

KOREA JOURNAL

Published quarterly by the Korean National Commission
for the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Publisher

Chung Hee Chae

Editor-in-Chief

Jeong Soo-young

Associate Editors

Yi Jeong-hyeon

Yun Byung-soon

Kim Yeong Jae

Consulting Editor

Keith Clay

Art Advisor

Kim Jin-pyong

Contributing Editors

Alexandre Guillemoz (CNRS, France)

B. C. A. Walraven (Leiden Univ., The Netherlands)

Jung-young Lee (Drew Univ., USA)

Laurel Kendall (American Museum of Natural History)

Marshall R. Pihl (Univ. of Hawaii, USA)

Martina Deuchler (Univ. of London, UK)

Werner Sasse (Ruhr-Univ. Bochum, Germany)

Young Whan Kihl (Iowa State Univ., USA)

Editorial Advisory Board

Ahn Byung-ook (Song Sim College for Women)

Cho Hung-youn (Hanyang Univ.)

Cho Sung-Eul (Ajou Univ.)

Ch'oe Wŏn-Shik (Inha Univ.)

Frank Tedesco (Dankook Univ.)

Lee Ki-Dong (Dongguk Univ.)

Lee Pyonggeun (Seoul National Univ.)

Moon Myung-dae (Dongguk Univ.)

Shin Yong-Ha (Seoul National Univ.)

Song Sang-yong (Hallym Univ.)

Yang Sung Chul (Kyung Hee Univ.)

Subscription Information

The *Korea Journal* is published quarterly by the Korean National Commission for Unesco. Correspondence regarding subscriptions, back issues, and changes of address should be sent to the *Korea Journal*, Korean National Commission for Unesco, C.P.O. Box 64, Seoul 100-600, Korea. (TEL No. 82-2-776-2805; FAX No. 82-2-774-3956). Annual subscription rates including postage are as follows:

Within Korea	US \$ 22	Foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. currency
Overseas Seamail	US \$ 30	by bank check or international postal money order.
Airmail		No personal checks accepted.
Asia	US \$ 35	Price per copy is US \$ 8 seamail/US \$ 10 airmail.
Australia, Middle East	US \$ 40	
Europe, USA, Canada	US \$ 40	
Other Regions	US \$ 45	

The opinions expressed by the authors do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editors of the *Korea Journal* or the Korean National Commission for Unesco.

COPYRIGHT © 1993 by the Korean National Commission for Unesco.
Ministry of Culture and Information Registration No. and Date: PA-1504, Feb. 19, 1964.
Ministry of Education Registration No. 25-05. Published on March 31, 1993.
Typeset by Seoul Computer Press and printed by Samkwang Printing Company.

KOREA JOURNAL

Vol. 33 No. 1

Spring 1993

Contents

Park Chan Wook	5	The Fourteenth National Assembly Election in Korea: A Test for the Ruling Democratic Liberal Party
Lee Nam-young	17	The Voter's Choice: The 14th Presidential Election of Korea
Lew Seok-Choon	27	Student Movement in Korea: Structure and Functions
Lee Seon-Young	34	Realism and the Korean Novel: An Attempt at a New Research Method
Kim German	47	The History, Culture and Language of the Koryŏ Sarai
Larisa V. Zabrovskaja	69	Consequences of Korean Emigration to Jiandao

POETRY

Lee Geon-Cheong	79	A Thirsty Waterbird; Horsecweed Flowers; Palm Reading; A Yellow Man's Dog 7; A Yellow Man's Dog 13; Hyena; A Night in the Old Street; Black Bird; Narrow Dreams; Prows of Wooden Ships <i>Translated by Chun Kyung-ja</i>
-----------------	----	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

FICTION

Cheon Seung-se	95	<i>Hye-ja's Snow Flowers</i> (Hye-ja-ŭi nunkkot) <i>Translated by Suh Ji-moon</i>
----------------	----	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

