analyze the data until all the data are collected, they miss the advantage of qualitative inquiry where new questions and themes emerge from the fieldwork process, which help the researcher adjust their steps. For this reason, I endeavored to analyze the collected data beginning my first day of fieldwork. This enabled me to modify my interview questions, re-evaluate my plans for recruiting interview participants, and in the selection of observation sites. After each fieldwork period, I conducted more intensive and comprehensive analysis of my entire data set. While I did not conduct an in-depth content analysis or discourse analysis of the secondary data, I did consider secondary data to understand the broader context of the research topics, and to get specific data during my analyses and interpretation process. I will present here the analysis method focusing on the process after the fieldwork.

Data Transcription and Organization

All data was categorized into three types: interview data, observation data, and secondary data. Interviews and field notes from participant observations were transcribed into a word processing program with their own labelling systems. The electronic photos and secondary data were grouped and saved in different sub-folders. All electronically saved data were backed up onto an external drive for protection against loss. The secondary data was organized as files in sub-folders on a computer, and some was stored in scrapbooks and file boxes depending on the types of data. I

transcribed all of the data myself, a tedious and time consuming task, which helped me gain familiarity with the data by providing deeper insight.

Interview data

In total, 58 interviews were used for the data analysis; this involved 20 females and 38 males. Their age ranged from the early 20s to the early 80s⁴. About half of the participants claimed farming as their principal occupation. The demographic information of all participants is displayed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Demographic information of total 58 participants

Gender	Age	Residence time	Farming
Male (38)	20s (1)	0-5 years (18)	Full-farmer (27)
Female (20)	30s (10)	6-10 years (8)	Half-time farmer (7)
	40s (21)	11-15 years (5)	Hobby-farmer (15)
	50s (15)	16-20 years (2)	Non-farmer (8)
	60s (7)	Native (25)	
	70s (3)		
	80s (1)		

I identified participants by giving each of them a number with the alphabet letter “I” rather than using pseudonyms. The interview data were divided into two groups by their resident duration. The mid-1990s was used as the standard criteria year because the

⁴ Regarding age, when possible, I asked the participant’s age during the interview. This was not always possible because in Korea it is not always proper to ask a person’s age particularly if you do not know them well. In this case I tried to guess his or her age by the other ways, e.g., from their school graduation year or others.

Gewnong (“back-to the land”) movement in Korea began around then.

- The native, long-term resident group consists of the participants who were born and raised in Hongdong, or moved to the area before the mid-1990s. They were given number “1” (i.e., I-1-1, I-1-2...I-1-25).
- The *Gewnong*, short-term resident group consists of the participants who moved to Hongdong after the mid-1990s. They were given number “2” (i.e., I-2-1, I-2-2...I-2-33).

The set of interview data coding indicators was developed for a more effective display of the participant profiles and doing analysis (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Interview data coding indicators

Coding Indicators	
Participant	Number to identify each interview participant
Residence	<u>Group 1</u> 1- Native 2- Moved to Hongdong before mid-1990s 3- Moved to Hongdong before mid-1990s (due to marriage) <u>Group 2</u> The exact duration years of residence in Hongdong
Farming	1- Full-time farmer 2- Part-time farmer 3- Hobby farmer 4- Not involved
Organic	1- Full-scale organic farming 2- Partial organic farming 3- Conventional farming 0- Inapplicable
Processing	1- Producing own processing food products 2- Not involved
Marketing	Market routes where they sell their agricultural and food products in the past 5 years 1. Poolmoo co-op 2- NACF 3- Local markets (e.g., local shops, restaurants, schools, etc) 4- CSAs (Community-supported agriculture, Gguremi in Korean) 5- Others (e.g., other co-ops and organizations, on-line, farmers' markets, and farm-gate)) 6- General food markets 0- Inapplicable
Position	Positions that the participants are taking (1.a. leadership position / 1.b. full-time employee) 1- Co-ops 2- Farming related organizations 3. Town or village residents' autonomy organizations 4. <i>Gewnong</i> (re-farmers) related organizations 5. Specialized organizations related to tourism, education, culture, etc. 6. Related experts & government officers 0- Inapplicable

Participant profiles

Group 1: The native, long-term residents (see Table 3.4).

- In total, 25 interview data were used for data analysis.
- Nineteen participants were born and raised in Hongdong; 5 female participants had moved to Hongdong (their husbands' hometown) after marriage; 1 male participant had moved there 32 years ago in order to start farming and a related business.
- Eighteen were full-time farmers; 4 participants farmed as a hobby or to assist family members; 3 participants had farmed but stopped.
- Twelve participants applied organic farming practices to their entire farm, and 8 participants did partially, in many cases, only for rice farming.
- Six participants produced their own processed food products for sale (e.g., vegetable pickles, juice, kimchi, and sauces).
- There existed several distribution channels through which the participants sold their agricultural produce and processed food products: the most popular route was the Poolmoo co-op (12 participants), followed by other co-operatives and routes (11 participants), the NACF (10 participants), general markets (10 participants), local markets (6 participants) and CSAs (3 participants).
- One-half of the participants occupied leadership positions. These positions comprised voluntary/honorary representatives in farmers/food cooperatives (6 participants), farming related organizations (5 participants), and/or village/town resident autonomy organizations (4 participants).

Table 3.4 Interview participant group 1 (Native, long-term residents)

Given #	Gender	Age	Residence	Farming	Organic	Processing	Marketing	Role
I-1-1	M	41	1	1	1	2	1,2,3,5	1a
I-1-2	M	61	2	1	1	1	1,4	0
I-1-3	M	60+	1	1	1	2	1,5,6	0
I-1-4	M	39	1	1	1	1	1,5	1a, 2a
I-1-5	M	75	1	1	2	2	2,6	3a
I-1-6	F	50+	3	1	2	2	2,6	2a, 3a
I-1-7	M	65	1	1	2	2	2,6	2a, 3a
I-1-8	F	53	3	3	1	2	2,3	5b
I-1-9	M	45	1	1	2	2	1,2,5	0
I-1-10	M	85	1	1	2	2	2,6	3
I-1-11	F	50+	3	4	0	2	0	0
I-1-12	F	73	1	4	0	1	3	0
I-1-13	M	53	1	1	1	2	1,3,5	1a,2a, 5a
I-1-14	F	69	3	1	2	1	3,4	0
I-1-15	M	40+	1	1	1	2	1,2	1a
I-1-16	M	50+	1	1	1	2	1,4,5	0
I-1-17	M	50+	1	3	1	2	2,5,6	6b
I-1-18	M	72	1	1	2	2	2,6	0
I-1-19	M	50+	1	1	1	2	1,5,6	1a
I-1-20	M	50+	1	1	2	1	1,5,6	1a
I-1-21	M	37	1	1	2	2	1,5,6	2a
I-1-22	F	60+	1	3	1	1	3	0
I-1-23	M	50+	1	1	1	2	1,5	1a
I-1-24	M	30+	1	3	1	2	0	0
I-1-25	F	50+	3	2	2	2	0	1b

Group 2: Gewnong, short-term residents (see Table 3.5)

- In total, 33 interview participants' data were used for analysis.
- Their average residence duration was approximately 7 years and ranged from 5 years or less (17 participants), 6-10 years (9 participants), 11-15 years (5 participants), and 16 years or longer (2 participants).
- They included 9 full-time farmers, 6 part-time farmers, 10 hobby-farmers, and 8 participants who were not engaged in farming activities.
- Twenty-one participants farmed organically on all their cultivated land and 3 participants partially adopted organic farming.
- Nine participants produced their own agricultural food processing products.
- They sold their agricultural products through CSAs (12 participants) followed by other co-operatives and routes (11 participants), local markets (6 participants), Poolmoo co-op (5 participants), NACF (2 participants), and general markets (2 participants).
- Compared with the first interview group who took leadership/voluntary positions, they worked as employees in farmers/food cooperatives (5 participants), specialized organizations (5 participants), village/town resident autonomy organization (3 participants) and farming related organizations (1 participant). Some of them took voluntary/honorary representative positions with Gewnong related organization (2 participants), farming related groups (2 participants) and farmers/food cooperatives (1 participant).

Table 3.5 Interview participant group 2 (Gewnong, short-term residents)

Given #	Gender	Age	Residence	Farming	Organic	Processing	Marketing	Role
I-2-1	M	40s	10	4	0	2	0	3b
I-2-2	M	44	2	4	0	1	0	0
I-2-3	F	50s	15	3	1	2	1,4,5	3b
I-2-4	F	45	9	4	0	2	0	5b
I-2-5	F	49	5	2	2	1	3,4,5	0
I-2-6	M	44	5	4	0	2	0	3b
I-2-7	F	56	1	3	2	2	0	0
I-2-8	M	50s	19	2	1	1	1,3,4,6	0
I-2-9	M	44	7	4	0	2	0	1b
I-2-10	M	47	15	1	1	1	1,4,5	4a
I-2-11	M	30s	5	2	1	2	3,4	5b
I-2-12	M	30s	5	3	1	2	2	2b
I-2-13	F	45	14	4	0	2	0	1b
I-2-14	M	42	4	1	1	1	4,5	4a
I-2-15	M	50s	2	1	1	1	5	0
I-2-16	M	50s	16	1	1	2	1,2,5	2a
I-2-17	M	47	13	2	1	2	3,5	2a, 1a
I-2-18	M	30s	5	4	0	2	0	1b
I-2-19	F	30s	5	3	1	2	0	0
I-2-20	M	46	6	3	1	2	0	5b
I-2-21	F	41	4	1	1	1	4,5	0
I-2-22	F	44	6	1	1	1	4	0
I-2-23	F	60s	4	1	1	1	3,4	0
I-2-24	M	30s	7	3	1	2	0	5b
I-2-25	F	20s	1	3	1	2	0	5b
I-2-26	M	36	3	1	1	2	4,5	5b
I-2-27	F	42	3	3	1	2	0	5b
I-2-28	M	44	10	3	1	2	0	1b
I-2-29	M	40s	6	3	2	2	0	0
I-2-30	M	30s	2	4	0	2	0	1b
I-2-31	M	60s	10	2	2	2	6	0
I-2-32	F	40s	5	2	1	2	3,4,5	0
I-2-33	F	40s	15	1	1	1	1,4,5	0

Observation data

The observation data was organized with the labels given the alphabet letter, “O” (i.e., O-1, O-2...O-25). Table 3.6 shows the examples of participant observations that I conducted during the fieldwork.

Table 3.6 Example of participant observations

#	Title	Date, Time, Place	Main activities
O-1	Staff training meeting, Hondong iCOOP	6/21, 9:00-12:00 iCOOP office	- Lecture and discussion about the history and policies of the iCOOP
O-2	The Japanese Sogo Coop visitors to Poolmoo Coop	6/22, 10:30-15:00 Around Hongdong area	- Tours (e.g., rice paddy, rice mil center, packing center, and storages)
O-3	<i>Nonghwal</i> (College students’s summer voluntary “agricultural activity”)	6/26~7/6 on and off In and around town	- The farming and cultural activities of the students (approx. 100 students of the Catholic and Sungkonghoe University)
O-4	Local women’s <i>Pungmul</i> band club meeting	6/27, 19:00- 23:00 Member’s farm house	- <i>Pungmul</i> : Korean farmers traditional percussion - Weekly regular practice meeting - Dinner & group conversation
O-5	Hongseoung Coop’s Provisional general assembly	6/28, 9:00-15:00 Hongsung co-op	- Amending the co-op articles - Membership luncheon and gathering
O-6	The contact ceremony between the iCOOP & Poolmoo Coop	6/29, 10:00-14:00 Hongdong elementary school	- Agreement about the 2013 producing and marketing plan - Luncheon and sports events of members
O-7	Gakkum (local gardening coop)	6/29, 14:00-16:00 Gakkum office	- Local gardening training program (5 th)
O-8	Granma Coop’s meeting (3th)	6/30, 16:00~18:00 Community Center	- Preparation meeting: discussion about the foundation day, place, and articles of the association
O-9	ChangJeon village’s senior women’s gathering	7/13, 16:00-18:30 ChangJeon Village Hall	- Group conversation
O-10	NACFA, the organic rice committee meeting	7/17, 10:00-12:00 NACFA	- Discussion for making a decision of the NACFA’s rice price (2013) and marketing strategy
O-11	NACFA, the organic compost research group meeting	7/18, 14:00-16:00 NACFA	- Sharing the results of rice field investigations where organic compost techniques applied

Table 3.6 Continued

#	Title	Date, Time, Place	Main activities
O-12	7 th Korea-Japan Integrated Rice-Duck Farming Symposium	7/21-24 on and off Around town	- Presentations about rice-duck farming techniques, policies, and related issues on Japan and Korea - Tour programs - Welcome & farewell party
O-13	Nutrition-Education Workshop, Chungcheongnam-do	7/24, 10:30-15:30 Yesan Agricultural Research and Extension Center	- Presentations of policies and typical cases related to local food, eco-friendly lunch program, school farming, education farm programs
O-14	Examination for the organic certification labeling (iCOOP)	7/25, 8:30-12:30 Dongmak village hall and rice fields	- Individual farmers' interviews - field investigations
O15	Radishe <i>Jakmokban</i> (crop interest group) meeting	7/27 10:00-12:00 Poolmoo co-op office	- Discussion about the specific crop's agriculture (e.g., allotment, farming techniques, purchasing price, standards of products, and rules of packaging and delivery, etc.)
O-16	Picked Radishe <i>Jakmokban</i> meeting	7/27, 14:00-14:00 Conference room of iCoop	- Distributing seeds
O-17	Strawbale houses construction	7/27, 15:00-17:30 8/2, 16:00-18:00 The construction site	- Three families (return farmers)' construction of strawbale houses - Volunteering work
O-18	Poolmoo Coop's vegetable committee board meeting	7/27, 18:00-20:00	- Discussion the issues related to the business partnership with the iCOOP
O-19	Local Humanities Lecture Series	8/7, 17:00-19:00 Balmal library	- Approx. 40 residents - Humanities lecture series: Korean history
O-20	The Dreams Community Garden (local organization)	8/8, 9:00-11:00 Hongdong Elementary School	- Summer program for the local children with developmental disabilities - Natural dying program
O-21	The Young Collaborative Farm (YGF)	8/9, 9:00-11:30	- Visit the working sites and doing volunteer work
O-22	Korean language class for Immigrant females	8/9, 14:00-17:00 Hongseong woman farmers' Center	- Korean language class for the local immigrant females
O-23	The Summer Membership Meeting of JongNong Farmers' Association	8/16, 15:20-23:00 Poolmoo High School	- Presentations about the history of JongNong and organic farming - Membership training programs and gatherings
O-24	Other tourism activities	Day to day	- Field trips of elementary students, Corn-Camp, CCEM membership Camps, etc - Picking your own vegetables/strawberries, rice-planting experience event, guided town tour, farm tour, etc.
O-25	Local shops and restaurants	Day to day	- Local women's shop, Gotgol shop, <i>Tteul, ect</i> , etc. - Observation products, price, qualities, consumers, shopping circumstances

Data Cording and Categorizing

The coding and categorizing process began with reading the interview transcripts and field notes. I marked passages that contained coherent and significant concepts, jotted down notes and comments, and encapsulated them with a representative word or phrase in the margins. This process is known as *open coding* (Charmaz, 2006). After working through the entire transcript in this manner, I reviewed the codes in the margins and then organized them into three research topics such as “History of nested markets” and “Small-scale farmers’ empowerment” and “Tourism development” that have been developed into three separate manuscripts (Chapters 4, 5, and 6).

More robust coding and categorizing processes were separately undertaken using these three topics. For each topic, I read the entirety of all of the interview transcripts and field notes again, considering whether the initial themes, which I had made during the open coding process, were properly given. Through this process, more specific themes were determined reflecting the purposes and focus of the research topics and questions. After that process, all the themes were compared to each other for possible connections and combinations to further develop categories.

In addition, Clarke’s (2005) situational mapping method was undertaken to generate “situated knowleges” (Haraway, 1991) during the analysis process. Situational analysis is an effort to shift to a more post-modernist approach while utilizing coding methods informed by grounded theory. While Charmaz (2000) emphasizes the shift from positivist to social constructivist approaches, Clarke (2005) adds relativist and postmodernism perspectives to this shift. The postmodern perspective views all knowledge as socially and culturally produced—Haraway (1991) specifically calls these as “situated knowleges” which are produced and consumed by particular groups of people, historically and geographically locatable. Situational analysis seeks to “analyze a particular situation of interest through the specification, re-representation, and subsequent examination of the most salient elements in that situation and their relations” (Clarke, 2005, p. 29). This analysis provides three kinds of maps that place emphasis on the complexities of situation as the grounds of social life:

- (a) Situational maps lay out the major human, nonhuman, discursive, and other elements in the research situation of inquiry and provoke analysis of relations among them;
- (b) Social worlds/arenas maps lay out the collective actors, key nonhuman elements, and the arena(s) of commitment and discourse within which they are engaged in ongoing negotiations—meso-level interpretations of the situation; and
- (c) Positional maps lay out the major positions taken (and not taken) in the data vis-à-vis particular axes of difference, concern, and controversy around issues in the situation of inquiry (ibid, p. xxii).

Drawing upon the situational analysis, I wrote down all themes on a big piece of paper and mapped them by circling, boxing, coloring, or underlining them to describe the relationships of the themes and categories. This mapping method was repeatedly conducted during the analysis. More detailed analytic procedures of different research topics will be discussed in the each manuscript. Related literature was frequently revisited in order to enhance a theoretical sensitivity during coding and categorizing process. The secondary data was also reviewed to get additional information or to fill the gaps founded in the primary data. For the entire process of analysis, Korean was used to keep the original meaning intended by the participants for trustworthiness purposes (Lincoln & Gonzalez, 2008). Only the usable portions of the data on the final report were translated into English.

Quality and Trustworthiness

Since a qualitative approach to research is based upon different worldviews and assumptions than quantitative research, many scholars argue for using different terminology and criteria to determine the quality of qualitative research results. Merriam (1998) stated that “If as in the case of qualitative research, understanding is the primary rationale for the investigation, the criteria for trusting the study are going to be

different than if discovery of a law or testing a hypothesis is the study's objective" (p. 200). Similarly, Wolcott (1994) suggested *understating* is "something else" which qualitative researchers seek to instead of validity. He defined understanding as "the power to make experience intelligible by applying concepts and categories" (p. 367), and what is researcher ought to seek is "a quality that points more to identifying critical elements and wringing plausible interpretations from them, something one can pursue without becoming obsessed with finding the right or ultimate answer, the correct version, the Truth" (pp. 366-367).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed the idea of "trustworthiness" which is analogous to the language of validity in positivistic research and proposed four criteria for ensuring trustworthiness, particularly to make qualitative inquiry more acceptable to conventional criteria. The four parallel criteria are *credibility* (positivistic term equivalent, "internal validity"), *transferability* ("external validity" or "generalizability"), *dependability* ("reliability"), and *confirmability* ("objectivity"). Firstly, credibility indicates how the study results are credible or believable in their compatibility between the constructed realities of participants and those attributed to them by the researcher. Secondly, transferability refers to the extent to which the study results are meaningful and applicable to other similar settings or contexts. Thirdly, dependability refers to how well designed the study is so that other researchers following the same procedures can reach the similar results in the same (or a similar) context. Lately, conformability refers to the degree to which the findings of the study can be confirmed or corroborated by others.

Despite the long tradition of using the Lincoln and Guba's (1985) parallel criteria, this approach has been criticized for its logical inconsistencies by defensively applying the postpositivist frame. Instead, Morrow (2005) offered particular standards of trustworthiness of qualitative inquiry such as sufficiency of and immersion in the data, attention to subjectivity and reflexivity, adequacy of data, and issues related to interpretation and presentation. Jamal and Hollinshead (2001) also identified engaged interestedness and reflexivity as important components of quality for which qualitative

researchers need to demonstrate their specific interests in engaging with the topic and their own positions. Further researchers need to understand how their own experiences and understandings of the world affect the research process including data gathering and interpretation of the participants' narratives. Furthermore, based on the discussions above mentioned, but sometimes choosing concepts that better represented my approach, I tried to ensure trustworthiness of this study and make it more understandable through the following.

Prolonged Engagement

I ensured I became familiar with the research setting before starting the fieldwork in Hongdong. As mentioned previously, my experiences at NGOs engaged in the region for years helped me to familiarize myself with the history, culture and social context of the research setting. It also helped me to develop strong rapport and trust with the participants in the study. For this study, I visited several times and stayed in the town in order to collect and analyze the data. These involved: i) the pilot study (summer 2011, 2 visits, total 7 days stay), ii) the fieldwork (summer 2012, approximately three months stay), and iii) the follow-up visit (summer of 2014, 5 days).

Persistent Observations

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), "If prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides depth" (p. 304). I attempted to secure persistent observation through living in the town during fieldwork, building rapport with the residents and involving myself in their daily lives, and conducting daily observations in diverse settings. During the fieldwork, I tried to create rich, thick descriptions because "the more grounded in supporting detail a researcher's findings are, the more credible and trustworthy they are" (Merriam, 1998, p.152). Taking photographs and videos provided additional background meaning to help interpreting the main data.

Crystallization

I tried to deploy a ‘crystallized lens’ rather than ‘triangulated lens’ in collecting and analyzing data. Ellingson (2009) stated that whereas *triangulation* seeks the truth by using various types of data and analysis to clarify a phenomenon, *crystallization* aims to show various partial realities with multiple viewpoints of a phenomenon. Crystallization can be secured by using multifaceted perspectives and multiple methods of collecting and analyzing data. Richardson (2000) stated that through crystallization, researchers provide a rich, detailed, complex understanding of the research topic. To enhance the crystallization, I drew upon interdisciplinary approach (e.g., rural sociology, community, tourism, and environmental study) and multiple methods (e.g., informal conversations, semi-structured interviews, observations conducted at different times and location, and secondary data). By doing this, I tried to obtain different perspectives and in-depth understanding on the phenomena under study rather than corroboration or cross check participants’ responses.

