KOREAN POLITICS: DEMOCRATIC

VALUES IN A CONFUCIAN

SOCIETY

By

KIDAE KIM
''
Bachelor of Arts

Kyungpook National University

Daegu, Korea

February, 1978

KOREAN POLITICS: DEMOCRATIC

VALUES IN A CONFUCIAN

SOCIETY

Thesis Approved:

_____
Thesis Adviser

_____

_____

_____
Dean of the Graduate College

ii

1290981

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

PREFACE

Democratic political development in developing coun-
tries has been a concern to political scientists in develop-
ing countries and developed countries since the 1960s. Now
we understand that political development cannot be obtained
by the institutions of the political system alone. To
achieve democracy, a society needs to formulate a democratic
environment and political culture in which the democratic
institutions can operate.

Conflicts between traditional and democratic values in
a transforming society can hinder the operation of modern
democracy, especially when the traditional values are
strongly rooted. Korean society is the case in point. The
strong Confucian ethos of the society has been one of the
important factors hindering democratic development.

Three dimensions of the political system were studied
to understand the problem; cultural background, origin of
political support, and the performance of the election sys-
tem.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

Political development has been the major concern of the
Korean people. Since independence the country has experi-
enced political upheavals, uprisings, rebellions, and coups.
This is unsatisfactory for a rapidly modernizing nation such
as South Korea and one of the most important problems the
Korean people are struggling with. Yet, despite the strong
desire of the people for democracy, the goal has been elu-
sive.

After the massive destruction of the Korean war (1950
-1953) a western style industrial economy was successfully
developed to the extent that Korea is now categorized among
the newly industrialized countries.[1] Thus, the Korean people
have escaped from the poverty which characterized much of
their recent history. Today Korea is able to produce modern
cars and ships quite competitive in international markets.

---

[1] Joan Edelman Spero, The Politics of International Economic
Relations, Third Edition, St. Martin's Press, New York,
1985, p 100.

1

Its Gross National Product per capita, $2,395 in 1986, is now higher than in some European countries.[2] Korea is now the 7th largest trading partner of the United States.[3] All this can be attributed to a successful replacement of the traditional economic system with a modern Western style economy.

Successful economic development enhanced not only the living standard of the people but also gave the nation the international prestige Korean people longed for. They now host important international events including the 1986 Asian Games, 1988 Summer Olympics, and meetings of many international governmental groups and private associations.

Despite these developments, however, political development has lagged. Though a democratic system was institutionalized according to the American model, the people have periodically suffered from the authoritative regimes. Further, personal authoritative rule produced a cycle of demonstrations, uprisings, coups, and declaration of martial law.

Politically, a separation of powers system has not been institutionalized. The power of the presidency has been so aggrandized that either or both of the other branches of government can hardly check the presidency or executive power. Further, the delegation of powers to local governments has been suspended by central governments.

---

[2] Wall Street Journal, June 22, 1987.

[3] Newsweek, "Crisis in Korea," June 29, 1987, p 28.

A system of legitimate partisan competition has not
been institutionalized. Party activities and opposition law
makers are arbitrarily hindered and intimidated by the rul-
ing party. The police and administrative organizations
played substantial roles in ruling party election victories
and the parliamentary election system is frequently criti-
cized as favoring the ruling party. The rise of the mili-
tary role in politics after coups resulted in a delay in
political development. Political activities and freedom of
press have been suspended by military governments or by
regimes under martial law. The National Assembly has been
dissolved by the military and arbitrary law-making bodies
organized by the soldiers have taken the place of the
national legislature.

These political problems undermined not only the legit-
imacy of the regimes but also the stability of the society.
Lack of government legitimacy and arbitrary personal rule
have caused recurrent students demonstrations and periods of
political chaos.

The Korean people have a very strong aspiration for
democracy. Literacy is very high and modern education wide-
spread. The economic situation is also good. Basic social
conditions appear satisfactory for the commitment of democ-
racy. Why has the Korean society failed to realize democ-
racy in the territory, given that democratic institutions
were introduced about 40 years ago?

Koreans have a strong cultural pride and nationalism which inhibits their adopting Western democratic values. The society has ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and historical homogeneity. As a result, Koreans retain strong nationalism despite decades of suppression by Japan and centuries of strong Chinese influence. Korean nationalism, then, came to involve tenacious loyalty to what was seen as Korean, including the Confucian social system. Thus, unlike the Japanese or the Chinese, who could adopt Western practices with minimal threat to nationalism, Koreans are much more conservative in abandoning social tradition, even where they conflict with democratic development.

Thus, the answer might lie in a conflict between traditional values and Democratic ideals. Korean society had been a Confucian hierarchical system for long time. Although Confucian institutions were dissolved during and after the Japanese colonialism, the Confucian mentality has prevailed in the society and strongly influences every sector of life. Traditional values might produce friction with democratic values.

