

## From Farmer to Activist: Emotional Processes in Miryang Farmers' Fight against Power Transmission Towers

This paper explores the role of emotions in the trajectory of Miryang farmers' prolonged fight against the construction of 765kv high-voltage power transmission towers in their community that disrupted their ways of life. To stop the construction, Miryang farmers, mostly elderly women, carried out a wide range of protest activities since 2005, from petitioning and litigations to physical blockades as they dug trenches, set up tents, and chained their bodies together in the construction sites. One farmer even committed self-immolation. How did the otherwise self-contained, conservative farmers turn into dedicated activists? To answer this question, I draw on the concept of emotion culture—a shared understanding that regulates how emotions should be consumed and expressed within a given society—and investigate how Miryang farmers, armed with new emotional experiences acquired through protest participation, came to embrace a new emotion culture anchored in horizontal solidarity and social justice in place of one that accentuated conformity to authority. I propose a focus on emotional processes and contending emotion cultures helps not only to explain how the Miryang farmers achieved a new collective identity but also to shed new light on why and how confrontational protests have become so entrenched in contemporary South Korea.

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