Member Checking

To enhance credibility, I conducted member checks for elaborating the generated data, but rather than for a sense of validation or verification. During the fieldwork in 2012, I shared my interpretations of interview data with the participants to clarify meanings and insure the accurate interpretations of their responses. In addition, I communicated with several participants through e-mail, Facebook messaging program, and phone after I returned College Station whenever I confused with the data. When I had the opportunity to revisit Hongdong in 2014, I shared the study findings with several participants and checked if my interpretations and conclusions accurately represented their interviews. I also asked additional questions to fill gaps that I had identified during the data analysis and writing process.

Peer Debriefing

Peer debriefing allows the researcher the opportunity to explore and clarify interpretations by exposing the researcher to extended discussions with peers about findings and interpretations (Merriam, 1998). For ensure credibility of this research through peer debriefing, I discussed with my advisors and fellow doctoral students in my field all along the process of my research. I also discussed my initial interpretations and findings with a Korean colleague who has conducted qualitative inquiries in other Korean rural settings, *Jeju*, which helped me clarify my coding and categorizing the data.

Reflexivity

Acknowledging that reflexivity is an important and constant aspect of qualitative research, I tried to report how my preconceptions, beliefs, assumptions, and experiences affect the research design and process in dissertation writing. In addition, I took a reflective journal with daily detailed notes of my experiences, observations, and reflections on methodological, theoretical, and personal insights on my research. This research journal allowed me to focus on my experiences during the fieldwork and my subjective reactions to the research process.

CHAPTER IV
DYNAMICS AND NATURE OF NESTED MARKETS
IN SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT:
A CASE STUDY OF HONGDONG TOWN, SOUTH KOREA

Overview

This research analyzes the dynamics of nested markets identified in Hongdong Town, South Korea, by tracking their historical roots and changes over time. Four distinct phases of historical development of the nested markets are examined: seeding/incubating phase (1950s-late 1970s), grass-roots/formative phase (early 1980s-mid 1990s), expanding/institutionalization phase (late 1990s-mid 2000s), and differentiation/hybrid phase (late 2000s-current). Results show a complex and dynamic process of origin and development of nested markets in which multiple actors participate actively, including established native farmers, new in-migrating residents, consumers' cooperatives, and various government stakeholders. Local ecological and historical specialties, together with global and national institutions, have shaped the popularity and development of nested markets as identified in the Hongdong rural domain. This study provides the mechanism and characteristics of the nested markets identified from the case study and insights into their potentials for sustainable rural development.

Introduction

Recent literature concerning rural development concludes that agriculture and rural modernization paradigm has been challenged by a new developmental paradigm that took hold in the 1990s (Marsden et al., 2001; van der Ploeg et al., 2000). The new paradigm, generally referred to as an *agro-ecological framework* or *sustainable rural development*, characterizes current rural development as a series of responses to adverse effects from the mainstream agro-food market (Altieri, 1989; Marsden et al., 2001; Sonnino et al., 2008). The development of innovative agro-food markets is observed as a

key practice of the new rural development that occurs not only in European nations but also in other nations such as China and Brazil (Oostindie et al., 2010; Ventura & van der Ploeg, 2010).

The term nested markets refers more pointedly to the markets that are emerging to respond the failures of the neoliberalist global agro-food markets (Hebinck et al., 2014; Ventura & van der Ploeg et al., 2010). A key distinctive characteristic of nested markets is the *embeddedness* in non-market social and ecological relationships, which is differentiated from the free market that is described as being *free* from any social interventions (van der Ploeg et al., 2012). Rather than limitedly aiming to foster agricultural growth, nested markets embrace and support a wide array of social goals by creating specific marketplaces where specific transactions take place between specific producers and specific consumers who are linked through specific networks (van der Ploeg, et al., 2012; van der Ploeg, 2014). Their strong embeddedness stems from being rooted in specific historical, cultural and local resources (“common-pool resources”) and/or in mutually shared rules/principles/values between producers and consumers. The embeddedness helps nested markets to resist and/or prevent being taken-over by multi-national, large agrifood markets (Polman et al., 2010; Schneider et al., 2014). This new approach inspires sustainable alternatives counter to the modernization paradigm that have dominated rural development policies and practices over the last century.

However, the incipient stage of the study about nested markets raises several questions related to not only the nature and function of nested markets, but also their changes over time: Have nested markets mainly emerged in developed countries like European nations where agricultural modernization has already been completed? Or, have they also been frequently observed in other nations? If so, under what conditions have nested markets been created? How do they differ from the mainstream free market in neo-liberalism? Who are the key actors in the creation and development of nested markets? Are these nested markets able to confront the mainstream free market or will they be taken over by it?

This present study aims to expand our understanding of nested markets from a qualitative case study conducted in Hongdong Town (hereafter referred to as Hongdong), South Korea (hereafter referred to as Korea). Hongdong is well known to the Korean people for its organic agriculture and agricultural cooperative movement promoted by local small-scale farmers to sustain their land and rural lifestyles against the rapid urbanization and market liberalization. By tracking local grass roots struggles from the 1950s onwards, this research identifies different types of nested markets in the rural agricultural setting of Hongdong and their particular mechanism and characteristics in terms of rural sustainable development.

This article is divided as follows: (1) a brief review of the concept of nested markets; (2) overview of the Korean rural development policies and practices; (3) presentation of case study methods; (4) description of historical development of nested markets; and (5) discussion about different types of nested markets identified from the analysis of case study and their characteristics. The article concludes with insights into the potential of nested markets for sustainable rural development.

Rural Development and Nested Market: the International Context

Recent research in rural development claims that the rural modernization development framework has been replaced by a new framework since the 1990s (Marsden et al., 2001; Marsden, 2003; O'Connor, 2006; van der Ploeg et al., 2000). This new rural development, referred to as an *agro-ecological framework* or *sustainable rural development*, is a “territorially-based development” which re-emphasizes food production and agro-ecology, re-asserting the socio-environmental role of agriculture (Marsden, 2003). The prior framework focused on agricultural productivity and market accessibility with the primary purpose of supporting urban economic development. By contrast, current rural development aims at redefining the role of agriculture in a society that supports a wide range of socio-political issues including food safety, security and justice, cultural and environmental conservation, and rural livelihoods.

The establishment and development of “nested markets” is recognized as the core practice of the new rural development (van der Ploeg et al., 2012; Ventura & van der Ploeg, 2010). The adjective “nested” explicitly highlights the embeddedness of markets in non-market, social and ecological relationships. It criticizes the free market assumption that markets are free as an attempt to artificially *obfuscate* the social and cultural roots, interventions, and structures in which all markets are inevitably embedded and by which most of the advantages are available to a handful of transitional agro-food companies (McMichael 2005; McMahon, 2002; Shiva, 2000). Nested markets are neither anonymous nor governed by the principle of the *invisible hand*; rather, they are nested in normative frameworks that are often associated with creating common goods and are shared by all actors participating in that markets (van der Ploeg et al., 2012).

Despite the diverse mechanisms involved, new nested markets are usually established through processes of social struggle, which create public concerns by revealing “the *lack* of social relations” inevitably caused by “structural holes (or chasms)” in the processes of globalization and de-regulation (van der Ploeg, 2014, p. 29). Innovative markets emerge by collective actions as the outcome of “bridging of structural holes” such as “growing distances between producers and consumers,” “the fear of renewal,” and “extended time and space distances” (more detail see *ibid*, pp. 30-33).

Nested markets often exist as specific segments of wider markets, but at the same time, are distinctive markets in terms of their dynamics, interrelations, governance forms, price differentials, distributional mechanisms, and overall impact on rural communities and society. These differences come primarily from the fact that a nested market is generally grounded in a common-pool resource (CPR) perspective or is “*in and by itself* a CPR” (Schneider et al., 2014, p. 194). These CPRs are essentially *non-material*, which is an important difference with most other CPRs, material things (e.g., irrigation water, common pasturelands, and joint parking spaces), discussed by Ostrom. The CPRs, which nested markets are rooted in, are characterized to be (a) grounded in a commonly shared set of rules. This set of rules (b) links specific producers and

consumers (through shared expectations, quality definitions, specific infrastructure, reputation, trust, etc.). It also (c) specifies resource use (also beyond the nested markets) and thus, (d) allows for the transaction of specific products (ibid. p. 195). Drawing on the discussion of linkage between nested markets and CPRs, some scholars explain why, despite being vulnerable to the exiting mainstream markets, nested markets can resist takeovers by large corporations and face the threats of mainstream ideologies (Polman et al., 2010; Schneider et al., 2014).

Van der Ploeg et al.'s (2012) study empirically investigated the dynamics and mechanisms of nested markets evolved in European nations, China, and Brazil. The study observed that while nested markets in European nations developed mostly focusing on “securing positive externalities” (e.g., the maintenance of quality of landscape, protection of biodiversity and animal welfare, improvement of food quality and rural livelihood), in China and Brazil nested markets are profoundly adjusted in accordance with social justice issues and peasant movements. Table 4.1 summarizes the examples of nested markets identified from the comparative study.

Table 4.1 Example of nested markets in Europe, China, and Brazil

Europe	China	Brazil
Nested markets aim for (1) high quality products, (2) organic products, (3) regional specialties (4) direct selling, (5) agro-tourism services, (6) care facilities, (7) decentralized energy production, (8) maintenance of landscape and nature, and (9) traditional diversification activities	Nested markets examples: (1) local markets for organic produce, (2) the Green Food market, (3) eco-agriculture that strongly builds on ancient agricultural traditions, (4) associated with ‘One Village, One Product’ and (5) for agro-tourism (e.g., the Hundred Miles Gallery)	Nested markets for peasants and family farmers are created through public programs such as the Government Food Procurement Program (PAA- <i>Programade Aqisicao de Alimentos</i>) and the National School Meal Program (PNAE).

Agriculture and Rural Development in South Korea

Despite having only 22 percent arable land with 70 percent being mountainous, Korea has a long agrarian history dating back to the early Neolithic period (King, 1911). The Korean Land Reform (1949-52) distributed farmland ownership to rural peasants, with about 0.9 hectares on average given per household. Until the 1950s, agriculture was the main economic sector and nearly 80 % of the population was engaged in farming. Since rice has been a staple food in Korea, supporting rice farms has been the most critical political issue in modern Korean agricultural development.

After the Korean War (1950-53), the manufacturing export-oriented economic development forced rural young people from their villages to the cities. A large amount of U.S. food aid under the PL 480 program (1956-70) kept food prices and wages low in Korea which gradually led to a collapse of the Korean agricultural sector, subsequently increasing their food dependency upon the international market (McMichael & Kim, 1994).

In 1960, the National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF, “*Nonghyop*”) was launched under the central government’s top-down approach. The *Nonghyop* was an umbrella organization of farm cooperatives in Korea that comprised almost all of the Korean farm households. Since its establishment, the *Nonghyop* has played a pivotal role in carrying out a number of services using the benefits from its own Agricultural Bank system and on behalf of the government; programs included collecting and marketing rice, educating farmers, providing them credit and insurance and assistance with the distribution of seed and fertilizer. In 1969, the Korean government enacted the dual rice price policy that purchases rice grains at a high price from farmers and sells to consumers at a low price to subsidize both farmers and urban workers.

The Rural *Saemaul Undong* (RSU: New Village Movement), a nation-wide comprehensive rural modernization project, was undertaken by President Park during the 1970s. Combined with the Green Revolution, the RSU extensively endorsed distributing hybridized rice varieties (i.e., *Tong-il* high-yielding rice variety), expanding irrigation infrastructure, and using synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Despite these supports, the

development gap between rural areas (an agricultural economy) and cities (a manufacturing economy) has been increasingly widening since the 1970s.

During the 1980s, with the advent of the Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture (URAA), and in spite of the increase in global market pressures, the domestic agricultural protection policies continued, supported widely by civil society in Korea. Following the success of the June 1987 Democracy Movement, anti-global free-market movements (e.g., the Save Korean Wheat Movement and the *Sintoburi*, “Healthier Domestic farm products” Campaign) became more active with the support of environmental and cooperative groups. A series of food contamination accidents and environmental mishaps, such as the Beef-Tallow Accident (1989), the *Rakdong*-River Phenol Accident (1991), and the Pus-Milk Accident (1995), further provoked public concerns about healthy and safe foods.

In 1993, the government introduced the concept named “Environmentally Friendly Agriculture (EFA)” a term referring to organic and low-input agriculture. The EFA Promotion Act (EFAPA) in 1997 and its national certification system in 2001 were subsequently established in Korea. Four certification emblems (labels & seals) were developed for fresh produce and grains, depending on the amount of chemicals and fertilizers used, and the number of years of adopting organic farming. These labels are:

- *Organic* (with green emblem) for at least 3 years with no chemicals including pesticides and fertilizers;
- *Transitional* (light green) under conversion to organic;
- *No Chemical* (blue) for products with no chemical pesticide use and half chemical fertilizer; and
- *Low Chemical* (orange) for products with a low level of chemical pesticide and fertilizer use (reduction to 1/2 chemical pesticide and 2/3 chemical fertilizer than that are used in conventional farming).

Rural tourism, often referred to as “Green tourism,” was promoted as a rural sustainable development from 1984 and gained momentum in the late 1990s. A range of

government-endorsed tourism projects have been announced, viz: Rural Traditional Theme Village (RTTV), Green Rural Experience Village (GREV), Integrated Rural Development (IRD), Beautiful Village (BV), Fishery Experience Village (FEV) and Integrated Rural Development in Mountain Areas (IRDMA) (Hong et al., 2003; Lee & Nam, 2005).

Korean society became highly restructured, becoming centered on neoliberalism principles, after the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997-98. As increasing national competitiveness became a dominant agenda, the government concluded that the agricultural sector was not competitive in comparison to the cheaper imported agricultural products. The structural adjustment program, enforced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), reallocated resources from agricultural sectors into manufacturing and service industries with increased emphasis on high-tech industries. Agricultural trade-related regulations and subsidies were eliminated following the edicts of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Beginning in 2005, the Korean rice market saw much increase in competition as a result of the abolishment of the governmental rice-purchasing program and an expansion of the rice market through imported rice that was made available directly to consumers. Until 2004 this released rice to secondary markets for processing.

In recent years, the Korean agricultural market has become a global one with the establishment of bilateral trade agreements with other countries, viz: Chile (2004), Singapore (2006), ASEAN (2007), the EU (2011), Peru (2011), the United States (2012), New Zealand, Canada, and China (2014). The national grain self-sufficiency rate in Korea has spiraled down to its lowest level in history as exhibited in Table 4.2. Korea now ranks much lower in self-sufficiency among the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) nations – at 23.1 percent in 2013. Nearly 57% of imported grains (wheat, corn, & soybean at the average of 2003-09) were purchased through four major grain trading companies; namely, Cargill, ADM, Bunge, and LDC (SERI, 2011).

Table 4.2 Ratio of food self-sufficiency in Korea (1970-2013)

Unit: %								
Year	Average	Rice	Barley	Wheat	Corn	Soybean	Potatoes	Others
1970	80.5	93.1	106.3	15.4	18.9	86.1	100	96.9
1980	56.0	95.1	57.6	4.8	5.9	35.1	100	89.8
1990	43.1	108.3	97.6	0.05	1.9	20.1	95.6	13.9
2000	29.7	102.9	46.9	0.1	0.9	6.4	99.3	5.2
2010	26.7	104.6	26.6	0.8	0.8	8.7	98.7	7.8
2013	23.1	89.2	NA	0.5	1.0	9.7	NA	NA

* Source: Ministry for Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (MAFRA, 2014).

The government's free market policy has provoked social protests against the global free trade system. Korean farmers have been at the forefront of such opposition, seeking to challenge and disrupt the global free trade agenda: in 2003, Lee Kyung Hee committed suicide at the Cancun WTO Summit; in 2005, a protest was held at the HongKong WTO meeting at Victoria Harbor. A nationwide candlelight protest against the US beef import took place in 2008 and the fears of mad cow disease (Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, BSE) brought tens of thousands of people into the street for more than 100 days, calling for the resignation of President Lee and demanding a ban on US beef. Despite the protests, US beef imports resumed and Korea became one of the world's largest importers of U.S. beef. The far-reaching social protests resulted in the 2010 launch of the free school meal program in Seoul, which was later added to other regions. This free school meal program aims to provide meals prepared with eco-friendly food ingredients and has been made available to all students regardless of income levels. In 2012, the Korean Co-operatives Fundamental Law went into effect and this is expected to facilitate the development of cooperative food markets.

Case Study: Hongdong, South Korea

Case Selection

Hongdong is administratively included in Hongseong *Gun* (“Country”), Chungcheongnam *Do* (“Province”) and have 14 *Ri* (“Villages”) including Mundang village, Kumdang village, and Unwol village. The location is easily accessible, barely ten minutes from urban areas, and only two hours by car from the Korean capital, Seoul. Its landscape consists primarily of rice paddies and other crop fields; rice is the most important cultivated crop as the land use distribution shows rice paddy (54.5%), dry paddy (42%), orchard (0.6%), and pasture (2.9%). Among 3,916 residents with 1,619 households, about 67% of residents were engaged in farming. The average farm size is about 1.4 hectares per household; 84% of farms cultivate less than 2 hectares, and conversely, only 0.67% farms cultivate over 10 hectares (Statistic Korea, 2010).

Data Gathering and Analysis

Qualitative data were gathered via participant observation, in-depth interviews and secondary data during three months of residency at Hongdong in summer 2012. To follow the origin and historical evolution of nested markets in Hongdong, “potential nested markets” were provisionally identified from the preliminary research in 2011 referring to Table 4.1. These included *organic rice products*, *traditional/healthy food*, *Korean native cattle (Hanwoo)*, and *agritourism*, which offered a starting point for the fieldwork and analysis process of this study.

Participant observation was conducted for “greater rapport, better access” to the residents and their activities, offering enhanced understanding of the phenomena investigated (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2010). It was conducted in not only directly related places with the potential nested markets such as local stores, restaurants, farming fields, tourism destinations, and processing facilities, but also extended to various activities and places including village gatherings, schools, town meetings, and workshops.

In-depth, narrative interviews were conducted with 58 individuals including farmers, village leaders, processors, distributors, government officials, and residents. Narrative interviews were adopted as “a way of understanding one’s own and others’ actions, of organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole, and of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time” (Chase, 2012, p. 656). Interview participants were encouraged to freely express their emotions, ideas, and interpretation beyond describing what happened during the rise and development of the potential nested markets and without being overly guided by the researcher’s intentions. Each interview lasted between one and three hours in Korean, and was recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysis.

For enriching the contextual, historical account of the potential nested markets and their relations to the Hongdong development, a variety of secondary sources was collected during the fieldwork. These include brochures, magazines, newspapers, images, films, organizational and personal archives, and journal articles via offline and online sources that are written in Korean.

As an analytic method, historical situational mapping analysis was used (Clarke, 2005). Field notes and interview transcripts were reviewed while doing initial open coding for identifying elements in the development process of the potential nested markets for different historical moments (e.g., people, animal, tradition, farming, land, idea, ideologies, policies, funding, world events, technologies, and so on). Next, the identified elements were listed on oversize paper divided into seven historical periods (1950s, 1960s ...2010s). The relationships of the elements were described by circling, placing in boxes, and underlining with different color pens. This historical situational mapping allowed the researcher to see all of the elements simultaneously and trace the relations among the elements over time, preventing either getting lost in too much detail or overlooking important elements. Results are summarized below under the four historical phases of developing nested markets.

Historical Development of Nested Markets in Hongdong

Through the data analysis, four phases of historical development for potential nested markets have been identified and described below: i) the seeding and incubating phase, 1950s-late 1970s, ii) the grassroots and formative phase, early 1980s-mid 1990s, iii) the expanding and institutionalization phase, late 1990s-mid 2000s, and iv) the differentiation and hybrid phase, mid 2000s-current.

1950s – Late 1970s: Seeding and Incubating Phase

Poolmoo School and “the great common people”

In 1958, the Poolmoo Agricultural Technology School⁵ (hereafter referred to as the Poolmoo School) was established in a blighted rural town, Hongdong, after the Japanese Imperial Period (1910-45) and the Korean War (1950-3). After the model of the Danish folk high school (known as *folkehøjskole* in Denmark), the school’s mission was to nourish poor local youths to be “*great common people*,” not elites so that they would create practical connections with their hometowns (Hong, 1996; Poolmoo School, 2008). The curriculum included subjects of humanities, ethics, cooperation, and democracy that would not be otherwise possible under the periods of military dictatorships in Korea.

Two Poolmoo School co-ops and the alumni

One of the School founders, Lee Chan-Gap (1904-1974)⁶ was a leader of the Buy Korean Products Campaign and the *Orsan* co-op movement on *Yongdong* Village, North Korea under the Japanese rule. After the division of the Korean nation, he wanted

⁵ 풀무농업고등기술학교 in Korean, “Pulmoo” means bellows, See the home page <http://www.poolmoo.or.kr/>

⁶ A Korean name consists of a family name first followed by a given name. The family name is usually one syllable while the given name is two syllables or sometimes one syllable.

to realize his ideal of building a co-operative community through educating local people in Hongdong, South Korea (Kim et al., 2012; Poolmoo School, 2008). Despite the government restriction, the schoolteacher, Hong Soun-Myung, taught his students about the subject of cooperative movement while referring to the Rochdale Society and the Raiffeisen's Credit Union. In 1959, two teachers and 18 students launched the Poolmoo co-op and opened a school store, which was known as the first consumer co-op in post war in Korea (Kim et al., 2012; Hong, 1996). In 1969, they founded the Poolmoo credit co-op, which later in 1972 was re-established as a local co-op to support local farmers suffering from high interest payments. Contrary to the social trend at that time, many Poolmoo alumni remained in their hometowns and owing to their continuing efforts, several organizations were established throughout the 1970s and 1980s. They include the Poolmoo Farmers' Society (1969), the Agricultural Machinery co-op (1975), the Hongdong Weekly News (1980), the Gatgool Daycare Center (1981), and the Sigol Publisher (1981).