BOOKS

- Jeanne Paik Kaufman 103 *Encounter*
by Hahn Moo-Sook
- Vincent S.R. Brandt 107 *The Chosen Women in Korean Politics:
An Anthropological Study*
by Chung-Hee Soh
- Albrecht Huwe 110 *Han'guk chonggyo munhwa sajŏn*
(Encyclopedia of the Korean Religious Culture)
comp. by Han'guk chonggyo munhwa sahoe yŏn'guso
- BOOK NOTES 114 *Sourcebook of Korean Civilization*
(Edited by Peter H. Lee et al.);
Peace Under Heaven (Ch'ae Man-Sik);
Paekchesa (Shin Hyŏng-shik);
Shilla-sŏyŏk kyoryusa (Muhammad Kansu);
Han'guk kodaemunhwa-ŭi hŭrŭm (Im Hyo-Jai);
Chosŏn-minjok honinsa yŏn'gu (Pak Kyŏng-hwi);
Han'guk chŏnjaeng-gwa han'guk sahoe pyŏndong
(Comp. by the Korean Social Science Society);
Han'guk-ŭi chŏnt'ong kŏnch'uk (Chang Kyŏng-ho);
Han'guk munhwa sangjing sajŏn
(Compilation Committee for DSKC);
Han'guk hanjaŏ sajŏn (Institute of Oriental Studies);
Urimal parŭm sajŏn (Yi Ūn-jŏng)
- 120 Notes on the Contributors

COVER: The illustration on the cover is a painting entitled "Muje" (Untitled; 47 x 47 cm, 1991) by Hwang Suk-Bong. His sense of formative art comes from first dissolving then reunifying the tradition. He constructs a new world of art by emphasizing plasticity in his characters, breaking from the standard frame of traditional calligraphy. And in this way, he attempts to influence the visual senses, where each piece is not "to be read" but rather "to be seen."

Student Movement in Korea: Structure and Functions*

Lew Seok-Choon

I. Perspectives on Korean Student Movement

The student movement in Korea has held a historical tradition to the extent of critically effectuating the course of the nation's history. In modern years, the student's censorious role contributed to marking every milestone in modern Korean history—the April 19, 1960 overthrow of Syngman Rhee's dictatorial regime; the May 18, 1980 Kwangju resistance against Chun Doo-Hwan's coup d'état; and the demand for a direct presidential election which led to a revolt against the Chun regime in 1987 is one of the major examples.

By the fact that the vested rights' total or partial conciliation was given in security, these happenings show the direct and indirect social influence of the student movement. It is also a matter not to be overlooked in that these censorious, observing, and resisting role of Korean student movement is existing with the power of the vested rights which they are in opposition to. However, systematic efforts to understand the phenomena of the Korean student movement, which is continuously carrying out such an important historical role, are not yet satisfactory.

There are many academic approaches to analyze and understand the movement. Nevertheless, these standpoints have in common the limitation of not being able to offer an answer as to why this movement continuously has influence in real politics with important social consequences. As an example, explaining the cause of the student movement based on the theory of friction between generations (Yoo, 1986), or of microscopic and psychological concepts based on mass psychology (Kim, 1976), clearly has its limitations, making it impossible to comprehend the historical and structural dimension of the Korean student movement. The perspective regarding the student movement as socialist revolutionary movement based on class consciousness (Choi, 1987) disregards the moral dimension of the Korean student movement, which

* The Korean version of this paper in full text can be found in Korean Sociological Association (ed.), *Hyöndaeh han'guk sahoe munjeron* (Social Problems in Contemporary Korea) (Seoul: Han'guk pokchi chöngch'aek yön'guso: 1991).

was revealed at the instance of the killing by police of a university student. Also, the resource mobilization approach to the movement (Kim, 1985), by assuming the Western version of rationality, neglects the historical context of Korean society, especially the students' tendency of elitism and adventurism.

Under the assumption that the student movement plays a historical role in molding societal changes and development in Korea, this paper will examine the structural conditions that have made such phenomena possible. Thus, this paper will start out by touching on some of Korea's structural characteristics which function as the external conditions of the student movement. Secondly, it will examine how the student movement's leadership perceives such conditions by analyzing the goals and ideologies of the movement. Thirdly, it will review how the critical minds of the student activists have affected Korean society based on survey results. Lastly, the paper concludes by prognosticating the direction of the student movement in the 1990s.

II. External Structure of Korean Student Movement

Following the assumption that the Korean student movement has historically executed critical roles concerning the established society, the question of why Korean society's structural characteristics were in need of such a function could be of natural interest. However, this is as controversial a matter as the problem of how to comprehend the student movement. Therefore, the structural characteristics will be simply put by dividing the changes of Korean society after its liberation into political, economic and international levels through ordinary standards.

First of all, on the political side, the country's antagonistic structure of south-north division has been conducive to dictatorial rule. The Korean War experience has led the South Korean society to recognize that it is possible to mobilize all human and material resources for the sake of guaranteeing peace. This mandatory recognition was not only for the ruling class but also for the ruled. Therefore, it was inevitable for the power to be formed in ranking order. Furthermore, the structural condition of power concentration eventually blocked the expression and institutionalization of various interests (Song, 1990). This shows that the country may participate in antidemocratic and inhuman governing which suppresses individual freedom and group autonomy. However, even though there have been efforts which have shown some possibility of change, the south-north confrontation still cannot but hold "the theory of survival" as a primary criterion.