Organic farming: Struggles over the Green Revolution

Organic farming was another subject that the Poolmoo School put a great effort into teaching the students. During the 1970s, organic farming directly challenged the Korean government policy that adopted the Green Revolution for increasing crop productivity (I-1-13; O-23). The use of hybridized seeds and chemical fertilizers/pesticides was increasingly encouraged through government subsidies and consultations especially through the Hongdong Branch of Nonghyop (hereafter, referred to as the "HN co-op"). Initially, two school alumni adopted organic farming in the year following a visit by a Japanese organic farming movement leader, Kodani Junichi to visited the Poolmoo School in 1975. Within a few years, more local farmers followed their example (I-1-13; Poolmoo School, 2008).⁷ However, these organic pioneers were

⁷ Kodani Junichi was the founder of the Ainoukai Association in Japan. During his visit, he apologized for his country's colonization and addressed making a peace in Asia through spreading the sprits and practices of organic farming. With this momentum, the Jeongnong Hoe

not welcomed. The village elders discouraged the younger farmers from adopting organic farming by using their patriarchal positions. The pioneers were even under government surveillance and inspection, being treated as communists (O-23).

Early 1980s – Mid 1990s: Grass-Roots Initiatives and Formative Phase

The initial direct marketing, “jicgerae”

The Poolmoo co-op was re-established in 1980 with 31 founding members (mostly comprised of local farmers) outside of the Poolmoo School, opening its own local retail store (Poolmoo School, 2008).⁸ A few years later, the co-op started a direct marketing program (“jicgerae”) with urban consumer groups such as women’s clubs and religious organizations, focusing primarily on economic benefits that would occur by cutting off several intermediaries (I-1-9; I-1-13). By the time the direct marketing commenced, the quality of organic produce was not well recognized and translated into premium prices because of a lack of consumer knowledge about the potential benefits of organic products. However, after the democratic movement success of 1987 in Korea, there appeared an increasing public awareness in anti-globalization and environmental issues, and this led to a growing consumer demand for domestic organic products. The Poolmoo co-op established a close partnership with the Womenlink co-op (one of consumer food co-ops in Seoul) in 1989 to establish a means of marketing its products, but local farmers remained skeptical about converting to organic farming (I-1-13; I-1-18). The farmers were concerned about the techniques of organic farming (e.g., weeding and pest control issues), unstable markets, and the negative hype attached to organic farming by the previous political regime.

(“Right Agricultural Association”), the first organic farmer’s association in Korea based on a Christian identity, was established in 1976.

⁸ Although most of the members were local farmers, the co-op officially remained as “consumer” co-op because of its historical root and the Korean cooperative law system.

The duck-Rice farming and solidarity between farmers and consumers

In this context, the introduction of the duck-rice farming technique (or Integrated Rice-Duck Farming, IRD) established a new era in farming (I-1-8; I-1-13). The duck-rice farming is a technique that uses ducklings released into the rice paddy to eat insects/weeds, pat down sprouts, and soften soil with their feet. By using ducks, farmers are more productive in rice farming with less labor and without using agricultural chemicals. Ducks had traditionally been used in farming in Asia, but this particular method for modern rice farming was just developed in 1989 by Takao Furuno, a Japanese farmer (See Furuno, 2001; Rutz, 2009; Suh, 2014, for more details). In 1994, three Mundang village farmers (Ju Hyeong-Ro, Gwak Min-Gi, and Lee Dong-Jun) succeeded utilizing this duck rice farming. In the following year, 19 neighboring farms (at total 10.5 hectares in the rice field in Hongdong) decided to adopt the duck-rice farming (I-1-8; I-1-13).

The first Duck-Rice Event was held in the same year as part of an “urban-rural exchange program” promoted by urban food co-ops (I-1-13). Funds contributed from the co-ops’ members were pre-paid to the farmers for the rice crops. Farmers invited the urban supporters to their rice fields at the day when ducklings were released to rice fields in early June. About 400 urban co-op members attended the first Duck-Rice Event and this event contributed to popularizing organic farming throughout the region by creating a “green, ecological” image of Hongdong. This single event was a source of pride for the residents—raising the sense of belonging and self-confidence (I-1-1; I-1-5; I-1-18). There was immediate growth in multiple social networks (e.g., with consumer co-ops in urban areas and environmental and consumer organizations) and forging new organic market routes.

Cooperative-based direct marketing further developed as the optimal way to maximize mutual benefits for farmers and consumers by securing fresh and healthy foods and, at the same time, protecting small-scale Korean farmers who were under the growing pressures of the global free market. Several rural tourism programs such as working at the farm, picking their own produce, and harvest festivals were later

developed by the joint efforts of the local farmers and consumer co-ops. Each recognized the potential of tourism in creating solidarity between farmers and consumers beyond the simple buying-selling relationship that is common in a conventional marketplace (I-1-13; I-2-20; I-2-27).

Poolmoo School Life co-op and “Gotgol” small co-ops

As the Poolmoo co-op developed as a local co-op, the Poolmoo School founded its own co-op in 1981, which started with the name of the Poolmoo Food Processing (PFP) co-op and then developed to the Poolmoo School Life Coop (PSL co-op) later in 1993 (Kim et al., 2012; I-2-17). The co-op and its own local store were simply called respectively the “school co-op” and the “*Gotgol* store,” following the historic name of the store location. The sale merchandise included fresh-baked breads made from Korean native wheat, and agricultural products cultivated organically by the Poolmoo School students, and traditional food products made by local residents, particularly senior women.

In later years, several other co-op oriented businesses and organizations such as the Poolmoo recycling soap workshop, the *Neutinamu* (“Zelkova”) used-book store, the Poolmoo sewing store, and the *Gakkum* Gardening co-op made their home near the Gotgol Store. They established a network in keeping with the cooperative principles of the Poolmoo School and the Poolmoo Ecological Agriculture Course (PEAC, “Poolmoo College”) (I-2-8; I-2-17).⁹

⁹ The Poolmoo Ecological Agriculture Course (PEAC, “Poolmoo College”) is a grass-roots college established in 2001 outside of the official educational system. The aim of the Poolmoo College is to educate younger people to live in rural areas to farm or do something related to farming as part of rural community. About 10~20 students newly enter the 2-year college level course per year. The students are required to live in a schoolhouse together at least during their first school year. They usually have lectures in the morning and farming in the school fields in the afternoon. Hong Sun-Myeong, the former Poolmoo High School principal, is now serving as a principal of the College.

Late 1990s – Mid 2000s: Expanding and Institutionalization Phase

Eco-friendly agriculture certifications

The enactment of the Environmentally Friendly Agriculture (EFA) Promotion Act in 1997 and the EFA National Certification/Seal in 2001 significantly shaped the development of organic farming and market. Prior to the advent of these protocols, the individual farmer's reputation—especially the farmer's ethics and knowledge of the farming—weighed more heavily than any formal quantified or specified standards when determining the quality of products (I-2-13; I-2-14). However, after the enactments of these policies both the organic materials and the products had to be certified by government rules and regulations. As reviewed earlier, the Korean organic labelling system had four seals under the concept of “environmentally friendly” products. This labeling system oftentimes caused confusion in a consumer's mind: the “no chemical” or “low chemical” products were deemed, falsely, to be better than “organic” or “transitional” products (I-1-13; O-23).

Two grass roots farmers' co-ops, the HN co-op and the Poolmoo co-op

Beginning the late 1990s and through the early 2000's, the number of farmers in Hongdong who adopted organic farming grew rapidly: for example, in the case of rice, the number increased from 19 farms in 1995, to 30 in 1996, 183 in 2001, and 430 in 2002. At its peak, 2006, about 800 farms were engaged in organic (including eco-friendly) rice farming; it occupied about 70% of total rice households and 86% of rice paddies in Hongdong (IDR, 2006). The farmers belonged to either single or multiple *Jakmok-bans* (“crop-working group”) in which they exchanged organic farming skills and marketing information. Around 2000, several *Jakmok-bans* for organic rice farming existed at each village while a few *Jakmok-bans* were organized for other organic crops and livestock at the town level. The rice *Jakmok-bans* in nine villages became members of HN co-op beginning 2001 and created their own umbrella association, the Duck-Rice Farming Committee (I-1-3; I-1-6; I-2-16). The rice *Jakmok-bans* in the other five villages decided to work with the Poolmoo co-op. Since the HN co-op dealt with only

rice crops, the other *Jakmok-bans* for grains, vegetables, and livestock established the Poolmoo Environmental Agricultural Farmers Association (PEAFA) under the Poolmoo co-op (I-1-10; I-1-23). In 2006, Poolmoo co-op numbered 1,008 members, and among them, 869 (86.2%) were farmers: 704 members, 112 members, and 53 members belonged to rice committee, vegetable/fruit committee, and livestock committee, respectively (Kim, 2008).

The organic products produced in Hongdong were sold through several market routes: Poolmoo co-op (47.4%), HP co-op (24.5%), self-consumption or relatives/friends (8.9%), and wholesale/retail dealers (9.2%) (Kim, 2008). Each of the two co-ops had developed multiple direct channels to sell organic products under its own brand name. For instance, based on the 2004 harvest, the Poolmoo co-op sold organic rice products to multiple consumer food co-ops (70%), school cafeterias (10%), processing food factories (10%), and other whole food retail stores (10%) (Poolmoo Co-op, 2005). Meanwhile, the HN co-op distributed rice products through its nationwide retail outlets (20%), the *Chorol-maeul* whole food stores (35%), the *Maeil* Infant Foods Company (9%), school cafeterias (8%), and other food retail stores and processing food factories (30%) (HN Co-op, 2006). The organic rice products were sold in higher prices, at a premium of 10% to 50% above the prices of conventional products, depending on the year and the type of rice (I-1-8; I-1-11; I-1-18).

Intensifying competitiveness and three big consumer co-ops emerged

Following the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, the intensifying competition from foreign food purveyors and from the larger Korean super market chains triggered a significant change in the food co-op sector in Korea. Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, a significant majority of grass roots consumer food co-ops integrated their order-supply process to reduce logistical costs, resulting in the emergence of three major

consumer food co-op affiliations: *Hansalim*, *Dure* and *iCOOP* (I-2-9; I-2-28).¹⁰ These co-op federations sought to focus upon “expansion and competition” by partially adopting a corporate-like business model (e.g., expanding memberships, building supermarkets, lowering the prices, and prioritizing consumer rights), deviating from cooperative principles previously pursued (e.g., educating membership, managing democratically, protecting rural livelihood, and generating public goods) (I-1-1; I-1-4; I-2-8; I-2-9; I-2-27; I-2-33; O-18). The membership and sales grew dramatically each year. For example, the size of the iCOOP grew from 1,229 members (with seven membership co-ops) in 1999 to 15,368 members (with 58 membership co-ops) in 2004. In 2004, turnover increased by about 17 times to that of 1999 (iCOOP, 2005). These three co-op affiliations began to dominate the Korean co-op market, becoming the most popular channel for distributing organic products (I-2-9; I-2-28).

With this restructuring of the consumer co-ops, the Poolmoo co-op closed its own local retail store in 2001 and ended other smaller marketing routes in order to concentrate on the relationship with the iCOOP (I-1-11; I-2-9). In a few years following, almost all products collected from Poolmoo co-op members were sold through the iCOOP’s logistical and distribution system.

Mid 2000s – Current: Differentiation and Hybrid Development Phase (Crisis & Opportunities)

Increasing eco-friendly rice products and the Poolmoo co-op’s crisis

To secure enough supply and reduce risks, both of the Poolmoo co-op and the HN co-op worked in close cooperation with their members (I-1-23; I-2-13; I-2-18; I-2-28; O-14; O-15; O-16). During the off-season, the co-ops would forecast the demand of crops for the following growing season, based upon their own research (e.g., previous sale patterns, partner consumer co-ops’ requests). An estimated amount was then allotted

¹⁰ The current official name is iCOOP Korea. iCOOP Korea began with 6 local co-ops in the Seoul-Gyeonggi area in 1998, called “The 21st Century Consumer Co-operatives” at the time.

to each of members who had applied for crop farming. The co-ops assisted their farmers during framing and certification processes (e.g., group purchasing materials such as seeds and organic fertilizers, informing proper planting and harvesting dates, and choosing certification agencies). During harvest, crops collected by the co-ops were processed, certified, packaged, and delivered to the business partners. Up until early 2000s, with demand outstripping supply, the organic products generally sold at a premium.

After the mid-2000s, the co-ops faced some serious marketing challenges (I-1-4; I-1-24; I-2-9; I-2-10; I-2-18; I-2-28). Both produced about 30% more rice in 2005 than the previous year. Yet, against all expectations, rice sales dived significantly. A large number of conventional rice farmers throughout the nation adopted eco-friendly (or organic) farming techniques in 2004-5, particularly due to the abolishment of the government rice-purchasing program. These new farmers tended to provide rice at cheap prices substantially supported by the local and regional governments. Their “no chemical” or “low chemical” rice products were not often differentiated from or even more being valued than the “organic” or “transitional” products produced by the Hongdong farmers because of the confusion regarding the Korean four-certification system that mentioned in an earlier section.

A huge surplus of organic rice, collected in 2005 by the Poolmoo co-op, remained unsold even after the harvest of 2006 (I-1-1; I-2-8; I-2-9). The iCOOP was able to consume just 60% of the expected amount. The Poolmoo co-op was forced to sell the surplus rice to general markets at a steep discount, creating a serious financial crisis for the co-op. The HP co-op experienced the same difficulties, with the difference that its own bank and nationwide retail outlets helped the farmers to better ride out this crisis (I-1-3; I-1-4).

Disbanded Poolmoo co-op and growing power of consumer co-op

After the 2006 rice crisis, the undemocratic management style of the Poolmoo co-op board became a more serious issue (I-1-1; I-1-4). With the growth in membership

and sales during the 2000s, direct member involvement with management had declined considerably, leading to a business structure where a few board members and business managers ruled decision-making, which included adopting a new business model, building new facilities, and starting a new business. For some years, numerous members voiced their concerns opposing the undemocratic co-op management. In 2005, a group of members exited the co-op to establish a new co-op named the HongSeoung Organic Farmers (HSOF) co-op and re-located to the neighboring town of *Janggot*.¹¹

With this dissention, the Poolmoo co-op board resigned in 2009, yielding temporarily control to the iCOOP (formally, the executive director of iCOOP) for about three years (I-1-11; I-1-23; I-2-9; I-2-10). A large-scale restructuring was undertaken to stabilize the co-op's business and management. The Poolmoo co-op and its affiliated organization, the PEAFAs were split into two independent bodies (practically consumers' and producers' organizations). Most members (farmers and producers) opted to continue their membership within the PEAFAs, while a few not engaged in farming, consumer members, and some farmers continued membership in either the Poolmoo co-op or became dual members belonging to both. Furthermore, the PEAFAs were divided into three independent producers' associations: the Poolmoo Rice Producers Association (PRPA), Poolmoo Vegetable & Fruit Producers Association (PVPA), and Poolmoo Livestock Producers Association (PLPA). In order to raise capital to repay its existing liabilities, the Poolmoo co-op (as a former form) liquidated its assets, such as land, the Poolmoo RPC (rice processing complex), and other logistic and packing facilities. The iCOOP acquired most of these assets.

Most of the interview participants viewed the Poolmoo co-op as being practically disbanded through this restructuring process although the Poolmoo co-op, which now took on the role of a consumer co-op, planned in 2013 to open a retail store in a nearby urban area (i.e., I-1-11, I-1-24; I-2-3; I-2-33). The Poolmoo co-op had

¹¹ The coop aims to expand its distribution network, having connection with several consumers' cooperatives, operating special organic corners in general groceries, and opening its own local retail shops and restaurants.

historically advocated primarily the local farmers' rights and benefits; many believed that its historical and philosophical legitimacy was sustained by the local farmers' ownership and participation.

Local farmers' discontent about consumer led, business-oriented co-op

According to the interviewees, each of the three Poolmoo Producers' Associations, now restructured resembled more a business-oriented organizations rather than their historic selves as co-operatives (I-1-1; I-1-19; I-1-20; O-18). For example, the board was populated with individuals who invested in the business and who made most of the decisions. There was a continuing debate whether the general members' rights and benefits would be proportional to their investments (O-18). Since 2012, each of the three Poolmoo associations and the iCOOP has made an annual contract to confirm their agreement of production and consumption (O-6; O-18).

There have been many debates and discussions concerning the restructuring process. Some interview participants perceived this situation to be “*undemocratic*,” “*business-oriented*” and placing “*consumer co-op's high-handedness*” over individual farmers and their organizations (e.g., I-1-1; I-1-3; I-1-11; I-2-3; I-2-8; I-2-33). Others accepted it as the only means of survival in the growing competition in the organic market (e.g., I-1-9; I-1-20; I-1-23; I-2-28). Yet most participants concurred that local farmers had lost bargaining power and had become increasingly reliant upon big consumer co-ops' directives. They expressed frustration at the farm gate price, which has remained steady or dropped even lower than prior levels, in spite of the rapidly rising living and farming costs. They attributed the new status quo to the distorted power relations between farmers and consumers and some interviewees even admitted that they have either stopped organic farming or withdrawn from the Poolmoo associations.

Return Back-to-the-farm farmers and innovative products

The most outspoken critics of the new direction in co-op organic market came from the return farmers (“*Gewnong*” people) who moved to Hongdong as part of the

Back-To-The-Farm (“*Gewnong*”) Movement. This movement started in Korea around the mid-1990s by Buddhist groups and other alternative living groups pursuing ecological lifestyles in rural communities. As the Poolmoo School and the Poolmoo College had strong connections with some of *Gewnong* movement organizations, Hongdong was a popular place for the *Gewnong* people (I-2-8; I-2-10; I-2-14). Some of the return farmers started practicing what became known as “beyond organic certified” practice (I-2-14; I-2-22). Rejecting the excessive use of artificial inputs such as plastic mulching, organic fertilizers, and improved varieties, the return farmers tried to revert to the original and nascent spirit of organic farming: minimizing artificial inputs and fossil energy, using indigenous seeds and adopting crop rotation and polyculture not all of which were required for general organic certifications.

An organic rice-livestock integration practice was also developed led by the Poolmoo College and some return farmers who foresaw the need of high quality organic fertilizers and beef products made safely and ethically. In this practice, animal manure was used as fertilizers and soil additives, the byproducts of organic rice such as rice straw, chaff, and rice bran found use as feedstuff and materials for managing cattle pens. As a result, this method allowed cattle, usually the *Hanwoo* breed, to flourish in a low-stress environment, being given food that did not contain either antibiotics or growth hormones.

More recently, an increasing number of the return farmers have participated in tourism dialogues and issues. The particular attributes of these farmers (e.g., generally well educated, younger, ecologically oriented, and/or trained in diverse sectors) elevated the trajectory of tourism development by either replacing the role of native farmers or promoting new types of tourism programs (I-2-10; I-2-24; I-2-26; I-2-27; O-7; O-24). In responding to commoditizing tourism, the return farmers tended to focus on developing educational tourism and social care farming service. Two examples of the innovative attempts by them are the Dreams Community Garden (DCG) and the Young Collaborative Farm (YGF). The Dreams Community Garden is a non-profit organization founded in 2010, and is dedicated to teaching local youth afflicted with intellectual and

developmental disabilities, on how to plan, grow, and sell garden vegetable and plants, providing community-integrated work circumstances and career opportunities (I-2-11; O-20). Another initiative is the Young Cooperative Farm, founded in 2011 by three return farmers to assist the newly arrived return farmers who may have suffered from limited farming skills and lack of land after moving away from the cities (I-2-26; O-21). Participant farmers learned basic organic farming skills and worked collectively on the farm, sharing the profits through an internship program.

Innovative distribution practices

The return farmers led several efforts at reducing dependency on large consumer food co-ops. The fastest growing new sales route in Hongdong was the Community Supportive Agriculture (CSA) practice (“*Gguremi*”) that delivers agricultural produce and homemade foods weekly or biweekly to members’ homes or offices. The *Gguremi* originated with the local return farmers who began delivery of their produce to friends and relatives in cities (I-2-14; I-2-21; I-2-22). As public interest in fresh and healthy foods gained popularity, this delivery method rapidly morphed in diverse forms. In 2012, there existed about five *Gguremi* programs in Hongdong, operated either by an individual farm or in a joint venture between two or more farms working together. These return farmers have multiplied their sale routes—such as farmers’ markets, online selling, farm gate sales, and local food network—rather than being solely dependent upon the large consumer food co-ops.

In recent years, established residents and long-time farmers sought new means of marketing and sales. For example, in 2012, some local senior women established the Poolmoo Grandma Farmers’ co-op (GF co-op), selling their products (e.g. agricultural products, homemade traditional foods, etc.) on “Grandma’s Table” at the Hongdong Visitor Center (I-1-22; I-2-6; O-8). The location became a popular spot for local residents and tourists who purchased locally grown fresh produce and exchanged ideas

about traditional processing methods.¹²

The Different Types of Nested Markets in Hongdong

This in-depth and detailed study has scrutinized the rise and change of the “potential nested markets” which initially identified in Hongdong. Several markets are added to the initial lists, specifically being dividing into two elements of markets: goods/services and market distribution practices as follows.

- A. Goods/services: organic products (including duck-rice produce), high quality agricultural products, slow/traditional/healthy food products, Hanwoo (Korean native cattle) products, agritourism (for outsiders) and community/social care farming services (for local residents) (more details see Table 4.3A) and,
- B. Market distribution practices: farmer & consumer’s joint co-op market, government-funded farmer’s co-op distribution, local food practice, and direct transition practice (more details see Table 4.3B).

In terms of “what the market is about,” i.e., the types of goods and services, which make up these nested markets and are related to at least one of the goods and services listed Table 4.3 A. Duck-rice was the leading force in initiating and expanding the boundaries of nested markets in Hongdong. Several duck rice products (e.g., white rice, brown rice, sweet rice, black sweet rice, etc.) were marketed under a single brand name and at premium price. Diverse traditional/health food products (e.g., sweet rice drink “*sikhye*”, rice-cakes “*tteok*,” and raw rice wines “*makgeolli*”) and agritourism services (e.g., the Duck-Rice Story Festival and hand-rice planting program) were later developed interrelating with the development of duck-rice products.

¹² In 2013, the HP co-op set up a dedicated corner in its local retail store for promoting local food system. The HP member farmers delivered their products (daily deliveries for farm fresh produce) to store keepers at the Visitor Center, who sold the products for a small fee, normally 15% to 20%. The participating farmers agree to set quantities and prices and were required to timely reimburse the retailer for the cost of unsold product.

The organic farming practices were adopted for other crops, viz: vegetables, and fruits (e.g., barley, soybeans, potatoes, cabbage, radishes, chili, red peppers, ginger, garlic, onions, mushrooms, apples and strawberries). These organic agricultural products also found use as primary ingredients in traditional/health foods (e.g., fermented soybean paste “*doenjang*,” red pepper paste “*gochujang*,” pickled vegetables “*jangajji*,” kimchi, home-made tofu, etc.). Wild herbs and greens gathered on cleaner sites enabled the local people to develop healthy and traditional food products. Beyond the value of these food products, the widely implemented organic farming in that region consequently resulted in improving biodiversity and local area’s ecological image. This, in turn, contributed significantly to the development of community-based green tourism, promoting cultural regeneration through events such as cooking classes, farm visitation programs, and village festivals.

The *Hanwoo* (Korean native cattle) were raised for a long period of time in the region and other regions throughout Korea, but it gained popularity as premium meat when co-marketed with the growing demand from both the organic farmers and consumers alike. Organic farmers benefited using the organic rice-livestock integration practices because they were able to both obtain improved quality of meat and rice and conserve natural resources through lower costs of outputs of feedstuff and organic fertilizers. The *Hanwoo* products organically raised and managed in Hongdong have been in great demand from consumers following the 2008 nationwide candlelight protest against the US beef import due to concerns about mad cow disease.

High quality products have seen resurgence in recent years promoted by return farmers who opposed the commercialization of organic farming and market practice. Rejecting highly industrialized organic farming methods, they reverted to the earlier ethos that drew upon organic farming methods and sustainability practices (“beyond organic certified” practice, e.g., eschewing fossil fuels, using indigenous seeds, adopting crop rotation and polyculture).

Along with development of educational tourism programs that were tailored for outsiders, a new form of “community care farming” awareness program was developed

in recent years, focusing on educating local students and the return farmers (e.g., the Dreams Community Garden & the Young Collaborative Farm).

Table 4.3A Distinctive goods & services in nested markets

Category	Characteristics	Related Products
Organic products	Organic certified products, particularly, rice products using duck-rice farming	Several types of rice, rice-processing products – e.g. sweet rice drink (<i>sikhye</i>), rice-cakes (<i>tteok</i>), rice noodles, and rice wines (<i>makgeolli</i>)
High quality products	Products produced using “beyond organic certified” farming including natural farming, biodynamic agriculture, permaculture, and often using indigenous seeds	Rice, other grains, fresh vegetables, fruits, free-range eggs, dairy products, etc.
Traditional and/or healthy food	Food products produced by local women, particularly the elderly women; using organic products and wild herbs and greens gathered on clean areas with local, heritage knowledge	Ferment soybean paste (<i>doenjang</i>), red pepper paste (<i>gochujang</i>), pickled vegetables (<i>jangajji</i>), kimchi, home-made tofu, dried products (medical herbs, wild herbs, greens and fruits), fermented juices, and traditional sweets and cookies.
Hongdong Hanwoo	Korean native cattle; organically raised in Hongdong, particularly using organic rice-livestock integration practices	Several products using prime cuts and grading system (based on the amount of marbling in the meat and the age of the animal).
Agritourism	Community-based tourism; approx. 20,000 visitors per year; group travelers from schools, consumer co-ops and associations	Popular programs: pick-your-own crops, hand-rice planting, village tour, and rural heritage program (cooking classes, natural dying, etc.)
Community care farming	Providing care and the opportunity of vocational education for people including local children and youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities, and return farmers and new residents	Dreams Community Garden (DCG), Young Collaborative Farm (YGF)

The goods/services are distributed through multiple routes, generally taking many different transactional forms that can be differentiated from general agricultural markets. Van der Ploeg (2014) defined such routes as a “socio-material infrastructure,” which definition is “the set of specific artifacts and rules that are used to channel flows of goods and services between places and people” (p. 24). As Milone and Ventura (2014) observed, they can be “hybrid forms of quasi-market, quasi-organization, or a market within the market” (p. 45) and “the boundaries and forms can continuously change over time within the organizational innovation cycle of transaction relationships” (p. 52). This study identifies four market distribution practices as summarized in Table 4.3B and below.

- Farmer-consumer’s joint co-op practice (“Poolmoo model”): the majority of organic farmers in Hongdong were the members of the Poolmoo co-op, which started as the Poolmoo School’s co-op in 1959. The co-op promoted direct marketing (“*jicgerae*”) with urban consumer groups in 1984. The co-op changed its market strategy from multi-relationships with grassroots co-ops into a single-strategic alliance with the iCOOP. Three Poolmoo Producers’ Associations separated from the Poolmoo co-op as of 2011, concentrating on a production part while passing over the other processing and marketing activities to the iCOOP.
- Government-funded farmer’s co-op practice (“Nonghyop model”): established as a parastatal co-op in 1961, the HN co-op (Hongdong local branch of the Nonghyop) began to support the Hongdong duck-rice farmers in the early-2000s. The organic rice products collected from the members were processed and sold through several market routes, particularly using the HN co-op’s nation-wide retail stores and infrastructures (e.g., staff, bank, and facilities).
- Local food practice (“Local model” or “Poolmoo School model”): there have been numerous grass-roots organizations and co-op oriented businesses in Hongdong inspired by the Poolmoo School and the Poolmoo College. Locally grown and processed agricultural products were circulated through local stores

(e.g., *Galgol* store & the Poolmoo Grandma Table), bars (e.g., *Tteul*), restaurants (e.g., *Singgut*, *Sangmi*), and kindergartens and schools, which were mostly co-owned by local people and operated under cooperative principles.

- Direct distribution practice (“Direct model” or “Gewnong model”): many *Gewnong* (return) farmers were disappointed by the centralized co-op led organic market (including organic certification system), which they thought was becoming more like the highly commercialized market and losing its initial spirit. They criticized the co-op led market for being much more suitable to mid-sized and larger farms rather than small-size family farms, which they considered as the cornerstone of healthy communities and ecological lifestyles. By developing their own direct market channels such as the CSA programs (“*Gguremi*”), farmers markets, and online sales rather than participating in the Poolmoo and the Nonghyop distribution models, they sought to protect their farming philosophies and ecological life styles.

The boundaries of nested markets can be delineated by the interrelations between these two market elements: the goods/services and market distribution practices. Producing only distinctive goods (and services) is not enough for creating nested markets. There should be new distinctive distribution practices combined with the goods/services, which are operated with a particular set of rules established by the negotiation of the participating actors such as farmers, distributors and consumers. This current study does not evaluate whether the nested markets identified above fit these key characteristics of *specificity*, *connectedness*, and *rootedness*, which Ploeg et al. (2012) identified as common features of nested markets (see pp. 149-159). Further research needs to examine more rigorously the nature and characteristics of nested markets in terms of these three features. This study concentrates on the evolutionary characteristics of nested markets as discussed on the following section.

Table 4.3B Distinctive market distribution practices in nested markets

Types	Poolmoo model	Nonghyop model	Local model	Direct model
Category	Farmers-consumer's joint co-op distribution	Government-funded farmers' co-op distribution	Local based distribution	Direct, short-cut distribution
Main participants	Long-term established, full-time farmers; organic farmers; big consumer co-op federations	Long-term established, full-time farmers; duck-rice farmers, comparatively older farmers	Return (back-to-the farm), part-time farmers and particularly those who are connected to the Poolmoo School and local organizations	Return (back-to-the farm), full-time and part-time farmers
Main products	Organic produce, Hanwoo, tourism	duck-rice produce, Hanwoo	Organic produce, traditional food, community care farming	Organic produce, high-quality products, traditional foods
Certifications	Required	Required	Not required	Not required
Circuits simplified	(1) ⇔ (2-1) ⇔ (2-2) ⇔ (2-3) (3-1) (4-1) ⇔ (5)	(1) ⇔ (2-1) ⇔ (3-1) ⇔ (5)	(1) ⇔ (3-2) (4) ⇔ (5)	(1) ⇔ (5)
Typical market forms	Home delivery, co-op own retail stores	HP own retail stores	Local stores, restaurants, local farmers markets, school cafeterias	Produce box, online sales (internet) farmers markets

* Note: The numbers (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) denote:

- (1) Individual farmers
- (2) Co-op: (2-1) Farmers' co-op, (2-2) Consumer co-op federation & national wide logistic system, (2-3) local co-op
- (3) Retail store: (3-1) big retail store (nation-wide), (3-2) small local retail store,
- (4) Restaurant: (4-1) co-op own restaurant, (4-2) local restaurants, (4-3) public (i.e., school cafeteria)
- (5) Individual consumers

The Evolutional Characteristics of Nested Markets in Hongdong

This research shows a complex, dynamic and ongoing process where new types of markets (“nested markets”) have been emerging and developing over time. As this study has traced and described, the current trend related to nested markets is the result of long established collective struggles of multiple actors, including long-term resident farmers, return farmers, and various levels of farmer and consumer food co-ops, civil organizations, and governments, responding to the adverse effects of the urban centered industrialization and profit-driven global market development. Not only local ecological and historical specialties but also global and national institutions have shaped the rise and development of nested markets identified in the Hongdong rural domain (for details refer to Table 4.4). Several characteristics are identified from analyzing the rise and development process of the nested markets in Hongdong as follows.

Multifunctional Agriculture and Synergistic Effect

The process of rise and development of the nested markets, identified above, demonstrates strong complementarity with the notion of ‘multifunctional agriculture’ (Knickel & Renting, 2000; OECD, 2001; van der Ploeg et al., 2000). In contrast to the modern recognition of agriculture the main goal of which is maximizing profits by producing “food, feed, fibre and (now also) fuel” (Polman et al., 2010, p. 295), non-commodity outputs from agriculture were also addressed in that rise and development process. The benefits highlighted include preserving rural cultural heritage, improving biodiversity, educating the younger generation, securing safe and wholesome food, and protecting local farmers. As described previously, the “synergistic effect” and “virtuous circle” generated was another particular characteristic clearly observed in origin and developing nested markets (Knickel, 2001; Marsden & Smith, 2005; Miele & Pinducciu, 2001). The reputation of Hongdong with a “green, ecological” image contributed to increasing external supports (e.g., government funds & expert consultations) and networks (with NGOs, experts, & other villages), and, interestingly, *Gewnong* farmers

who brought new ideas and resources into this rural town.

Local and Traditional Knowledge

Local farmers' knowledge played an important role in the development of the nested markets. Local knowledge embedded within the local ecology and culture was much more accepted or appreciated in the nested markets than in other general markets where only standard knowledge—scientifically and institutionally certified—was accepted to be useful or valuable. The role of local elderly women was particularly notable in this matter. Their role was not limited to providing traditional cooking and related knowledge (e.g., gathering wild ingredients & preserving ingredients) but also extended to other areas such as farming (e.g., skillful weeding, poly-culture, and traditional/local seeds) and education (e.g., handing down cultural heritage through different forms of educational tourism and local everyday lives). These activities were “not just about maintaining ‘old culture’” but rather “a constant replenishment of knowledge systems in the face of the dominating ‘ecotechnocratic discourses’ associated with globalization” (Marsden et al., 2001, p. 80). The role of young, returning farmers (*Gewnong* people) was also obvious in recognizing the value of local knowledge, encouraging the older people to recall and share their knowledge, and often assisting them participating in nested market activities.

Endogenous Potential: Local Schools and External Resources

Local-based educational activities remarkably contributed to the rise and development of the nested markets. The Poolmoo School provided the local poor youths with opportunities to be “great common people—farmers” but not “elites.” Comparatively many local younger people remained in Hongdong, and they led several local/regional farmers' and democratic movements throughout the 1980s and 90s. The local and regional leaders of diverse organizations including the Poolmoo co-op and the Nonghyop co-op mostly came from the Poolmoo School. This reminds us of the

importance of enlarging local “endogenous potential,” which refers to “local knowledge systems, but also to struggles of local groups to resist, propose and actively construct alternatives to industrial modernization and to their capacity to develop social networks to enable these” (Marsden et al., 2001, p. 80).

However, this study observed that local endogenous potentials are not something static or pinned to local resources. Rather, local endogenous potentials become richer and stronger when receiving, connecting, and interacting with external resources such as people, ideas, and the broader social discourse and movements as well. In the 1960s and 1970s when the Korean society extensively focused on agricultural productivity, the external connections that Poolmoo School had at that time (e.g., Japanese organic farmers group, volunteers and teachers from cities and foreign countries, etc.) helped the locals to have doubts about mainstream development projects (e.g., the Green Revolution) and propose other possibilities (e.g., organic farming & direct marketing). In addition, during the 1990s and 2000s, government policies and resources significantly influenced the expansion and trajectories of nested markets (e.g., organic certification, cooperative law, community-based rural tourism). Nevertheless, what is needed to be emphasized is that the local “critical consciousness” (Freire, 2000), which is grounded in local needs and initiatives, should not be overlooked in developing local endogenous potentials. This is important because internal needs and initiatives often tend to be subordinated to the external demands and institutions, which will be further discussed later.

Social Struggle: Structural Holes and Civil Society

Previous studies considered the emergence of nested markets as social responds to “failures” of the mainstream markets, in particular “the markets governed by global players, such as supermarkets and global commodity trading companies” (Hebinck et al, 2014, p. 5). Similarly, van der Ploeg (2014) conceptualized nested markets as collective struggles to “bridge” the “structural holes” created in mainstream markets. Following this concept, the analysis of this study indicates multi-dimensional “structural holes”

existed at certain points of the Hongdong history, which includes rural community breakdown, domestic agricultural market crash, ecological and cultural degradation, food unsafety, organic market commercialization, food injustice, and so on (refer to Table 4.4).

However, the matter of which particular “structural hole” appeared as a “*perceived* structural hole” was significantly defined by what civil society (often centralized civil society) was interested in, and thus whether the agenda created great public attention or not. For example, despite the long-established local efforts of creating a cooperative and organic market for about 20 years, the direct market route (“*jicgerae*”) became activated along with social movements (e.g., anti-globalization, protecting domestic rice market) led by centralized civil organizations after the success of the June Democracy Movement in 1987. As such, the structural holes are not physical (ontological) matters. Rather, they are socially constructed and their priority or urgency was made through ongoing socio-political interactions and negotiation in which multiple human actors participate presenting diverse, sometimes contradictory interests, visions, projects, and resources. As Hebinck et al. (2014) pointed, this study shows clear evidence of increasing power and involvements of civil society in all aspects of the creating and developing of nested markets in comparison to the past when experts and the state drove the rural development policies.

Multi-layered Counteractions and Returning Farmers

Related to the issue above, it needs to be noted that nested markets in Hongdong arose in response to not only the failures of neoliberalist free markets but also of other forms of nested markets. The Local model and the Gwong model emerged through the efforts of redressing the conventionalization of organic farming and large consumer co-op dominance (related to the Poolmoo model and the Nonghyop model), mostly led by return farmers. Social networks and information that the return farmers had accumulated from their previous city lives and diverse work experiences, ecological oriented attitudes, and particularly IT skills nudged them to create new types of nested markets that differ

from not only the mainstream markets but also the co-op dependent market (e.g., the Poolmoo model and the Nonghyop model). More recently, the role of return farmers has increased remarkably in shaping the trajectory of nested markets' development by either criticizing the commercialization of co-op markets or by promoting new agendas (e.g., welfare issues, animal welfare, endogenous approach, and social economy), and sequentially, there are growing tensions and conflicts between native farmers and this ex-urban return farmers. To develop a full picture of nested markets additional studies will be needed that focus on multi-layered counteractions among different types of nested markets and their dialectic evolutions and power dynamics related to these evolutions.

Internal and External Power Relations

Nested markets in Hongdong emerged through collaborations and negotiations between local needs and social demands at large as discussed above. It is consistent with Milone and Ventura's (2014) study of three European nested markets. They found that "the triggers for the emergence of these markets was almost the same, the need of farmers to find new ways of earning income in the face of an ongoing price squeeze, and the new and emerging needs of the civil society, which created new forms of demand" (p. 46). However, as previously mentioned, there existed unbalanced power dynamics between local needs and social (external) demands: in that relation, internal needs were often subordinate to external demands. In other words, local farmers' needs were frequently forced to surrender to urban consumers' demands. Many consumer food co-ops lowered prices while strengthening quality criteria for "securing fresh and safe foods at lower prices," which extensively acted against local small-scale farmers' incomes and livelihoods. A further study with greater focus on these power dynamics is therefore suggested.

Common Pool Resources

The result of this study shows that common pool resources (CPRs) are highly recognized in all cases. For example, rural tourism in Hongdong developed using the local historical, cultural, and natural resources such as the duck-rice farming practice, the Poolmoo School's history, unique brand of duck-rice products, and nostalgic images, which were not properties of any one single individual farmer and organization as they had been locally and historically accumulated. Prior studies pointed to the CPRs as the key that prevents nested markets from being taken away from the mainstream market or becoming conventionalized (Ploeg et. al., 2012, Polman et. al., 2010; Schneider et. al., 2014). However, its actual effect remains unclear in this study. Diverse factors affected the gradual commercialization and external dominance process over local initiatives as seen in the cases, particularly in the Poolmoo model. CPRs are not fixed, but rather they are continually interpreted and used differently by the actors who participated in relevant activities of nested markets.

Conclusion

This study has examined the different types of nested markets in Hongdong, their changes over time, and their characteristics as they differ from the mainstream markets. Four different types of food and agricultural markets are identified as possible nested markets to counter the industrialized global free market: (1) farmers-consumer's joint co-op practice ("Poolmoo model"), (2) government-funded farmers' co-op practice ("Nonghyop model"), (3) local food practice ("Local model" or "Poolmoo School model"), and (4) direct transition practice ("Direct model").

These nested markets have emerged and developed in response to the failures of the global industrialized agro-food free market as addressed in previous studies (Schneider et al., 2014; van der Ploeg et. al., 2012). Many socio-political factors influenced the introduction of nested markets and the social movement linked to local grass roots efforts played a key role in their emergence. In the late 1980s and the early

1990s, the social agenda for defending the Korean small-scale farms from the assault of global free market hastened the development of the Poolmoo model. This is consistent with the case of China and Brazil where nested markets were initiated by social movements in order to strengthen family farming (van der Ploeg et al., 2012). However, this case study has shown the focus shift in a social movement from production to consumption begun since the late 1990s, and it significantly shaped the trajectory of nested markets' development. New types of nested markets (i.e., the local model and direct model) emerged from the efforts of redressing the conventionalization of organic farming and large consumer co-op dominance (related to the Poolmoo model & Nonghyop model). This result raised an important issue of power dynamics between farmers and consumers, which needs further examination in a future study.

This study has also examined the complex and dynamic process of the origin and development of nested markets in which multiple actors participate actively, including long- native farmers, new returning farmers and residents, consumers' co-ops, and various local and government institutions. This study has highlighted the prominent role of the Poolmoo School in enlarging local endogenous potentials and simultaneously the important roles of external resources such as people, ideas, and knowledge as well as the broader social discourse and movements that make local endogenous potential richer and stronger in practice. The level of mutual assistance between local elderly women and the young, returning farmers provides significant insight into areas such as sustainable development of heritage, feminism, and conflict/power management.