Secondly, on an economic level, an unequal distribution of wealth became a byproduct of earlier problems of absolute poverty. The experience of absolute poverty brought forth a national agreement on the necessity of economic development and growth. Due to the seriousness of materialistic survival, there was not enough room to think about distributing the fruits of growth. Therefore, the restricted development which put importance on growth and efficiency was undertaken and to make it possible the state could not but delve deeply into the markets. The demand for the growth of the national economy gradually called for swift methods relying on the government granting privileges to an economic group represented by some plutocrats. Consequently, as much as the growth-oriented economic policies was applauded for

achieving an economic miracle, it intensified the gap between the haves and have-nots, grafting a deep-seated resentment among the disadvantaged. Unfortunately, the demand for compensation by the disadvantaged is not being treated as importantly as the interest for economic growth.

Lastly, on the international scale, the cold-war structure, which has been inherent to Korea, has thrust the country under foreign subjugation. Such internalization of the external cold-war structure provided for a very strong American role in the South. United States' interests concerning the South were a very decisive in international politics and in military standards. Such dependency on the U.S. is also a problem related to the political aspects of this country, which is still facing antagonism from the North. Even with the 1980s reform in Eastern Europe signifying the absolute dissolution of the international cold-war structure, Korea remains the sole society to be still under the ideology of the cold-war era.

It is such structural characteristics, all intermingled, which forced the country to rely on student movement. No other group but the students in South Korea was able to challenge this ruling structure. Who else but university students could ask for political freedom, distributive justice, and national autonomy against such a ruling order? They are intellectually discriminating as well as organizationally ready to be mobilized for protests on behalf of the people. This is the reason why students have fulfilled the role of demonstrator against the ruling order.

Under such circumstances, Korea, meanwhile, has undergone turbulent social changes in this century. Also, among the worldwide trend of the breakdown of the communists states, Korea recently tied the diplomatic knot with the Soviet Union. Behind such radical changes in this country, there has always been an unwavering student effort to criticize, resist and censor the ruling order, politically, economically and internationally. Such efforts had a great spreading effect because they were defined by purity rather than by economic or political interest which from the onset of the 1980s seemed to be one of the main characteristics.

III. Goals and Ideologies of the Korean Student Movement in the 1980s

Up until 1980, the student movement was barren of any unified ideology, organization, or mode of struggle. It merely raised its voice sporadically, when called for, to point out problems in the prevailing ruling order. Therefore, before the 1980s there was no specific difference in the student movement's internal line or the aspect of participation arising from it.

But the latter years of the 1970s gave birth to two distinct lines in the student movement, namely, the "Chunbiron (Theory of Preparation)" and "T'ujaengnon (Theory of Struggle)." These two lines became involved in two problems of the student movement: securing grass-roots support and accomplishing the vanguard role. The former stressed the accumulation of the grass-roots potential, while the latter emphasized a vanguard political struggle. The so-called "Seoul Spring" of 1980, which came after the long dictatorial rule of Park Chung-Hee, gave way to a division in the movement's lines. The two lines differ in their methods of struggle in a sense that

"Chunbiron" adopted a moderate route, aiming to secure grass-roots support before taking any direct action. It hence pursued a lawful struggle. Meanwhile, "T'ujaengnon" did just the opposite, clashing head-on with the existing rule, with the belief that time was running short.

However, when their struggle was aborted by Chun Doo-Hwan's coup d'etat followed by the Kwangju massacre, students began to totally reject the romantic concept of their movement. They also subsequently began to critically perceive the U.S. role in South Korea.* After their aborted movement of 1980, the reality as recognized by the leadership of the student movement was manifested in a formation of two different lines, i.e., "Murim" and "Hangnim." The former basically evolved from the "Chunbiron," while the latter succeeded the "T'ujaengnon" emphasizing the student movement's striking role. During the course of the 1985 general elections, "Murim," which up to then had been the majority in the student movement, lost its popularity when they decided to boycott the elections. They were confronted with the problem of taking their methods of struggle in a politics-oriented way or mass-oriented way.