Table 4.4 Rural development and nested markets in Hongdong

Key Elements	1950s-late 1970s Seeding/incubating phase	Early 1980s-mid 1990s Grass-roots, initiatives phase	Late 1990s-mid 2000s Expanding/institutionalization phase	Late 2000s-current Differentiation/hybrid phase
Time period	Land Reform (1949-52), Korean War (1950-3), US food Aid (1956-70)	URAA (1986), Korean democracy movement (1987)	Food contamination accidents; Asian economic crisis (1997), Eco-friendly agriculture promotion law (1998)	Expanding Neo-liberalism, Anti-US beef protest (2008), Korea-USA FTA (2012), Cooperative Law (2012)
Social Agenda	Modernization, manufacturing export-oriented economy development	Environmentalism, organic farming movement, cooperative movement	Back-to-the-farm movement, anti-GMO, anti-globalization movement	Social economy, local food movement, free-school meal movement
Particular Focus of rural development	Reduce poverty, <i>Samaeul</i> -movement, Green Revolution	Protection domestic small-scale farmers from global market opening pressure (e.g., buy domestic produce movement, direct marketing)	Expanding organic farming and direct markets, development organic regulations, and rural tourism	Multifunctional agriculture, endogenous development, local food system, new cooperative movement
Local landscape and activity (Hongdong)	Poolmoo School (1958); Poolmoo School Co-op (1959), Poolmoo Credit Union (1969), organic farming (1975)	Re-foundation of Poolmoo Co-op (1980), Direct marketing (1984~), Duck-Rice farming (1994) & Event (1995), Mundang village's rural tourism initiatives	Growing organic farmers organization in membership and sales; development of market infrastructures; rice incident (2005-6) and finical crisis; disbanded Poolmoo co-op & growing power of consumer co-op	Local concerns about commercialized co-op sector & dominant consumer powers, return to initial spirit of organic farming and co-op, increased roles of return farmers
Emerging New Product/ Service		Duck-rice produce, other organic crops (vegetables, grains), urban-rural exchange program (Duck-Rice Event)	Traditional/healthy foods, processing products, community-based rural (green) tourism	Hanwoo (Korean native cattle) High-quality products, new types of tourism and farm-education program (e.g. the Dreams Community Garden, The Rice Paddy School, etc.)
Emerging Distribution practices		Co-op market, direct market	Local stores, online markets	Produce Box, school food program, farmers markets, local food markets,

CHAPTER V
EMPOWERING SMALL-SCALE FARMERS IN NESTED MARKETS
A CASE STUDY ON HONGDONG TOWN, SOUTH KOREA

Overview

This study discusses the empowerment of small-scale farmers who participate in “nested markets” such as food cooperatives, local markets and community supported agriculture. Previous studies have argued that farmers participating in nested markets are empowered by extending their roles to the entire food system and using the extra income to strengthen multifunctional farming. This study conducts a comprehensive qualitative study of farmers’ experiences participating in four different types of nested market models—the farmer-consumer’s joint co-op model, the government funded farmers co-op model, local model, and direct model—which are found in Hongdong Town, South Korea. As a result, this study identifies several factors that facilitate or hinder the empowerment of participant farmers. A more in-depth discussion provides insights for multi-dimensional approaches to empowerment that involves democratic management, ideological struggle, participatory education, and self-consciousness.

Introduction

Small-scale farmers have exhibited an increasing potential for combating the difficult global challenges of today — food supply, reduction of poverty, sustaining communities, and conservation of natural and cultural diversity (e.g., Altieri, 2009; Oxfam, 2011; Shucksmith & Rønningen, 2011). Simultaneously, they have had to face threats to her/his farm’s own survival and livelihood resulting from the massive growth and domination of transnational corporations (TNCs), which continue to adversely affect sustainable development (Altieri, 2009; Araghi, 2000; Goodman & Watts, 1997; Oxfam, 2011, Shiva, 2000).

Responding to such threats from TNCs, the small-scale farmers have developed

innovative marketing routes: farmers' markets, community supported agriculture (CSA) practices, box schemes, food cooperatives, and fair trade markets. Some socio-economic benefits are well documented and include results such as the increase in farmers' income, promotion of local environmental stewardship, recovery of rural community culture, lessening of vulnerability in global agrifood market, promotion of safer and healthier foods, enhancement of social equity and democracy, and provided educational opportunities (Brunori & Rossi, 2000; Feenstra, 1997; Hinrichs, 2000; Lyson, 2004). However, in spite of the proliferation of studies regarding innovative markets, there is surprisingly a paucity of research seeking to relate the empowerment of the small-scale farmers with their active participations in these markets. Rather than assuming that these markets automatically ensure empowering the participant small-scale farmers, in-depth research, critically examining mechanisms and characteristics of the markets is warranted in order to determine the contributing factors that help empower its participant farmers.

The objective of this paper is to explore the dynamics of the relationships between empowerment factors and small-farmers' active participations in new emerging innovative agricultural and food markets. These markets are referred to as "nested markets" to emphasize their *embeddedness* in specific historical, cultural and local resources ("common-pool resources") and mutually shared rules/principles among participant farmers and consumers (Hebinck et al., 2014; van der Ploeg et al., 2012). This research builds on the chapter 4 that identified four different types of nested markets in Hongdong. While the chapter 4 explores a broad spectrum of nested markets, this chapter examines empowerment practices in the different types of nested markets focusing primarily upon the participant farmers' own experiences and interpretations.

Literature Review

The Potential of Small Scale Farmers in Sustainable Development

The underlying assumption behind the advance of agricultural modernization is

its unquestioned belief positing that large-scale, intensive farming offers a better means of feeding people and reducing poverty than any forms of small-scale farming (Altieri, 2009; Oxfam, 2011). The public has placed high priority on increased scale, specialization and technology-driven intensification farming throughout the world. However, after decades of slow decline, global hunger began to rise in the mid-1990s and soared during the 2008 food price crisis. The world's 48 poorest countries experienced more deepened poverty levels after opening up their economies to international trade and after the transition to large-scale agriculture (Braun et al., 2008). It also negatively affected the ecosystem in myriad ways due to the overuse of water resources, high reliance on oil-based agro-chemicals and diesel-burning machinery, growing application of genetic breeding technology and nanotechnology (Altieri, 1999; Scialabba & Williamson, 2004; Pimentel et al., 2005; Scrinis, 2007).

In recent years, the role of small-scale farming is viewed more favorably in terms of both productivity and sustainability. Some scholars claim that small farms are not less productive than large farms when the productivity calculations consider the total food yields and input costs (Altieri, 2009; Oxfam, 2011). Similarly, van der Ploeg (2014) argues that small-scale farms (“peasant agriculture”) have the best potential for meeting food sovereignty because of their production capacity based on sustainable and autonomous farming practices. Much public good from small-scale farming has been documented, including reducing soil erosion, protecting biodiversity, conserving cultural heritage, providing educational opportunities, and counteracting climate change (Altieri, 2009; Oxfam, 2011). These benefits are further underscored by the popularity of multifunctional agriculture in recent years (Marsden, 2003; OECD, 2001).

TNCs in Industrial Global Food Markets

One of the important features of contemporary mainstream food markets involves the rapid growth of transnational corporations (TNCs). A handful of food chain clusters monopolize every market sector from the business of seeds to the supermarket shelves (Lyson, 2004). Globally, four firms – Dupont, Monsanto, Syngenta, and

Limagrain – dominate over 50 % of seed industry sales; Cargill, Bunge, and ADM handle nearly 90 % of global grain trade; Wal-Mart revenues topped \$400bn in 2009, equivalent to the GDP of the world’s low income countries combined (Oxfam, 2011). Three most advanced food chain clusters—Cargill/Monsanto, ConAgra and Novartis/AND — focus on establishment of rules geared toward maximizing their profits and transferring costs and risks down to the weakest participants, generally the small-scale farmers and laborers. As one example, consider the portion of the total income retained by coffee producers, which dropped from 20 % in the 1970s to 13 % in the 1990s (Braun et al., 2008). TNCs have enlarged their power by lobbying vigorously global institutions such as International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to erase trade barriers and increase the consumption of their products (Shiva, 2000). Moreover, TNC’s control over the seeds and livestock genetics using the legitimacy of intellectual property rights (IPR) marginalizes farmers and more seriously, small-scale farmers in developing countries as evidenced by increasing lawsuits filed between Monsanto and individual farmers (Shiva, 2001).

Small-Scale Farmers in Nested markets

The term *nested markets* is used in this study, drawing upon the agro-ecological framework that views sustainable rural development as “progressively unfolding set of responses” to failures of the neo-liberal, global modernization project (Marsden et al., 2001; Ventura & van der Ploeg, 2010, p. 322). The emergence of nested markets to challenge the adverse effects of mainstream agricultural food markets is a central and common phenomena recurring recently throughout the world (van der Ploeg et al., 2012). Using the term “nested” represents a strong rejection of the mainstream market as a given and unchanged entitlement running in the self-regulating system. Instead, the essence of nested markets is their strong “embededness” that roots in specific historical, cultural and local resources (“common-pool resources”) and/or in mutually shared rules/principles between producers and consumers.

The newly emerging nested markets differ from general agricultural and food

markets in many aspects, which can be succinctly illustrated through the four questions (Bernstein, 2010; van der Ploeg et al., 2012; Schneider et al., 2014):

- (1) *Who owns what?* Instead of a few landlords and big companies, participant farmers in nested markets own (co-own) and control the most of socio-material infrastructure;
- (2) *Who does what?* The role of the farmer in nested markets is extended to processing, designing, selling, evaluating, and re-organizing compared to in the general markets where their role is limited to the delivery of raw materials for the food industry;
- (3) *Who gets what?* Farmers get a higher share of the total value added than in general markets where the most wealth is accumulated in larger food companies; and
- (4) *What is done with the surpluses?* Instead of using accumulated wealth for take-over of other enterprises, the surpluses in nested markets are mainly used to strengthen multifunctional farming and to improve livelihoods.

The previous chapter explored the rise and development of nested markets in Hongdong, and argued that the boundaries of the nested markets are delineated by the interrelations between two market elements such as “distinct good/services” (e.g., duck-rice produce, organic products, traditional foods, etc.) and “distinctive market practices” (e.g., cooperatives, direct marketing, local food systems, etc.). Nested markets are established and operated when the distinctive goods/services are combined with the distinctive distribution practices. Four different types of nested markets identified were the (1) farmers-consumer’s joint co-op practice (“Poolmoo model”), (2) government-funded farmers’ co-op practice (“Nonghyop model”), (3) local food practice (“Local model” or “Poolmoo School model”), and (4) direct transition practice (“Direct model” or “Gewnong model”). These markets are used for the cases to examine the empowerment of small-scale farmers who are participating nested markets in this study.

Case Setting and Research Methods

Case Setting: Hongdong Town, South Korea

Hongdong-Myon (“Township”) is one of many farming towns in Hongseong-Gun (“County”) in Chungcheongnam-Do (“Province”), South Korea. It contains 14 *Ri* (“Village”) including Mundang *Ri*, Kumdang *Ri*, and Unwol *Ri*. Located at the southwestern part of the Korean Peninsula, Hongdong Town is accessible within 10 minutes from the nearby urban areas or 2 hours from the Korean capital, Seoul, by car. The town has a population of 2,616 and 1,619 households with about 68% of the population engaged in farming. The average farm size is about 1.4 hectares per household; 84% of the farms cultivate less than 2 hectares and only 0.67% of the farms cultivate over 10 hectares. Rice being the most widely cultivated crop occupies 54.5% of the farm and others are dry paddy (42%), orchard (0.6%), and pasture (2.9%). Other crops include potatoes, cabbage, radishes, carrots, peppers, ginger, mushrooms, lettuces, apples, and strawberries. Of 1,619 total households, 415 raise Korean native cattle (“*Hanwoo*”) with an average of 20 heads per household (Korean National Statistical Office, 2010 Agricultural Census).

The Poolmoo School and co-op tradition

Hongdong is well-known to Korean people as an organic agriculture and agricultural cooperative movement. Much of this is a result of long-established efforts of the Poolmoo Agricultural Technology School (hereafter referred to as the Poolmoo School)¹³ which was founded in 1958. Under the mission of nourishing local underprivileged youth in order to help them become “conscious farmers,” the school’s curriculum included subjects such as humanities, ethics, cooperation and democracy along with farming techniques. The efforts enlarged “endogenous potential” (Marsden et

¹³ 풀무농업고등기술학교 in Korean, “Poolmoo” means bellows, See the home page <http://www.poolmoo.or.kr/>

al., 2001), particularly during the 1960s-1980s when urban centered development policies were dominant in Korea under dictatorial government. Many Poolmoo alumni remained in their hometowns where they actively promoted organic farming and launched diverse organizations, notably the Poolmoo Credit Union (1959) and the Hongseong Poolmoo Life Coop Association (“Poolmoo Co-op” in 1969) that significantly contributed to creating and developing nested markets in later years. Many local organizations have the word “Poolmoo” in their names and it indicates their strong connection to the Poolmoo School.

Organic farming

The Poolmoo School has been teaching its students organic farming since the 1970s. However, until the introduction of the duck-rice farming technique (also, referred to as “Integrated Rice-Duck Farming,” IRD) in 1993, very few alumni farmers were engaged in organic farming. Duck-rice farming is a technique that releases ducklings into rice paddies to eat insects/weeds, pat down sprouts, and soften soil with their feet. This technique requires less labor than traditional organic methods and at the same time, eliminates the need for agricultural chemicals (See Furuno, 2001; Suh, 2014, for more details). The duck-rice technique remained prominent until 2009 when a nation-wide bird flu (avian influenza) outbreak occurred in Korea. Thereafter, “apple snail farming” has gradually replaced duck-rice farming; occasionally one finds “rice bran farming” and “winter flooded rice farming,” adopted by only a few farmers, mostly young, ecologically conscious farmers (See Rutz & Zingerli, 2009, for more details). Since the late 1990s, the Korean government has supported organic farming to enhance the competitiveness of domestic agricultural sector, which faces competition from the global free market forces. Beginning early 2000s, a growing number of the farmers in Hongdong either entirely or partially adopted organic farming. As of 2012, about a third of the farmers were practicing organic methods, which covered 41% of rice paddies and 15% of dry fields of Hongdong's farming area.

Returned farmers, Gewnong people

The other characteristic of Hongdong is an increasing number of returned farmers migrating from cities to Hongdong. The returned farmers were often called “*Gewnong*” (“Back-to-the-farm”) farmers as they moved to rural areas as part of the “*Gewnong*” Movement, which started in Korea from the mid-1990s by Buddhist groups and other alternative living groups in pursuing ecological lifestyles in rural communities or engaging farming. Many of them decided to settle in Hongdong through the *Gewnong* movement organizations that had strong connections with the Poolmoo School and the Poolmoo Ecological Agriculture Course (“the Poolmoo College”).¹⁴ The comparatively young, highly educated, and ecologically oriented farmers have played important roles in the region’s development, particularly by bringing new thoughts and cultures (e.g., welfare issues, local education, animal welfare, endogenous approach, social economy) and initiating innovative market activities (e.g., high quality products, organic rice-livestock integration practice, local food markets, and educational farm services).

Research Methods

Data were collected through in-depth interviews and participant observations conducted in the summer of 2012 in Hongdong. Fifty-eight, in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with farmers, residents, shopkeepers and local government officials in Hongdong. Roughly one-half of the participants claimed farming as their primary occupation while 22 were either part-time farmers or hobby-farmers. Nine were non-farmers. The average size of their farms were about 1.5 hectares per household. Of the 47 participating farmers, 34 were fully committed to adopting organic farming, while the 13 others adopted a combination of techniques, organic farming amongst these. They sold their organic products through a variety of market routes, but mostly non-conventional routes such as food cooperatives, CSAs, on-line and farmers markets.

¹⁴ The college established in 2001 as a grass roots college in outside of the official educational system. 풀무환경농업전문과정 in Korean. See the home page <http://www.poolmoo.net/>.

Some participants also worked for the business organizations related to nested markets such as the Poolmoo co-op, local shops, and restaurants.

I endeavored to encourage my participants to feel free to express their emotions, ideas and interpretations beyond mere descriptions of their experiences in the nested markets. Furthermore, I was able to interact through informal conversations with residents and visitors who gladly opened up to my questioning. Each interview lasted between one to three hours in Korean and was recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysis.

Participant observation was conducted to obtain a rich and detailed perspective of the local setting (Emerson et.al., 1995; Marshall & Rossman, 2006). This comprised personal visits to pre-selected locations and events (e.g., farming fields, processing facilities, local shops, local schools, and agro-tourism sites), voluntary works in natural settings (e.g., wedding, picking peppers, vegetable packaging), attendance at a variety of formal meetings, cultural events and workshops organized in village and town-level, as well as occasionally at the city-level. The data collected from these observations were recorded in the form of field notes and my reflexive research journals.

In addition, a variety of secondary data was collected during the fieldwork in order to enlarge the contextual richness of the inquiry (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1998). The means employed included offline sources (e.g., local library, organizations, and schools) as well as online sources (e.g., local/regional governments and organizations' websites).

All field notes and recorded interview data were transcribed, tabulated and categorized using an identifiable labelling method. Observation data were labelled with the letter, "O" (i.e., O-1, O-2...O-24). Interview data were labelled "I" and divided into two groups according to the length of residency of the participants. The numerical digit "1" in the second spot (i.e., I-1-1, I-1-2...I-1-25) indicates that the interview participant is a "native-long term resident," born and raised in Hongdong or moved to the area before the mid-1990s. The number "2" in this same spot (i.e., I-2-1, I-2-2...I-2-33) indicates that the interview participant is a short-term, *Gewnong* resident who moved to

Hongdong as part of the *Gwenong* Movement. The number in the third spot represents an arbitrary number assigned to each individual interviewee.

The interview transcripts and field notes were repeatedly revisited and coherent and significant concepts were marked with representative words or phrases, using the system of *initial coding* (Charmaz, 2006). The initial codes were arranged under the four different types of nested markets, and then subcategorized into more specific themes related empowering or non-empowering factors determined by the participants' viewpoints. Due to the large spectrum and complexity of each case of nested markets, the activities relevant to agritourism and community/social care farming services were excluded from the analysis of the research presented in this paper.

The entire process of analysis was conducted in Korean to keep the original meaning intended by the participants for credibility purposes (Lincoln & Gonzalez, 2008). Only the usable portions of the data were translated into English in the final report by the researcher. Results are summarized below under the four different nested markets that are simplified for the analysis purpose of this study.

Case Studies: Farmers' Experience in Nested Markets

As described previously, nested markets in Hongdong can be categorized into four different nested markets, (1) farmers-consumer's joint co-op practice ("Poolmoo model"), (2) government-funded farmers' co-op practice ("Nonghyop model"), (3) local food practice ("Local model"), and (4) direct transition practice ("Direct model"). This section provides case studies from the four cases of nested markets.

Case 1: Farmer' & Consumer's Joint Co-op Practice ("Poolmoo Model")

The Poolmoo co-op was re-founded in 1980 as a regional co-op, being an offshoot of the Poolmoo School's internal co-op established in 1959. Since the launch of direct-market operations ("*jicgerae*") in 1984, the co-op expanded its business, establishing close partnerships with diverse urban consumer food cooperatives.

Generally, the Poolmoo co-op collects organic agricultural products from their farmer members and distributes the products to the consumer co-op(s)'s members while collaborating with its partner consumer co-op(s). To augment its members (farmers)' benefits, the Poolmoo co-op addresses the processes of planning (e.g., estimating production demand for the next season), farming/harvesting (e.g., group purchasing materials such as seeds and organic fertilizers, informing proper planting and harvesting dates), post-harvest handling (e.g., choosing certification agencies, rice processing, packing), and marketing (e.g., collecting, delivering). The organizational and marketing logistics vary over time and it is roughly divided into three phases as follows:

First phase (1984-early 2000s): the Poolmoo co-op operated its own local retail shop and created various business partnerships with grassroots consumer co-ops, school cafeterias, and food processing factories (“diversification strategy”). The co-op had both producer and consumer memberships but about 80% of the members were the local farmers.

Second phase (early 2000s-early 2010s): the co-op set up a strategic alliance with the iCOOP that was the fastest growing consumer co-op affiliation, resulting in shuttering its own local retail shop and disconnecting its ties to other small marketing routes (“single partnership strategy”). Since then, the Poolmoo co-op rapidly expanded its membership and volume of organic product sales. However, when a huge quantity of organic rice from the prior year remained unsold until the harvest season of 2006, the Poolmoo co-op had to sell the surplus rice to general markets at a discount (the “2006 rice incident”). This incident caused serious financial challenges for the co-op and resulted in conflicts among the members. The co-op board resigned in 2009 and ceded authority to the iCOOP (formally, the executive director of the iCOOP) for about three years.

Third phase (early 2010s-today): the Poolmoo co-op split into two distinct organizations, a consumer co-op and a producer association in 2011. The consumer co-

op (“Poolmoo consumer co-op”) was virtually disbanded.¹⁵ The producer’s association was reorganized into three independent Poolmoo Producers Associations (PPA), one each for rice, vegetable/fruit, and livestock production. Most of the assets of the Poolmoo co-op (e.g., land, rice-processing complex, packing facilities, etc.) were sold to the iCOOP. As of 2012, about 300 local/regional farmers participated in the three PPA and their products were distributed, under contract, through the iCOOP and its logistic and distribution networks (“PPAs-iCOOP alliance”) (See Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 The PPAs’ facilities and the brand image of rice product



Pride of the Poolmoo history and collective leadership

About two-thirds of the interview participants either worked in the past or were then working with the Poolmoo co-op. A majority of the interviewees expressed pride in

¹⁵ Most interview participants considered that the Poolmoo co-op was practically disbanded through this restructuring process. Despite the plan that the Poolmoo co-op (that now became a consumer co-op) planned to open its retail store in a nearby urban area, as many respondents believed that the historical and philosophical legitimacy was sustained through a farmer-led organization.

their achievements through their struggles and their commitment to organic farming and being a part of the Poolmoo's history. One co-op leader expressed that through the experience of collectively owning the co-op and managing it during a half century, the local farmers were able to establish their own spirit and a reputation that the organic farmers in other places would never have (I-1-23). Such a history influenced the farmers' self-perception and collective behavior, which enabled the Poolmoo to have a collective leadership in the Korean organic sector, even at the moment of crisis:

[During the 2006 rice crisis] We sold our rice without attaching the Poolmoo brand or certified organic seal. If we had sold under our name, we would have had more of a chance to reduce our losses, but we were well aware of the Poolmoo's status in an organic market. Our dumping price could have had a ripple effect and decreased the prices of other region's organic rice. This was an irrational decision in terms of business management, but that was the Poolmoo spirit and real leadership. Sacrifices and leadership like this is why others respect us. (I-2-9)

This is why big city consumer co-ops have been obsessed with creating partnerships with us, so they can secure low risk and high quality organic products. (I-1-23)

Benefits: incomes, emotional satisfaction, and self-determination

A majority of interview participants picked better income as the most important benefit from participating in the Poolmoo co-op. Until 2005, the organic rice prices were about 30~50% higher than the regular rice prices depending on a year and types of the rice in this farmer and consumer joint co-op market ("*jicgerae*," "direct marketing"). Other organic crops and vegetables fluctuated more in terms of their productivity, sales and prices; however, the partner consumer co-ops endeavored to secure the farmers a stable income through fund-raising and consuming campaign.

This was possible because the purpose of "*jicgerae was not a mere trading, but a social movement for creating a mutual community between farmers and consumers*" (I-I-13). Diverse educational activities including seminars, farm tours and farming programs were offered to urban co-op consumers. These activities helped create strong

trust, as one farmer cited, “*a kind of brotherly-sisterly bond between urbanites and farmers (1-2-20)*” beyond a simple buying-selling relationship. Some farmers referred to “*reducing feelings of isolation*” or “*creating self-confidence*” as the benefits they received by serving as speakers for the educational and tour programs or as the co-op board members. As one farmer expressed that “*for first time, I felt rewarded for what I have and proud of being a farmer (...) great responsibility for producing healthy food (I-1-1)*,” these connections empowered the local farmers to continue organic farming with self-regulations. As such, many respondents felt that they had power to make decision in farming and marketing processes in the past (e.g., choosing types of seeds and farming methods, pricing, packing, processing, and delivering, etc.).

PPAs-iCOOP alliance: Limited farmers’ role to delivery of raw materials

Because the fieldwork was conducted soon after the large-scale restructuring of the Poolmoo co-op in 2011, there arose debates about and critiques of the outcomes. While a few respondents agreed that the restructuring was essential for the co-op’s survival in growing competition of organic market (I-1-9; I-1-20; I-1-23; I-2-28), most respondents strongly criticized the restructuring as “*undemocratic*,” “*business-oriented*” and placing “*consumer co-op’s high-handedness*” over individual farmers and the Poolmoo co-op (e.g., I-1-1; I-1-3; I-1-11; I-2-3; I-2-8; I-2-33).

Each of the three Poolmoo Producers’ Associations (PPAs) was restructured to better fit a corporate model and not that of the co-op principles they established through history (I-1-1; I-1-19; I-1-20; O-18). The board was top-heavy with money-wielding investors, who were charged with making most of the important decisions. Debate continued on whether the general members’ rights and benefits would vary depending on the amount of their investments. One senior farmer showed his reticence about the new business direction:

I worked hard for the co-op (the Poolmoo co-op) for a long time with all my effort. But now it’s all useless. Now you need money; in fact, you need tremendous amount of money for large-scale farming or for investing. They say they will give more benefits if I invest ten million won (“\$10,000”). But it’s

ridiculous. Every co-op members should benefit equally if they are the members. Everything is now money, money, money. There is no co-op spirit anymore. (I-1-3)

Many farmers interviewed revealed their disdain for the partner consumer co-op, referring to the iCOOP, which they felt treated rural areas merely as a supply base for big cities and limited primarily to delivering raw materials for the consumer co-ops in cities. They expressed that they were not able to maintain self-respect and their dignity as independent farmers, given that the consumer co-op focused upon generating a profit, rather than building trust. One farmer lamented being relegated to their diminished status:

Now, we regard ourselves as *sub-contract laborer* to supply “*manufactured food*” to urban cities. We do not have any pride as independent farmers anymore. (I-2-33)

Under consumer centered distribution system, lower price, higher quality, stylish packaging, uniformity, efficiency... forced to live like the workers of a factory producing industrial products. (I-2-8)

Several farmers complained about the changed policies of the PPAs-iCOOP alliance, including its cessation of purchasing the products processed by the farmers:

Usually, fresh raw products are not very profitable. You have to process them to increase the profit margins. We used to dry and grind ginger ourselves and sell it but now the consumer co-op doesn't buy our processed products. They do it themselves. (I-2-10)

In recent years, the Poolmoo farmers have been asked to invest in the iCOOP's processing factory instead of processing the raw products on their own. This policy was borne of the idea that farmers would benefit more if they were to concentrate only on farming (producing raw materials) rather than on processing which carried a higher risk of failure. The few farmers in Hongdong that invested in the factory received a higher rate of return, which resulted in increasing debates among farmers. Some farmers welcomed this new policy, citing the previous failures and difficulties of processing; yet

a larger number of them criticized the policy for breaking the co-op's *limited compensation principle*. The principle prohibited members from generating surpluses, and if surpluses occurred, then any compensation generated by the surplus may be used solely for the benefit of the entire membership and the community at large (e.g., educating members, re-investing the co-op's common property, or support for other activities approved by the memberships):

It is nonsense that the co-op makes a higher return on investment than interest paid to depositors by a bank. In other words, the co-op is taking an unfair advantage of its members. Instead of generating such high profit margins, the co-op ought to provide higher compensation for the farmers or passed the savings to the consumers [...] the "leaders" have instead bragged about how their own returns on investment ranked higher than the returns possible in on a bank deposit. This clearly supports our claim that the co-op is pilfering money from other poor farmers who were not able to invest. (I-1-19)

Imposed low prices for affordable organic food

Price that the farmers received was another issue of contention surfacing repeatedly, and many interview participants felt that they had lost bargaining power and so had become increasingly reliant on the dictates of big consumer co-ops. They felt extremely frustrated at the fixed or even decreasing farm gate price despite the increase in their cost of living and the increasing farming costs. They had no choice but to comply with the price set by consumer co-ops because "*once farm products start rotting, negotiation comes later. There is nothing else for it but to accept the price they suggest. It better to throw all before they go all bad (...)*" (I-1-2)." The phrases, "*there is no production without consumption*" or "*affordable organic food for everyone including urban working groups*" that become increasingly used by the iCOOP or other citizen advocate groups illustrate the social pressures on farmers to lower their prices.

Unfair terms and enforcement of contracts

According to the farmers I interviewed, there existed distorted power dynamics between farmers and consumers over the contract terms and enforcement policies. They

felt that the changed structure of the PPAs-iCOOP alliance largely forced them into serving only the consumers' demands that were deeply rooted in the modern and an ecologically unrestricted life style. One comment received stated:

The rice-packing wrapper is made of seven layers of plastic. They pushed me to plant the Chinese ginger seed instead of the traditional Korean ginger because of the consumers' complaining that the Korean one is hard to peel off (...) choosing farming methods, determining whether this is good or bad, or anything else, everything is geared to fit the consumers' tastes and their convenience-seeking life style. (I-2-10)

Several interview respondents had contract issues with the PPAs-iCOOP and criticized them for not diligently fulfilling their contractual obligations with farmers in matters concerning product inspections and product returns, stated here:

Contract is useless. They only take the products in a good shape. There are too many regulations such as color, length, weight and thickness (...) what makes me more upset is that they often return to me the products for unreasonable reasons. Since those are all rotted and dried through all the way of come-and-go, I have no other ways than throwing them away. (I-1-1)

Several participants insisted that they had been blacklisted because they sold their products to the other co-ops or consumer organizations even though they provided the contracted quantities to the PPAs-iCOOP. One participant farmer claimed:

They call me a double-contractor who is selling products here and there. They say they are not going to trade with me next year. However, I can't just rely on one route. If I did, you may see, I wouldn't have any voice and would be a consumer's slave. I cannot trust the big consumer co-op. Maintaining connections with several co-ops requires a lot more work than concentrating on one big co-op, but it is the way I can protect my very minimum pride as a farmer. (I-2-33)

Organic certification & monoculture farming

The organic certification was frequently cited as cause for disempowering the farmers. They claimed that the assessment based only upon scientific criteria displaced all other possible avenues of creating trust between farmers and consumers, such as educations, face-to-face meetings and volunteering works that were discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of co-op development. One farmer contended:

The consumer co-op has become a large organization like Samsung. Since there is not any face-to-face relationship, the only possible way to secure the quality of the product is to rely on a certification system. Certification itself is based on distrust and suspecting others. Here, in this system, unless certification approves, my effort, history and philosophy towards organic farming shows nothing. I see it as invasion of my dignity. (I-2-8)

Similarly, another farmer referred to organic certification program that prevented small-scale farmers from entering organic markets and, more importantly, she felt, from engaging polyculture. She said:

We can't do various small quantity farming (in the current organic certification). Certification system would be the best if after getting land certified, I am allowed to grow anything on that certified land, but the current system requires me to get each type of farming certified. If I make any change from the initial plan, I have to be approved for the change, which requests me a lot of paper works. Within such a condition, farming various at a small quantity is too complicated and difficult. (I-2-33)

One respondent maintained that the result of restructuring into the PPAs-iCOOP alliance was the only means of catering to the growing needs of major cities, and the farmers were directed to “*manufacture*” “*a single product on a large scale.*” (I-2-8)

Case 2: Government-Funded Farmers' Co-op Market (“Nonghyop Model”)

The National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF, “*Nonghyop*”) is a parastatal farmers' co-op that was established in 1961 by the Korean central government.

A majority of the Korean farm households are members. Since its establishment, the Nonghyop has played a pivotal role in carrying out a number of services on behalf of the government (e.g., collecting and distributing rice, providing credit and insurance through its own Nonghyop Bank, distributing seeds and fertilizers and providing education and training for the members).

In the early 2000s, the Hongdong Local Branch (hereafter, the local NH or the Hongdong-NH) began support programs for the local organic rice farmers. It organized the Hongdong-Nonghyop Organic Farmers Association (HNOFA) as the subordinate organization. Out of the 1500 members of HN co-op, about 400 farmers produced organic rice, using mostly duck-rice farming methods (See Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 Hongdong NH duck-rice product



The Hongdong NH purchases organic rice from its members using the allocated government funding. The rice is then processed in the rice processing facilities, packed with own brand, and finally sold through various market channels. For example, in 2004, the NH co-op distributed the members' organic rice products through its nationwide retail outlets (20%), the *Chorok-maeul* whole food stores (35%), the *Maeil* Infant Foods Company (9%), school cafeterias (8%) and other food retail stores and food processing factories (30%).

Emotional security and strong support system

The Poolmoo co-op was the biggest player in selling a large range of organic products, but in the organic rice sector alone the Hongdong-NH had garnered more members than the Poolmoo co-op. Each Hongdong farmer growing organic rice belonged to a networking group organized at the village level called organic rice *jakmok-ban* ("crop-working group"). The mandate of this group was to promote free flow of ideas and the exchange of information and knowledge related to production and marketing of organic rice. Of the 14 villages in Hongdong, nine villages, through their own *jakmok-bans*, established business relationships with the Hongdong-NH. Between 1969 and 2005, the government subsidized the sale of rice – through a dual price rice subsidy/policy – offering to purchase rice from the farmers a higher and selling to the public at a loss. The Nonghyop, under a national agency agreement with the central government, conducted the purchase and sale of rice under this policy. Thus, the local farmers, particularly older farmers, had a history of mutual trust and familiarity with the Hongdong-NH. One senior farmer expressed his strong commitment to the NH co-op, "*How can I believe private cooperatives? Look at them [the Poolmoo co-op]. They've got a lot of debt. The government never perished. I have sold my rice to the government for a long time and will continue to do so (...)*" (I-1-5)

In practice, the Hongdong-NH benefited from the historical ties and the powerful networks with the government. The NH-owned financial arm of the business (e.g., banking and insurance), the NH nation-wide retail store ("*Hanarum*"), and the

governmental subsidies significantly have helped the Hongdong-NH's organic rice marketing efforts. The Hongdong NH was therefore able to survive the 2006 rice incident with much greater ease than the Poolmoo co-op (I-1-4). The Hongdong-NH was able to pay their members in full after the rice harvest using the low-interest government funds. Most other larger embattled co-ops like the Poolmoo were forced to go to banks (most likely NH Bank) to seek high-interest loans, adding further to their financial woes.

Benefits: premium prices, communality, and co-responsibility

All interview participants expressed their satisfaction for the premium price they had received in the past. Some recalled the period through the mid of 1990s and at least until 2004, when demand exceeded supply; the NH co-op led the organic rice market. The increased income was used partially for the communities such as in the case of the Mundang village. Duck-rice farming was first embraced by the Mundang village in 1994. Any excess profit realized through the duck-rice sales was used to purchase vacant land for the construction of the Mundang Center of Environmental Farming Education. The education center (owned and operated by the Mundang villagers) has served as a place an educational institute and offers accommodation for official visitors of the Hongdong region. This Center became a catalyst for the development of rural tourism (e.g., the Duck-Rice Event, the Duck-Rice Story Festival, and rural village experience programs).

The terms “communal spirit” and “co-responsivity” translated loosely from Korean, repeatedly surfaced during the interviews. A former co-op manager illustrated how these terms became a part of the lexicon in the co-op operational practices:

[According to the year crop plan] we had to allot the estimated amount of rice to each of village *jakmok-bans* and then, the each village had to again divide the re-allocate an amount for each individual household in that village. In general, the rice prices vary depending on the types of crops, regular rice, colored rice, or sweet rice... The black-sweet rice was the most profitable at that time almost twice more than the other types of rice. You may expect conflicts to arise from that situation. But, through formal and informal meetings, the decisions were

made very smoothly. During my experience working for six or seven years, I never observed serious conflicts caused from this matter. (I-2-13)

This communal ethic was very much prevalent and evident during the pre-growing season and through the post-harvest and certification process. She continued:

Since we did not tag the exact farmer's name on the collecting bag, and mixed all the collections and processed them all at once, if someone broke the rules, we were all in trouble... it would be the biggest disaster we could image. In other words, if one person used a pesticide, in that system, everyone had to collectively take the responsibly. (I-2-13)

According to her, the system carried obvious risks. For it to function efficiently, this system relied heavily on each farmer's honesty, ethics, self-discipline, and a sense of shared responsibility ("co-responsibility"), this resulted in a strict adherence to the principles of organic farming without undue policing. All participating farmers were well aware that a single breach of standards would hold serious repercussions affecting the wider community of farmers. The co-op instituted management rules and programs (e.g., organic farming principles, educational and training programs, and peer farmers' review process, and formulated penalty provisions and its enforcements guidelines), grounded in reality and widely supported by the participating members .

Bureaucracy and passive attitudes toward organic marketing

Any unpleasant experience mentioned by the interview participants almost entirely concerned the lack of aggressive sales efforts by the Hongdong NH in catering to the organic market business. Instead, the local organic farmers had to independently initiate an organic marketing campaign. The NH management and staff were resigned maintaining the status quo, embracing the passive and self-preserving attitude:

Regardless how much sold, they receive the same salary constantly. They have no plans, nor see any pressing reason to sell organic rice and expand the organic sector. Their main goal is to preserve their jobs and positions. For them, there is no reason to take the risk. (I-1-13)

Several interview participants felt that the passive attitude was fundamentally a result of the NH's revenue model in which most profits came from the credit business (e.g., bank and insurance business) and also some from the sales of upstream agricultural materials (e.g., seeds, fertilizers, herbicide, mechanics, etc.). By contrast, they said that it was hard to create any profit from the supplying and marketing agricultural products. Thus, the NH had not been willing to confront the aggressive marketing strategy of big grocery chains as one farmer mentioned, "*They don't want to take the hot potato. Credit business is pushover. Every farmer need a loan, so by providing local farmers with loans the interest income continues to pour in every night and day.*" (I-1-4)

Superficial perception of organic farming

The NH co-op saw a growing number of members who converted to organic rice farming after 2004-5 when the Korean government abolished the rice-purchasing program. Many farmers who feared that the rice price would fall due to the FTA's adopted organic farming. Since their decisions were primarily to secure a stable market route and income, latecomers focused more on maximizing profits rather than adhering to the initial organic and cooperative ethos. One farmer said:

The native farmers cultivate organically for the crops and vegetables they will sell, but they farm conventionally for those they eat. The country people are not naïve; rather they are trapped inside a capitalist model. (I-2-8)

The younger native farmers of Hongdong have gradually expanded their organic farm size. They have been aided to a large degree by low-interest loans and government subsidies that were slated to support the mid-to-large size farms. One former member of the co-op stated:

Native young farmers are very aggressive. Most land here is owned by them. They do organic farming in such a big land only motivated by making a profit. Look at those ugly plastic mulching covering all the ground. How can they say that the plastic is sustainable? They use lots of unnecessary organic fertilizers and F1 breed seeds. I am sure they rarely even touch land because they are always using the machines or employ older people to work for them. They don't

care about the land, healthy food or the community. They only care about the money (...). (I-1-24)

Case 3: Local Food Practice (“Local Model” or “Poolmoo School Model”)

After the Poolmoo co-op was spun off from the school, the Poolmoo School founded its own Poolmoo School Life co-op (hereafter referred to as “the school co-op”) in 1993. The school co-op opened a local retail shop, bakery, and eco-soap workshop, called collectively the “school shops” or the “*Gotgol* shops,” inspired by the old name of the location (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3 The school shops’ signs



The school co-op shop processed mainly agricultural products locally and ecologically grown and some handicrafts made by the locals. Some examples includes fresh baked breads from Korean native wheat, rice and vegetables cultivated in the Poolmoo school farms, soaps made from recycled cooking oil, and traditional homemade foods prepared by local senior women. Later, around the mid-2000s, several other co-op

oriented businesses and organizations such as the *Neutinamu* (“Zelkova”) used-book store, the Poolmoo sewing store and the *Gakkum* Gardening co-op were established near the school shops. They were closely knit within the network of the Poolmoo School and the Poolmoo College, sharing their operational principles and diverse resources.

Revive local communities with small-scale farms

When I asked about the benefits that the school co-op participants received, one teacher of the Poolmoo College answered with the rhetorical question, “*Who does the market exist for?*” and continued to speak:

The large co-ops (the Poolmoo co-op and the NH co-op) are only interested in selling organic products to the big cities when our children in our regional schools are given cheap agricultural food. What kind of organic spirit is that? (...) We need to focus on restoring communal life within our region, not on the business minded co-op that sells wellbeing products to metropolitan areas. (I-2-8)

He was also deeply disappointed at the recent phenomenon where urban consumer co-ops have been deviating from their early spirit and became too commercialized like large corporations. He insisted that to be different from the big corporations, “*the consumer co-ops need to consider about the agricultural issues and the livelihood of farmers*” beyond “*only focusing on buying our products for lower price*” (I-2-8). According to him, it was important to recognize the interrelationship between local markets and small-scale family farms for sustainable rural development:

Lot of small-scale farmers in a village indicates a large population, which means school could be maintained, a barbershop could be made, and bus could operate. This means there exist foundation for regional community to be sustained and prosper. School, restaurant, barbershop, market, teacher, city bus, these thing could only be kept if there is people living here. Since people moves out to the cities, these businesses start disappearing one after another. Consecutively, people and the region lose its vitality. For that reason, more leave. This is vicious cycle. (I-2-8)

The recognition that diverse small businesses are essential to enrich their lives, the local farmers established the school shops “*for serving the need of local people, operated by local people, with the principle that the profit should go back to the local people (I-2-17).*”

Non-discrimination principle & social responsibility

The school co-op shops share a “non-discrimination” principle in which the membership status does not make any differences in the services available to the customers. Despite the legal status as co-ops, many of the school shops do not have any restrictions for non-members participating in and using their services. One teacher introduced a relevant episode to illustrate the policy:

One student worker asked me, “She is not a co-op member...she is my neighbor. What should I do?” Here, we don’t discriminate people based upon their membership status. Non-members and subscribing members are offered identical service and prices. Everyone visiting our shop is our neighbor so we ask for same price and level of service. Even though co-op members had expenditures, our purpose is not to create a profit; we developed this program because we felt the responsibility of recognizing the value of such a program in our community. (I-2-17)

Figure 5.4 The School co-op’s self-service stand



This policy came from the recognition of the immense value of the co-op's social responsibility to counter the fast-growing "members only" trend in which many co-ops only addressed rights of their own members. This teacher thought that co-ops should offer opportunities of building democratic responsibility and participatory skills through more active involvement in the co-ops' managements. The "self-service stand" (see Figure 5.4) and "price set by the providers" were the few examples for facilitating the democratic practices:

All local farmers may sell their products at the shop. The farmers set the prices themselves. We only raise the price by minimum operating cost. The self-service is introduced to reduce the operating cost and also to provide opportunity to the local people by encouraging democratic practices and developing a high level of trust amongst peers. (I-2-17)

Local circulating economy

The "local circulating economy" was one of the often-repeated phrases during interviews. The local (community) currency, "*Ttel* currency" illustrates their ambition to establish the local circulating economy. "The *Ttel*" is the name of the community co-op bar (restaurant) operated by a group of local residents who are, for the most part, affiliated with either the schools or the *gewnong* (back-to-the-farm) people. They reopened the restaurant in the winter of 2010 when the only other bar in the town had closed because of financial difficulties. They issued the *Ttel* currency for use in the bar, and introduced in three denominations (See Figure 5.5)

Figure 5.5 The local currency



They believed that the local currency would stimulate the trade of locally produced and available goods and services by developing partnerships with other local business and official organizations:

The currency currently hasn't gained wide acceptance, and of course it can't compete with the national currency, but imagine that the county uses those currencies to partially pay their employees, teachers and others; then it would help local economy a lot. Since the local currencies can only be used in the local region, it prevents outgoing transfers of money. (I-2-1)

Mutual aid and local networks

Some interview participants brought up the idea that a local economy may be stimulated through restoring the traditional culture of mutual assistance, the premise

being that exchanging labor and resources can be a viable alternative to a dominant national or global currency system. By exchanging what they possess, people can live creatively and freely; they would then not be continuously exchanging cash for goods or labor, and *vice-versa*. One interview participant illustrates the idea:

In city, if you want do anything, you have to pay professional to do the work, but in the rural country, we use networks between people. For example, if my house heater needs to be fixed, my neighbor that has the skill could fix my heater then in return, I could help him do his farm work. Here (the school co-op), our job is to connect the networks between these peoples. (I-2-17)

A few women I met suggested that the local shops should serve to facilitate local people's networks beyond being merely a trading place for selling and buying products. For them, the local shop, *Hamgge-mekun-saramdul* ("people who eat together," often referred to as "the women shop") was the more than just a shop where "*we chat here waiting for children to be back from the school. It's like a town's meeting place*" (I-2-3). The women shop, operated by the Center of Hongsung Woman Farmers, had a small grocery, thrift and clothes' alternation corner as well.