During the constitutional amendment drive in 1987, "Murim" and "Hangnim" provided the momentum for the two lines to undergo several different modifications. They eventually evolved into two factions, which exist to the present day: the National Liberation (NL) and the People's Democracy (PD). This internal split is of great importance because these two lines controlled the entire 1980s' student movement.

NL, which leads Ch'ondaehy'op, a major national student group, has Kim Il Sung's "Juche" ideology as its doctrine. NL's ideology asserts that a nation should develop and determine its own destiny without foreign subjugation. The faction brands South Korea as a puppet of the United States. Its goal is to drive out the "imperialist forces" and form an "autonomous" government through reunification. With the belief that its struggle should put forth demands that can appeal to the general public, NL spearheaded a nationwide movement in June of 1987 for the direct presidential election. The movement quickly won grass-roots support and elicited a government concession that month, which came in the form of the June 29 democratic measure, declared by Roh Tae-woo, who was the ruling party's presidential candidate at that time.

Meanwhile, PD, whose ideology is firmly rooted in Marxist-Leninist theory, emphasizes class struggle in South Korea. The faction believes that the working class should rise up against what they call "fascism brought about by imperialist-controlled capitalism." While NL considers reunification of the country as the end, PD does not view the issue with such immediacy since it thinks it can be realized as a byproduct of a class revolution. PD has adamantly stuck to its line, while NL in the meantime has made superficial attempts to modify its ideology for greater public consumption, without significant success to date.

Overall, Korea's student movement in the 1980s bore a couple of characteristic

* The pamphlet "1980's Recognition and Strategy of Revolutionary Struggle," which reevaluates the U.S. role in Korea, came out in 1983. This was the first to show that the leaders of the student movement are systematically analyzing society in relation with the role of foreign powers. Nevertheless, it seems as if establishing the movement policy is not yet a theoretical system but rather is still situational dependent.

features. One of them was the confrontation between the moderate and radical lines. For the first half of the decade the main stream of the student movement gained broad public support by arguing for gradual reform through moderate struggle. However, in 1985 the main stream lost public support due to their refusal to participate in the general election campaign, giving way to the minority line which advocated participation in election. Consequently, the more moderate line, emphasizing the importance of public support, emerged as the main stream of the student movement.

The other characteristic trend of the Korean student movement in the 1980s lay in their theoretical confrontation on the direction and target of the movements. The movements in the decade began to grasp the totality of repression in politics, economics, and the international level. Consequently, each line formed in the latter years of the 1980s, i.e., NL and PD, offered a comprehensive understanding of the whole society in their own way. The dispute derives from the difference in defining the major contradictions in South Korea. PD attributes the central cause of repression to the contradiction between capital and labor, advocating the overthrow of monopoly capital and the "fascist regime." On the other hand, NL lays its stress on the contradiction between imperialism and nationalism and focuses its struggle on overcoming imperialism and the "puppet" fascist government. So, the two groups differ in defining which problem, economic exclusion or international subjugation, is the ultimate source of repression in South Korea. On the other hand, both lines recognize the state as fascist, and as the secondary target to fight against. Figure 1 demonstrates these relations.

Figure 1. Ideologies and Targets of Korean Student Movement in 1980s

Lines	Contradictions	Targets	External Structures
PD	Capital-Labor	→ Anti-Monopoly → Anti-Fascism	← Economic Exclusion ← Political Repression
NL	Imperialism-Nationalism	→ Anti-Imperialism	← International Subjugation

IV. The Consequences of the Student Movement in Korea

Public response to the campus movement can be interpreted as an indicator of the approval rate of the issues which such movements have brought forth. The main categories raised during the 1980s were as follows; 1) demand for democratization, 2) pursuit of a socialist system, 3) anti-imperialism (Americanism), and 4) demand for reunification. Each item will be examined in terms of public support.

No one in South Korea will doubt that the students' demand for democratization, evoking national consensus, has brought positive effects. For example, student activists first demanded the constitutional revision for the direct presidential election of 1987, and this triggered the rising aspiration of people for democratization resulting in the Declaration of June 29, 1987. Since then there has been a continuous process of democratization in Korea. Such evaluation can be confirmed by an objective data.

According to a survey in 1989, 83.6 percent of Seoul residents expressed a positive opinion when asked whether the student movement contributed to the democratization of Korea (Park, 1989).