The "Poolmoo" people & distance from the local people

Some interview participants expressed their negative feeling toward the school shops that are organized and operated by the "Poolmoo people":

Here we call them "The Poolmoo people". Since they have such a big power and are taking exclusively care each other, what my husband said, if he could, he would buy the Poolmoo diploma. (I-1-11)

The women that I met at the women shop they could feel the distance and alienation whenever they visited the school co-op shops:

Local students used to go to the Poolmoo School. But, now the students and teachers are mostly those who come from outside cities (...) I only use the

school shop when I need the bread, or I don't go there. At there, I felt uncomfortable like I am at a strange place (I-1-25)

Limited, small market scope and boundary

Some farmers, including part-time farmers, realized that they could not depend entirely on these outlets, because this local market area was not large enough. One woman had tried to sell her homemade spices and pickles through the school co-op store and the woman's store, but decided recently to stop:

This village is a very small consumer base. Also farm products are harvested all the same time. We have similar skills so we have to compete within such a small place. (...) Local people often say our products should be cheap. I set up the price of my *denjong* (soybean paste) after calculating the expenses, but everyone says it is too expensive. Only two were sold in these stores. I don't want to sell my products in this community anymore. (I-2-5)

Case 4: Direct Transition Practice (“Direct Model” or “Gewnong Model”)

Hongdong has witnessed an increasing number of “*Gewnong*” (back-to-the-farm or “refarm”) people since the mid-1990s as described previously. In 2012, there were roughly 60 *Gewnong*-households in Hongdong. Before moving to Hongdong most established networks with the Poolmoo College through outside organizations like the *Jongnong* (“Right Farmers”) organization and the Centre of *Gewnong* Movement (“Reformer School”). Upon settling in Hongdong, they tended to join in the Poolmoo co-op in order to develop local connections. However, many of them left the co-op during the restructuring process of 2010-2012.

The *Gewnong* farmers have attempted to revert to the earlier ethos of organic farming by minimizing artificial inputs (e.g., organic fertilizers, plastic mulching, and tilling) and fossil energy (e.g., green house farming) as well using indigenous seeds—all were not required by general organic certification regulations. Organic rice-livestock integration practices have been also adopted in recent years. Manure is used as a natural fertilizer and soil conditioning. Rice byproducts (e.g., rice straw, hull, chaff, and bran)

are used as livestock management materials. In addition, they established their own direct market channels such as the *Gguremi* (“package” or “basket”), farmers markets, and online sales.

The fastest growing sector was the *Gguremi*, a Korean-style Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). The operation delivers agricultural produce and other products through a nationwide door-to-door delivery system, directly to shareholders, most of whom live in urban areas. In general, the members would receive, on a weekly or biweekly basis, a food basket containing fresh organic vegetables, fruit, and eggs, in addition to homemade foods like kimchi, pickles, and other side dishes. In 2012, five *Gguremi* programs were in existence in Hongdong operated either by individual farmers or jointly by several neighborhood farmers. Thirteen interview participants were engaged in the *Gguremi*: ten interview participants were the *Gewnong* farmers and three were native farmers.

Sharing stories and restoring strong relationships

The participants claimed that the *Gguremi* connected the farmers and consumers by delivering, in addition to agricultural and food products, discourses on their farming philosophies, their ecological values and life experience stories. The farmers published weekly newsletters and organized talks and events, encouraging face-to-face meetings with their consumers. In addition, they deployed modern day social media (e.g., Facebook) and text messaging to facilitate communications. All of this fostered a familial bond, and a sense of mutual understating and trust, which resulted in “*whether there are wormholes or not, and the cheap prices won’t be a factor anymore when they [the shareholders] choose produce*” (I-2-14). The farmers felt obliged due to the added responsibility to produce healthy foods and to consider their members’ specific situations (e.g., whether they needed special items for sick family members, which vegetables they received too much or too little of, or which side dishes they preferred, or did not like, etc.) (1-2-23, 1-2-19).

Fair price & constant income

Most of the returning farmers received a regular paycheck each month when living and working in the city. At present, making a living as farmers, they have had to give up the guaranteed paycheck, and they have felt insecure in having now to rely upon an unstable income from farming (e.g., I-2-19, I-2-21). Many respondents repeatedly mentioned securing fair prices and adequate cash flow as the benefits from the Gguremi, which assisted them immensely in their quest to settle into a new rural life with a focus on farming:

My husband wanted to focus on farming, but I insisted that he get a paid job, something like a staff in the Poolmoo or the Mundang village (...) The Gguremi was started by sending crops and vegetables to three of my friends but it was soon expanded as they introduced others. Since I have stable income every month, I have been regaining my security, and my husband and I decided to put all our efforts in farming. (I-2-21)

The revival of small-scale farmers' powers

The farmers operating Gguremi expressed disappointment and concerns over the commercialization of organic farming. In order to differentiate Gguremi products from the run-of-the mill organics, they created an innovative term and standard for their products: “beyond organic certified practice” (e.g., eschewing external and non-renewable inputs, using indigenous seeds, polyculture, and crop rotation). Yet some farmers expressed their newfound confidence in the Gguremi model; they did not feel intimidated by the comparatively larger size and scope of the consumer co-ops. They could reduce their dependence on the larger co-op market in favor of catering to those consumers who embraced the Gguremi model and therefore felt empowered to retain and continue their farming philosophies:

I feel my power as a farmer revived ... not being dragged by the consumers' demands, I can set the standards by what I believe to be most important principles... then, I share my food with those who agree with those principles. (I-2-14)

These farmers were convinced that the Gguremi was most suited to small-size family-operated farms. They obtained much satisfaction knowing that they considered themselves the force behind healthy communities and ecological lifestyles.

I plant 130 different types crops and vegetables in a year...many types of beans, five and six kinds of peppers, and different types of oriental melons and tomatoes (...) I try to use indigenous seeds as much as I can. Since I do not sell them through general markets, when I get some from land, I just put them into the food delivery boxes. The point what I am saying is that the Gguremi enables me to continue to attempt innovative ways because I don't really have to worry about the general consumers' demands and preferences. (I-2-14)

In addition, Gguremi helped lead the resurgence in the practice of a cultural heritage, often reintroducing varieties that were long abandoned in the general market.

Look at the *Myung-ha-ju* (a type of a wild vegetable)... they used to be eaten as a food a long time ago, but they are now considered weeds and have disappeared from our dining table. Once, I gathered them from my farm where I had let them grow without tending or weeding. Some of our members recognized them, surprised, and were able to recall age-old recipes from memory. (I-2-22)

Feminism issues: a higher socio-economic status, and senior care in the community

Issues on feminism emerged several times during interviews. In the rural areas of Korea, men usually attend to rice farming in the wetland (*non*) areas and women work on dry land (*baat*) where diverse crops such as ginger, red pepper, cabbage, and other vegetables are cultivated. Cultivation of rice is dependent largely on machines. *Baat* farming, on the other hand, is inaccessible by machines because of the terrain and is therefore relegated to the female workforce. All female participants agreed that their income from *baat* farming had increased significantly with the advent of the Gguremi, which resulted in raising their status in the home. One farming woman has operated the “Granma Gguremi” since 2011 with another female “return farmer” from Hongdong with her son’s family, and she said:

My husband used to give me money for expenses. Of the \$10,000 that my husband made in rice farming on 20 mazigi, our direct cost was \$5,000, leaving us \$5,000. After other expenses – especially gas for car – we had no money left. After starting the “Granma Gguremi”, we are able to save everything we make farming on the baat. I supplement this income by selling homemade soybean paste and red pepper paste. Now my husband receives expense money from me, in a role-reversal. (I-1-14)

The two seniors who started the Granma Gguremi got much assistance from a daughter-in-law of one of them, who described the relationship between the two seniors:

When they first set out to start the Gguremi, I suggested that in order to stave off possible conflicts they set up clear managing rules...who would provide how much amount of each of the products, at what prices and how to divide the costs and profits. They chose instead to work together informally. They now divide their profits, albeit approximately. They do their farm work together. They share their stories working on *baat*, they comfort each other, and take care of each other. (I-2-19) (see Figure 5.6)

The two seniors have recently started the Grandma Farmers’ (GF) co-op together with other local senior women. The GF co-op now has a sales stall at the corner of the Hongdong Visitor Center for merchandizing and marketing their products, which include traditional foods and organic vegetables. Their corner has now become a popular tourist spot. Residents and tourists may buy fresh produce that is grown locally and sample traditional foods, as well as learn about traditional local recipes and knowledge.

Figure 5.6 The Granma *Gguremi*



* Source: Yeoreumine blog, <http://sonong.tistory.com>

Environmental concern: Long distance food travel

I learnt from interviews that Gguremi consumers were mostly residents of metropolitan areas such as Seoul, which meant that vegetable boxes had to travel at a greater distance to be delivered to the consumers. Efforts aimed at organizing consumers within local areas surrounding their farms to reduced market-to-home travel time were usually not successful. Some participants expressed their concerns about the long-distance their food had to travel, which additionally required the use of packaging materials—plastics, Styrofoam boxes, paper goods, ice-packs, and other non-renewables—in order to keep the produce from spoiling during the lengthier trips.

Intensive labor related issues and individualism

One of the repeated criticisms of participating in the Gguremi was the increased management that was labor intensive and time consuming. A single Gguremi farm would deliver between 50 and 100 varieties of organic products to about 30-40 members, requiring much time and effort (e.g., growing a vast amount of different crops organically, packing boxes weekly, and writing weekly newsletters). Several attempts at operating the Gguremi collectively or creating networks of farmers to reduce work time while extending the variety of goods provided to the consumers, have failed for logistical reasons such as different operational and farming principles and competing preferred crops. Surprisingly some Gguremi farmers similarly pointed to “individualism”—non-cooperative attitude and behavior—as a major cause for discord:

They are farmers who left cities and organizations because they wished to be independent to act in a manner they themselves judged fit, and they pursued values of their own choosing without a genuine community spirit. If some minor issue, disagreement...did not appeal to them, they would immediately cease cooperating on all issues. (I-2-6)

Barriers for (original) full-time farmers

With the skills and connections developed during their urban lives and diverse work experiences, the returning farmers brought with them their business tools and

viewed the market from a different perspective; they were adept at mobilizing resources, and they were efficient in organizing the Gguremi. I noticed also a sense of disdain and envy amongst some respondents who questioned the efficacy of the Gguremi when native full-time farmers operate the model.

The *Gewnong* farmers have many other means to make a living other than farming. They create multiple organizations and businesses, receiving government subsidies... their spouses may be a teacher or an employee with pay, or at a minimum have other jobs to have monthly salaries as an additional income. They are okay with the vegetable boxes (Gguremi), which they made with remains of what they consume themselves. But, for the ordinary farmer like me, how can we live in that way, for us, we need an adequate income for living and farming for an entire year. For us to make any living, we must complete one full cycle – from seeds to consumers - all at once in a single harvest. (I-1-6)

There existed the danger of increasing tensions and conflicts between native farmers and young re-farmers. Many native farmers expressed their displeasure in the belief that the young return farmers simply usurped the work they (the native farmers) had been doing (e.g., consultant job in government agencies and village/organizational representatives) and used their greatest advantages (e.g., government funds and external network opportunities).

Discussion

The results of this case study show that empowerment and disempowerment factors are very diverse and depending on the participant profiles and market characteristics. Table 5.1 shows the empowerment and disempowerment factors identified in the four nested markets. Economic benefits (e.g., higher and steady income), emotional security, goodwill and trust between consumer and farmers, educational opportunities, direct participation, external resources, social supports, communal spirit, the Poolmoo and the relevant local history, mutual assistance, collective action, and learning opportunities are all perceived as the facilitators of empowerment among many. By contrast, a multitude of factors combined together to either make the farmers feel less

powerful or limit some farmers' ability to fully participate in certain market(s). These included low market prices, market volatility, consumer co-op's dominant power, unfair contract conditions, undemocratic co-op management, increased market competition, bureaucracy, organic certification regulation, poor understanding of organic farming, small-scale local market, individualism, labor and time input, busy lifestyles, tensions/conflict in community, isolation, and high land price.

Empowerment has multifaceted dimensions, ranging from visible levels relating to ownership and decision-making processes to the deeper and not-too-obvious levels such as thinking, ideology, everyday lives and social networks (Hardy & Leiba-O'sullivan, 1998; Lukes, 1974). Empowerment can be achieved in several ways, for example, by increasing resources (Polsby, 1963), expanding access to decision-making processes (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970), acquiring political consciousness and actions (Gaventa, 1980), deconstructing knowledge and practicing everyday resistance (Foucault, 1976), and actor networking to generate meaningful capacity (Latour, 1986). Each of empowerment dimensions has its own mechanism; but all of them are interrelated and reinforce each other. This leads away from a narrow approach toward broader, multidimensional interpretations and effective assessment of empowerment processes that facilitate to an understanding of the actions and networks of the small-scale farmers who belong to diverse forms of nested markets. This section discusses some important implications highlighted from the each case to give more in-depth insights into empowering small-scale farmers in their efforts in sustainable rural development.

The Poolmoo Model: Farmer-Consumer's Joint Co-op Practice

In the Poolmoo market model, the relationship between rural farmers and urban consumers is the key to understanding the local small-scale farmers' empowerment issues in the context of a larger neoliberal restructuring of Korean society. As analyzed earlier, the relationship has very mixed outcomes in the case of empowering the participant farmers. Their former relationship (i.e., of mutual trust, respect &

relationships, brotherly/sisterly and familial bonding) greatly helped the participant farmers to control their lives by providing both economic and psychological/emotional benefits (e.g., stable income, self-confidence, and reducing isolation). However, the changed relationship was for the worse (i.e., business-oriented, prioritizing consumer rights and zero emotional satisfaction) because it led to a major disconnect between the farmers and their market. A possible explanation for this might be found in the larger socio-political situation in Korea.

In spite of the increase in global market pressures, and at least until the late 1990s, protecting domestic agricultural markets was a key social agenda supported by many urban people. The majority of urbanites had migrated from rural areas and felt emotionally guilty for the sacrifices made by Korean farmers in the country's quest for national development (Kim, 2006). However, in later years neo-liberal ideology took hold, fully and rapidly embraced by Korean society, and gaining momentum after the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997. Increasing global and domestic competition became a top priority for national development, resulting in the removal of many agricultural subsidies and the collapse of urban middle class. Meanwhile, during the 1990s, the *Sinmin* movement (a new social movement) largely displaced the *Minjung* movement (a class-based movement) in Korea. As a result, the focus of society greatly shifted from production to consumption (Feffer, 2005). The phrases "affordable organic products for low-class families" or "no consumption and no production" that were frequently used by larger consumer food co-ops reflect the change in underpinnings of these new social movements. This led to the conventionalization of organic markets where securing "fresh" and "safe" foods at "lower prices" was now the highest priority; as a result the role of the farmers was relegated to a delivery service for raw food products that were produced according to the tastes and desires of urban consumers. This result is consistent with the organic market development in European nations and USA (Marsden, 2003; Guthman, 2004).

Another important practical implication is that adopting convoluted and complex sales routes can empower small-scale farmers since it enables farmers to

negotiate a contract from relatively equal positions. Similar to what a 30-year study of the poultry industry in Louisiana found (Hendrickson et al., 2008), when the Poolmoo co-op adopted a single strategic option (with the iCOOP), the power relationship became asymmetrical and farmers were at risk of suffering the absurdity from their unequal position.

The Nonghyop Model: Government-Funded Farmer's Co-op Market

The result of the Nonghyop case study highlights the roles for decision-making and for ownership in advancing empowerment. Compared with other cases of this study, the Nonghyop has several profitable financial services and infrastructures for raising capital. As members of the co-op, the farmers have the legal right to own and control the co-op's assets (e.g., real estate, buildings, land, rice-processing complex and logistic facilities) which were developed by either their pooled money or government grants and subsidies. Different types of intangible resources (e.g., duck-rice practice, communal spirit, village reputation, shared history, collaboration experience, trust, and earned goodwill), also known as common pool resources (CPRs), are vital to their empowerment. These tangible and intangible resources help to empower in that it results in an increasing sense of belonging, in lessening dependency, and in reduction of costs.

However, this study shows that legal ownership, itself is not sufficient for permitting the participant farmers to control the market circumstance and direction. There is clear evidence that increased direct participation in a decision-making capacity empower farmers by providing them with opportunities to access quality information and voice their opinions, and it inspires a sense of solidarity and responsibility. More importantly, the farmers are encouraged to participate in collateral activities other than simply the production of raw agricultural goods. The farmers regularly meet and interact with other farming peers and colleagues and with consumers as well, which enables them to broaden their perspectives on farming, agricultural markets and political issues (Schneider et al., 2014). Promoting and encouraging direct participant in the decision-making processes could be an effective way to prevent oligarchy (or anarchy) in

management where a few board members and employees control decision making processes and outcomes by setting agenda based on their own narrow business-oriented but limited perspectives.

Another revelation emerging from this analysis relates to management of CPRs and the role they play. CPRs, in this research, are powerful empowerment facilitators. Previous studies referred to CPRs as successful forces in halting the conventionalization of nested markets (van der Ploeg et al., 2012; Polman et al., 2010; Schneider et al., 2014). However, this does not clearly appear to be the case in this study. Once the duck-rice farming technique had spread throughout the nation within a few years, the Hongdong's distinctive products (e.g., tourism programs and duck-rice brand products) were no longer highly competitive in markets. The duck-rice farming and its related history, experience, spirit, culture, and products are common resources accumulated locally and historically, which any single person or group possesses as material assets. Yet for the same reason, the resources could easily fade unless there is a continued and collective effort for making meaning and identifying and performing the CPRs in everyday life.

The Local Model (or Poolmoo School Model): Local Food Practice

The local model of this case has significant implications for understanding community empowerment. The local market model is designed to generate a common good that is shared with and beneficial for *all local residents*, not to maximize members' profits and benefits nor solely for the well-being of urbanites. The proponents believe that a healthy community can continue when diverse shops and business exist for the livelihoods and well-being of its residents. They view the small-scale farmers not only as producers but also as consumers, both of whom are essential to sustain a healthy rural community. Farmers need not only the market place to sell their products, but also they need other suppliers and services like a barbershop, bookstore, café, bakery, art studio, carpenter shop, schools, fitness center, transportation providers, and so on.

The participant farmers can increase control over their own lives (“empowering”) through opportunities that corroborate their beliefs, tighten/expand their

networks, and exercise their innovative ideas in practice. There exist several critical and participatory learning opportunities that focus on the philosophy and humanities subjects beyond farming techniques and technology. Such ideological and value-based characteristics cause angst to some farmers, especially the older long-established ones, and they therefore hesitate to join the local market network.

Another observation emerging from this case relates to the use of benefits by the local community to acquire power—*community empowerment*. Freire (1987) advocated the role of participatory education in individual and community empowerment. Farmers can develop new mindsets that might influence their personal and social life through community participation and dialogue; they can critically assess social and historical roots of their problems and discover their own holistic solutions differently from their traditional way of thinking (Wallerstein & Bernstein, 1988). Some marketing principles and practices (e.g., unmanned/self-selling systems, non-discrimination principles, and community currency) point to the practical examples of critical pedagogy that combines markets with the idea of the participatory education.

Direct Model (or Gwong Model): Direct Transition Practice

The case study of the direct model adds to our understanding on how the small-scale farmers are exercising their ‘agency’ to ameliorate their way of farming and life – specifically, as regards the ex-urban returned farmers. Interestingly, the Asian financial crisis triggered the “back-to-the farm” (“*Gwong*”) movement in Korea, bringing young people into countryside. As described previously, the young, returned farmers sought alternatives to the conventionalization of organic farming and dominance by centralized large consumer co-ops. The results of this study show that information about social networks acquired during previous urban lives, diverse work experiences, ecologically friendly attitudes, and particularly IT skills nudged them to initiate the Gguremi (“CSA”) that is different from both the neoliberal free market and the co-op organic dependent market.

The direct market model significantly helps the farmers to sustain their farming

principles and ecological life-styles, enabling them to earn stable and adequate monthly incomes based on the strong trust of their consumers. Contrast that with the general market where farmer and seller must meet the tastes and demands of consumers to increase their revenue and profits. In the direct model, farmers take responsibility to provide the best products at their sole discretion. There is no pressure upon the farmer to please everyone. The participating farmers are thus able to sustain their farming principles and ecological life-styles, create quality products, promote cultural regeneration, and provide educational opportunities that contribute positively to the sustainability of rural community and the society at large.