On the other hand, the students' pursuit of a socialist system did not gain sympathy from the public. The student activists have criticized the nation's economy which has accomplished rapid growth on the basis of capitalist economic principles. They suggested a socialist economy as an alternative. Whereas the student movement in the 1970s which demanded the revision of the policy of economic distribution has been supported by the public, the demands in the 1980s aiming for a socialist establishment were denied by the larger body of students as well as by the public. For instance, a poll in 1989 shows that 79 percent of college student approved the improvement of economic distribution under the principles of free-market economy, while only 16 percent of them approved the statement that distributive justice should be accomplished even at the cost of free-market principles (Lew, 1990).

Such denial of the socialist system may be perceived by the leading group of activists as a result of the ruling power's suppression. However, such disapproval of socialism would not be entirely irrelevant when considering that many people experienced the Korean War. Consequently, it cannot be simply put as the people's passiveness but it could be the result of most people's positive choice based on their historical experience. Therefore, the socialistic aspect of the movement definitely failed to gain public support. Nevertheless, one cannot deny the fact that this movement has also had an effect on the development of Korean society by bringing into the open the negative aspects of capitalism.

The third issue raised by the student movement is related to the role of the United States in Korea. The pro-American view since the liberation from Japanese rule has been questioned among student activists since the Kwangju uprising in 1980. Since then the anti-American slogans of the student movement have entered the thoughts of ordinary people, and they also began to reconsider the U.S. role on the Korean peninsula. Nowadays there exists a fair amount of anti-Americanism among the public. This fact can be found in a survey in June of 1989, in which 35.3 percent of people in Seoul were in sympathy with the student's advocacy of anti-Americanism (Park, 1989). This trend may have been intensified with the diplomatic pressure from the U.S. to open the Korean market.

Lastly, the student discourse on the reunification provoked the public interests in this issue. When the movement took up the issue in 1988, the public began to become concerned with the problem on which an open debate had been forbidden since the division of the nation, and went a step further to assume a critical attitude toward the government's policy of reunification. This change of view is shown in a survey result where 44.9 percent of Seoul residents thought that the students should be allowed to attend the P'yongyang Festival (Park, 1990). However, the general opinion of the public is strongly skeptical on the specifics of reunification proposed by the student movement. For example, a 76.7 percent approval rate for the statement that the government should control the contact between North and South reveals the public's fear of student activists' independent contact with the North (Lew, 1989).

In sum, among the proposals of the student movement, the issue of pro-democracy appears to get the approval by the public. The socialist tendency of the movement

hardly attained public support, although it served to improve distributive justice. The issues of reunification and anti-Americanism were accepted in principle with considerable public reservation on the specific strategies and procedures proposed by the student movement.

V. Prospects of Korean Student Movement in 1990s

We have based the prognostication of the future course of the campus movement on the people's evaluation of the students' past demands. As for the demand for democratization, students will quickly lose ground in raising such issues for very long since such "demand" has become more of a popular consensus. Thus, under the premise that the country continuously forges toward democracy, such demands will no longer require a censorial role by the students but will become a routine subject.

Pursuit of a socialist system, which the student activists assert will bring about an improved distribution of wealth, will soon falter. Faced with disapproval from the general public, it will bring about internal disorder to the factional lines. In other words, lack of support for the campus movement is inevitable unless students acknowledge and accept the economic superiority of this nation over North Korea. Only when they approach the crux of the unification problem based on such a premise, will they win public support. As for other issues as foreign subjugation, anti-Americanism, and unification, there is a foreseeable end to these issues due to the global breakdown of the cold war system, and the consequent changes brought forth by the nation's ruling class.

In essence, all three of the current movements, centered on democracy, distributive justice, and national autonomy, will fail because they have become banal, isolated, and extreme, giving way to a whole new set of movements of different temperament. They are likely to follow the pattern of the more advanced nations, changing from an ideology-oriented movement into one of practical value such as protection of the environment or pro-life.

REFERENCES

- Kim, Joo-Ho. 1976. "A Study on the Theory of Smelser's Collective Behavior." *Yonsei Journal of Sociology* 1.
- Kim, Joong-Sop. 1985. "An Alternative Approach to Social Movement Analysis." *Korean Review of Sociology* 3.
- Park, Jong-Sun. 1989. "Seoulcans' Response to Student Movement." *Truth and Liberty* 2.
- _____. 1990. "America in Korean Students' Mind." *Ibid.* 6.
- Song, Bok. 1990. *The Conflict Structure in Korean Society*. Seoul: Hyundae Moonhak.
- Yoo, Do-Jin. 1986. "A History of Student Movement." *Journal of Korean Society and Culture* 6.
- Lew, Seok-Choon. 1990. "Ideological Orientation and Political Choice of University Student." *Yonsei Journal of Sociology* 10-11.