Another impressive finding of the study is that the female participants were able to strengthen their socio-economic status in the community. The Gguremi market enabled the women to sell their diverse and “gourmet” food products that were not usually carried by co-op and general markets. In particular, the status of senior women increased significantly within the home and communities. Their farming and cooking knowledge and skills that had accumulated through their long-established engagement in dryland farming (baat) and household chores were now increasingly valuable and worked well in the direct market model.

However, their ideological and operational characteristics are more easily embraced by young, highly educated and part-time returned farmers rather than by native full-time farmers, revealing the limitations of the market model as an alternative to the mainstream food market for native, full-time farmers. Even more so, there exists a danger of increasing tensions and conflicts between native farmers and returned farmers. In this respect, the case of the Grandma Gguremi suggests a good example of how this market model develops to better contribute to rural sustainable development: the old native farmers and the young returned farmers can make up for each other’s vulnerabilities and weaknesses with their strengths, creating network empowering.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the empowerment of small-scale farmers who participated in the nested markets identified in Hongdong. Several factors that facilitate or hinder the empowerment of participant farmer have been identified (Table 5.1). The results of case studies showed that the factors of empowerment and disempowerment remain highly complex and controversial depending on the farmers' personal life, value systems, farming philosophy and their respective market characteristics. In general, the case of the Poolmoo market model showed that the relationship between rural farmers and their urban consumers is a key factor, even when associated with other factors – whether facilitators or barriers. This observation has a significant implication for the understanding as to how neo-liberal ideology and institutions have influenced the whole society, which surprisingly, including even the civil society and social movements.

In the case of the Nonghyop model, joint ownership of the tangible and intangible resources (CPRs) and direct participant opportunities were identified as important issues for the empowerment of the farmers. This study has also provided insights into the nature and management of CPRs that could exist as community common resources, but only through a meaningful process performed in everyday life at the community level.

With regard to the local model case, it has underscored the importance of the dialectical relationship between individuals and communities. The result showed that individual farmers are much more able to control their farming practices and lives when they are part of a community empowerment. The concept of place appeared to be important because it provides an “inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape” that are part of lived experience (Charter, 1999). Several types of critical and participatory learning opportunities were clearly identified as key facilitators of empowerment process.

Lastly, the direct model case has shown that small-scale family farmers could establish a stronger position in markets by launching a trust-based business such as the Gguremi. The results of this study assist in our understanding of the role of the ex-urban,

returning farmers by delving deeper into their profiles and convictions, how they exercise their agency and adapt to their way of farming and life. The observation about the improved status of female farmers in homes and communities provides the possibility of deploying markets as an effective means for empowering minor groups of people.

Overall, this study has shown that empowerment is an ongoing process where multi-dimensional factors come together integrally and spirally into the process of either facilitating or hindering the empowerment of small-scale farmers. Empowerment projects should be designed by a careful consideration of not only the obvious and visible factors (i.e., resources, decision-making process), but also latent and unseen factors (i.e., ideology, norms, socio political influence). More attention should be given to the processes by which small-scale farmers become conscious of the dominant forces that seek to oppress them, and then take appropriate action against these adverse forces by changing the conditions under which they live and work.

Table 5.1 Small-scale farmers’ empowering and disempowering factors in four different nested markets

	Farmers-consumer’s joint co-op practice (“Poolmoo model”)	Government-funded farmer’s co-op practice (“Nonghyop model”)	Local food practice (“Local model” or “Poolmoo School model”)	Direct distribution practice (“Direct model” or “Gwnong model”)
Participants	Long-term established, full-time farmers; organic farmers (rice, vegetables, fruits, & livestock)	Long-term established, full-time farmers; duck-rice farmers	Return (back-to-the farm), part-time farmers and residents who are connected to the Poolmoo School & College, and other local organizations	Return (back-to-the farm), full-time and part-time farmers
Overview of practice	Direct marketing (“jicgerae”) with urban consumer food co-op(s)	HN co-op’s nation-wide retail stores and urban consumer food co-ops	local stores, restaurants, and school cafeterias	CSA (“Gguremi”), farmers markets, and on-line routes
Empowering factors	Long established, practiced co-op philosophies/principles; diverse direct market channels; multi-relationships with grassroots co-ops; direct/democratic management; educating consumer members	Significant government funding; emotional security; communal spirit; better opportunities to access to information	Establishment of communal life; revitalized local economy; ecological life styles; collective empowerment	Steady income/reduce of risk; revival of small-scale farmers’ rights; recovering culture; restoring strong relationships with consumers; feminism issues
Disempowering factors	low market prices/market volatility; reliance upon big consumer co-op; prioritizing consumer rights (e.g., stringent regulations for processing, & packing, consumer-favor-refund policy, etc.); undemocratic co-op management; increased competition	Bureaucracy; poor understanding of organic farming; competition with non-organic products	Small market; competition among local people; low accessibility for original farmers; forced noble poverty spirit (must accept a low level of profits)	Individualism; labor intensive, busy life (processing and packing); barriers for (original) full-time farmers; high land price

CHAPTER VI*
**THE CO-EVOLUTION OF RURAL TOURISM AND
SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN HONGDONG, KOREA:
COMPLEXITY, CONFLICT AND LOCAL RESPONSE**

Overview

This research examines the evolution of rural tourism in Hongdong Town, Korea, and its links to agricultural change, and traditional small farm survival, as part of sustainable rural development. The study is informed by cross-disciplinary literature in rural development, specifically, multi-functional agriculture and nested markets. Results show a complex, dynamic terrain where new strategies are emerging within an agricultural sector struggling to survive global free trade policies and neo-liberalism. Here, rural tourism is neither a simple, business-orientated project nor a step-by-step process of tourism ‘development.’ It emerges, together with nested markets, in the rural agricultural domain. Farmers, residents and newcomers draw upon historical practices and cultural knowledge to create innovative, quality products and educational experiences that contribute to the sustainability of local agricultural livelihoods and cultural traditions. However, shifts in public sector roles and structural changes in the growth and power of the agriculture cooperatives exacerbate the tensions and conflicts evident within the community in this struggle for rural survival. The study offers possibilities for new forms of ‘local tourism experience’ and nested markets that can contribute to sustainable rural development.

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CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of this dissertation was to examine nested markets in the rural sector at the microscopic and offer an empirical study in order to create opportunities for shaping nested markets better serving sustainable rural development. A qualitative case study was conducted in Hongdong Town, South Korea, in 2012. Data were gathered via 58 in-depth semi-structured interviews with local farmers and residents, participant observation, and secondary data collection. Thematic analyses yielded three significant themes that have been developed into three separate manuscripts (Chapter 4, 5, & 6). A summary of the main findings and the principal issues and suggestions that have arisen from the chapters are provided in this section.

The Origin and Development of Nested Markets

The first manuscript addressed the findings and discussion about the different types of nested markets, their changes over time, and their characteristics that differ from the mainstream markets. Four different types of food and agricultural markets are identified as possible nested markets to counter the industrialized global free market that was increasingly encroaching on Korean agriculture: (1) farmers-consumer's joint co-op practice ("Poolmoo model"), (2) government-funded farmer's co-op practice ("Nonghyop model"), (3) local food practice ("Local model" or "Poolmoo School model"), and (4) direct distribution practice ("Direct model" or "Gwnong model). These nested markets are defined by close interrelations between two market elements—distinct goods/services (e.g., duck-rice produce, organic products, traditional foods, tourism, etc.) and distribution practices (e.g., cooperatives, direct marketing, local food systems, etc.).

These four nested markets differ from each other depending on their specific goals, rules, key participants and their power dynamics, but they share identifiable mechanisms and characteristics that set them apart from the mainstream market. They

emerged and developed in response to the failures of the global industrialized agro-food free market as addressed in previous studies (Schneider et al., 2014; van der Ploeg et al., 2012; Ventura & van der Ploeg, 2010). However, this study has shown that some of nested markets (i.e., the local model and the direct model) emerged from the efforts of redressing the conventionalization of organic farming and large consumer co-op dominance (i.e., the Poolmoo model and the Nonghyop model). This phenomenon has not been previously researched and thus provides here a new understanding of nested markets by concluding that a nested market exists alongside with other nested markets in a given time and place— and not to simply counteract the general global free market. These nested markets often compete with each other, yet they also interact and collaborate with each other. To develop a full picture of nested markets additional studies will need to focus upon multi-layered counteractions among these different types of nested markets, their dialectic evolutions and power dynamics related to these evolutions.

Another significant finding is that although many socio-political factors influenced the introduction of nested markets, social movements linked to local grass roots efforts played a key role in the advent of nested markets. In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the social agenda for defending Korean small-scale farms from the assault of global free market hastened the development of the Poolmoo model, which is consistent with the case of China and Brazil where nested markets were initiated by social movements in order to strengthen family farming (van der Ploeg et al., 2012). However, this case study has shown the focus shift in the social movement from production to consumption begun since the late 1990s, and its influence upon the nested markets and the empowerment of small-scale farmers (i.e., the Poolmoo model). This result raised an important issue of power dynamics between farmers and consumers, which needs further examination in a future study.

This study has exposed, too, the complex and dynamic process of the origin and development of nested markets in which multiple actors participate actively, including long-native farmers, new ex-urban returning farmers and residents, consumers' co-ops, and various local and government institutions. This study has highlighted the prominent

role of local educational institutions such as the Poolmoo School and the Poolmoo College in enlarging local *endogenous potential* and simultaneously the important roles of external resources such as people, ideas, and knowledge as well as the broader social discourse and movements that make local endogenous potential richer and stronger in practice. The degree of mutual assistance between local elderly women and the young, returning farmers provides significant insight into areas such as sustainable development, cultural heritage, the role and status of women, and conflict/power management (for both inter-generational conflict, and disagreements between the native farmers and the ex-urban, new returning farmers).

Empowerment of Small-Scale Farmers Participating in Nested Markets

The second manuscript discussed the empowerment of small-scale farmers who participated in the nested markets identified in Hongdong. The analysis focused on what specific factors the participant farmers perceived as important facilitators of or barriers to empowering themselves while engaging in the specific nested market(s). The results showed that these empowerment and disempowerment factors remain highly complex and controversial, depending on the farmers' personal lives, value systems, farming philosophy and their respective farms' market characteristics.

In general, the case of the Poolmoo model demonstrated that the relationship between rural farmers and their urban consumers is a key theme, even when associated with other factors – whether facilitators or barriers. This observation has significant implication for the understanding as to how neoliberal ideology and institutions have influenced the whole society, which surprisingly, includes even Korean civil society and social movements.

In the case of the Nonghyop model, ownership of the tangible and intangible resources (“Common Pool Resources”), and the direct participant opportunities were identified as important issues for the empowerment of the farmers. This study has also provided insights into the nature and management of CPRs that could exist as community

common resources, but only through a meaningful process performed in everyday life at the community level.

With regard to the local model case, it has underscored the importance of the dialectical relationship between individuals and communities. Results showed that individual farmers are much more able to control their farming and life when they are part of a community empowerment. Several types of critical and participatory learning opportunities were clearly identified as key facilitators of the community empowerment process.

Lastly, the direct model case has shown that small-scale family farmers could establish a stronger position in markets by launching a trust-based business such as the Gguremi. The results of this study assist in our understanding of the role of the ex-urban, returning farmers by delving deeper into their profiles and convictions, how they exercise their agency and adapt to their way of farming and life. The observation about the improved status of the female farmers in their homes and communities provides the possibility of deploying markets as an effective means for empowering minor groups of people.

Overall, this study has shown that empowerment is an ongoing process where multi-dimensional factors come together integrally and spirally into the process of either facilitating or hindering the empowerment of small-scale farmers. Empowerment projects should be designed by careful consideration of not only the obvious and visible factors (i.e., resources, decision-making process), but also latent and unseen factors (e.g., ideology, norm, sociopolitical influences). More attention should be given to the process in which small-scale farmers become conscious of the dominant forces that seek to oppress them, and then take appropriate action against these adverse forces by changing the conditions under which they live and work.

The Co-Relations between Tourism and Other Nested Markets in Sustainable Rural Development

The third manuscript examined the evolution of rural tourism in Hongdong, and its links to the other nested markets for sustainable rural development. The historical analysis conducted here shows the “hybridity” (heterogeneity) of tourism development in Hongdong. It is neither merely a business-oriented project nor a social movement, but rather it is an ongoing process performed by diverse actors responding to the external forces of neoliberalism. This study has shown in detail how tourism in Hongdong has been initiated and developed, influenced by both the local and the wider structural transformation of agricultural markets at the state and global levels. Four key human actors (excluding the non-human actors such as ducks and avian influenza) were identified: native residents, new residents (the *Gewnong* people), food co-ops operating in civil society, and governments. The result has shown how the interrelation between these key actors corresponded to events occurring in the development of rural tourism.

Despite many positive outcomes identified, this study has specifically addressed the adverse effects of rural tourism development largely informed by the post-productivist framework. The result showed that adhering strictly to the discourse of romantic or nostalgic notion of rural communities, rural tourism is not always successful in terms of rural sustainable development. Rather, it unintentionally contributes to the loss of prestigious status of farmers by focusing disproportionately on the romantic imagination of outsiders or tourists than on the desires of those who lived in rural communities. As shown in the later part of case study, efforts have been emerging more recently to use local natural and cultural resources such as educational farm activities, which were primarily developed for tourists and now for local residents, particularly local school students, youth, and disabilities—but not exclusively for tourists.

This study shows the usefulness of the agro-ecological framework in examining the rural tourism phenomena. It can be helpful to guides researchers to see the unfolding nature and evolution of tourism that is continually responding to the needs and challenges

from both inside and outside while situating tourism in larger rural sustainable development context.

Lastly, this study has showed that for the farmers, tourism was a complementary activity; they rarely viewed tourism as their principal means of income but rather as a promotional tool for selling their organic rice. The overall case of rural tourism in Hongdong suggests that very careful attention should to be paid to ensure that tourism is not promoted as an easy tool for government and society to avoid their responsibilities to protect the livelihoods of rural farmers and communities who are stewards of the common good. The results of this rural tourism study indicates that the goals of sustainable rural development may be better achieved when rural tourism is integrated with local nested markets, such as small organic farming enterprises and rural environmental, cultural conservation efforts.

Some Other Implications and Contributions

Overall, this study has significant implications for understanding a “market” which we often consider an abstract (pure) entity that is self-regulating (“invisible hand”) and, therefore, absolutely free of our intentions. Contrary to this prevailing belief, this study has showed that a market is a place or relation whereby multiple actors interact to establish their demands, desires, expectations, etc., and which continually changes in correspondence to larger socio-political structural changes as well as local actions. This study showed that a market can be deeply rooted in, and connected to, local cultures and regional resources, and people and society as well. This result could encourage us to challenge the discourse and institutions committed to accelerating neoliberalism and strive to create new markets that serve our common good, not maximizing profits only for a few capitalist groups. It also helps us to remember what we often forget—current existing markets are not fixed and unchangeable abstract entities, but the outcomes of people’s struggles and negotiations over the vested power, and thus, changeable by that their conscious intentions and fights. It gives us hope and empowers action toward

change.

This study also extends our knowledge of nested markets in the context of sustainable rural development. This study adds new empirical data to the work of other scholars in rural development and rural tourism by conducting an in-depth case study in Korea for the first time and dealing with many issues and themes frequently discussed in previous studies, such as multifunctional agriculture, synergistic effect, local knowledge, endogenous potential, and common good resources. Further, this study provides a new understanding of nested markets; specifically offering rich description related to the topics of power dynamic between farmers and consumers in nested markets, and the prominent appearance and role of the ex-urban returning farmers, neither of these topics have been fully addressed in previous studies.

In addition, this research contributes to the extensive body of literature on alternative food system and movement. Many researchers have sought to create alternative forms of markets to redress the negative effects caused by the functioning of the industrialized global market as reviewed in Chapter 2. However, as van der Ploeg et al. (2012) pointed out, these studies are “very much about morality and volunteerism” in which the initiatives of “the morality of consumers” in the rich parts of the north and west of the globe are given too much attention than the agricultural producers and their struggles. By focusing on the experience and perceptions of small-scale farmers in the Korean rural areas, this study offers rich information and implications for bridging the gaps and limitations that come from the western, consumer-oriented research trend. This contributes to the efforts to identify and shape the markets that serve for the benefits of both of consumer and farmers.

The present study also contributes to the rural tourism literature by examining rural tourism in more holistic and integrated manner than the previous fragmented and economic oriented ways while situating rural tourism in a larger sustainable rural development framework. Despite the current development of rural tourism studies, overly economic driven and tourism-centric approach has not taken adequate account of sustainability issues of rural areas. Much of rural tourism studies have often described

rural areas as static territories and containers of attractions. There is also a tendency to rely on a post-productivist paradigm (see Marsden, 2003). The agro-ecological framework explored in this study offers a holistic, place-based, local people-centred approach to investigate rural tourism in relation to sustainable development, such as through the development of small-scale organic farming and localized food systems. The research offered numerous insights into the complex stakeholder dynamics and institutional mechanisms and socio-political changes over time that shaped how rural tourism evolved and has been governed—the problems that can arise because of the many different stakeholders and agencies involved in the development and control of this rural sector.

Lastly, one of the key strengths of this study comes from the qualitative case study approach applied here. This comprehensive detailed exploration provides richer description and analysis grounded in direct observation and experience, supported by numerous interviews and examination of policy documents, etc. Furthermore, the historical investigation conducted here extends back to the 1950s and offers a more holistic view of the emergence and development of nested markets over time. This study also offers valuable historical data such as the Korean organic farming history (e.g., duck-rice farming, the knowledge exchange between Korea and Japan), the cooperative movement (e.g., the Poolmoo co-op, the power relations between farmers and consumer co-ops), and the back-to-the farm movement in Korea.

Directions for Future Research

This comprehensive dissertation research project tackled a complex domain with numerous interrelated issues, diverse stakeholders and institutional structures. A number of choices had to be made as to the most important directions and issues to address in relation to the research questions. Some directions for future research are summarized briefly here, which I was unable to undertake but believe are important to consider.

Non-Human Actors in the Nested Markets

ANT highlights that non-human beings are equally important to knowing and being in the world because they, like human beings, also have their own “actantiality” (potential for action) that are presented through the relationship with other entities (Law, 1992, 1999). This approach inspired me to endeavor to understand not only how non-human beings such as animals, seeds, land, weather, farming techniques, and traditional knowledge were used in nested markets for human needs, but also how farmers and residents engaged in nested markets had to adjust to and negotiate with non-human beings in order to realize their goals. In this study, duck/duck-rice farming/avian influenza appeared to play an active role in shaping the development of nested markets positively (e.g., tourism development, rice products and marketing, and positive community image building) and negatively (e.g., avian influenza outbreak in 2009, the concerns of contaminated water from duck-rice farmland). However, their actual roles were not addressed in this study. Future research could therefore concentrate on the investigation of non-human roles in the development of nested markets, using ANT or other pertinent theoretical and methodological approaches.

Social Movement and Civil Society

This study shows clear evidence of the increasing power and involvements of civil society in all aspects of the creating and developing nested markets in comparison to the past when experts and state had drove the rural development polices as also addressed in previous study (Hebinck et al., 2014). The result of this study specifically provided how social movements, particularly the shift from the *Minjung* movement (class-based movements) to the *Sinmin* movement (new social movements) in Korean during the last 20 years, have largely influenced the direction of nested markets. The focus of society greatly shifted from production to consumption and it led to the conventionalization of nested markets (e.g., organic co-op market) markets where

securing “fresh” and “safe” foods at “lower prices” was now the highest priority. As a result, the role of the farmers was relegated to a delivery service for raw food products that were produced according to the tastes and desires of urban consumers. A greater focus on the role of social movements (civil society) could produce interesting findings that help understating the power/empowerment issue.

Common Goods and Power Dynamics

Related to the issue above, the key motivation of creating and developing nested markets is generating common good rather than maximizing profits. A wide array of social goals including relevant issues of food safety, security and justice, cultural and environmental conservation, and rural livelihood were highly addressed during the development of nested markets. As this study has discussed, the matter of which particular common good should be addressed in nested markets was significantly defined by what civil society (often centralized civil society) was interested in, and thus whether the agenda created great public attention or not. The priority or urgency was made through ongoing socio-political interactions and negotiation in which multiple human actors participate presenting diverse, sometimes contradictory interests, visions, projects, and resources. Future research is needed to explore the topic of common good in terms of power dynamics and the social, economic, and political relations between individuals and groups.

Ex-Urban, Young, Returning Farmers & Heritage Conservation

As seen in this study, the role of returning farmers has increasingly shaped the trajectory of the nested markets—by either criticizing commercialization of co-op markets or by promoting new agendas (e.g., welfare issues, animal welfare, endogenous approach, and social economy). My research showed that there are growing tensions and conflicts between native farmers and these ex-urban returned farmers. Future studies

regarding the role of these retuning farmers would be worthwhile, particularly relating to the topic of common-pool resources. Possible research questions could be, for example, how traditional/local heritage has been presented through nested market development (e.g., rural tourism, food products) and who decided what to say about the heritage, who managed the relevant resources, and how and for whom.

Rural Tourism and Sustainable Development

Future research is recommended to build further upon the vital but little-studied intersection of rural tourism, nested agricultural markets and rural development. Having provided a rich picture of this domain in the Hongdong context, future research could also focus on comparative study of the characteristics of nested markets and their intersections with rural tourism, such as role of rural tourism as a potential nested market itself and, related to this, the characteristics of “specificity”, “connectedness” and “rootedness” that van der Ploeg et al. (2012) identify in their comparative study of nested markets in Europe, China and Brazil.

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