In this situation, a Western education system teaches democratic ideals and values among the basically Confucian people. Therefore, it might be expected that the two different and conflicting value systems will produce a severe friction not only in the mentality of the people but also in every sector of life. These frictions can cause many confu-

sions in life and inconsistency problems in the behavior of the people. Some kinds of behavior, women's social activity for instance, are accepted by some people in the society while rejected by others. A Confucian value system can also produce normlessness in the mentality of the people and make them alienated from politics. Thus, political alienation of the people, in return, can invite the rise of the charismatic leadership.

The conflict between democratic and traditional values first begins in the political learning of young children entering the education system. Therefore, we are led to study the mentality of the growing children to understand how the children perceive politics and reconcile conflicting ideas. It is hypothesized that young Korean students will well understand the democratic values and ideals because political institutions, the educational system and the mass media stress these themes.

The conflicting Confucian influence also has prevailed in the society in every sector of ordinary life. The result is that few Koreans have been meaningfully exposed to participative democratic practices. Instead, they live in a highly regulated hierarchical society. Thus, it is hypothesized that Koreans would be ignorant of the importance of participative processes, essential to democracy, such as voting.

This thesis will explore the relationship between democratic values and Confucian society in three stages. First, Korean political history is explored to bring forward the conflict between the traditional ethics and democratic values. Next, the attitudes of Korean children are examined. Over two thousand children in Grade 1 to 6 from schools throughout Korea were surveyed in 1983 concerning their attitudes toward democracy and political life.

Finally on the institutional level, the Korean parliamentary election system is studied in Chapter 4. The Korean parliamentary voting system, a key democratic institution, undermines the legitimacy of the government rather than strengthening it. This is attributed to the conflict between democratic and Confucian goals.

The study concludes that political life and social norms cannot develop independently of one another. Democratic development requires democratic social institutions.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

The Traditional Confucian System

Before independence in 1945 Korea had no experience
with democratic government and the prevailing Confucian
ethic left no scope for democratic principles. Indeed, the
only western element in Korean culture at the time of inde-
pendence was a strong Christian minority, introduced by mis-
sionaries in the 19th century. Until it was replaced by
Japanese colonialism in 1910, Korean kingship was absolute
and the political process was the business of the king and
the aristocratic 'yangban' or government officials. As was
the case with the European feudal system, government was not
the concern of the ordinary people.

Nevertheless, the traditional Korean government had a
character quite different from the European feudal system.
Korea's feudal system followed the Chinese Confucian model.
Even though people's participation in politics was not
allowed, the ideal was that politics was to be done for the
sake of the people, not for the king or the aristocracy.

The responsibility of the king and aristocracy was to antic-
ipate and prevent troubles for the people. For example, the
government was responsible for flood control, insuring that
rice and other staples are available, and that people are
not disturbed by brigands. In sum, the government was for
the people. However, even though the concept of the govern-
ment _for_ the people can be traced in the traditional Korean
politics, the concept of the government _by_ the people can
not be found. All the important government positions were
recruited by those scholarly Confucian aristocrats who
passed the civil service test called 'gwaguh' administered
by the government. The general concern of the people, as in
other Oriental societies, was not politics but economic
activity.[1] As politics was totally and exclusively the
domain of the yangban, when ordinary people complained, it
was typically about economic difficulties resulting from the
corruption or bad management of local officials. It was the
responsibility of higher officials to somehow learn of these
popular difficulties. There was few institutionalized
mechanisms by which people can bring forward complaints
themselves.

In the traditional system during the last Korean
dynasty, Chosun (or Yi 1392-1910), all important political
decisions were made by the king as a result of the discus-
sion with high ranking government officials in the court.

---

[1] Lee Myung Gu,(tr), _Sam-min-ju-eui_,(Korean) by Son Mun,
Sam-sung Cultural Foundation, Korea, 1974, pp. 99-117.

The decisions were made by and large in compliance with the discussion outcomes of the conference presided by the king.

> A monarch should rule the country in a kingly way, not as a conqueror. The nobility or yangban were to make concerted efforts to help the monarch in his royal administration. In order to achieve the goal of a Confucian state, arbitrary actions of the monarch should be checked by the bureaucracy, especially by the Office of Remonstrance (Sagan-won) and the ministers.[2]

In this context we can find some characters of oligarchy in traditional Korean political system.

As a consequence, many factional groups in the aristocracy played important roles in political decision-making, particularly since 16th century. These factional groups can be viewed as the prototype of a modern political party. Even though they did not have the formal organization and other characteristics of modern political parties, they sometimes exercised substantial group influence over the political process. The result was political conflicts, called 'sa-wha', between the aristocratic groups.

The kingship as well as the aristocracy was de-facto dissolved with Japanese direct rule in 1910. The Japanese permitted Koreans no direct participation in local or national government and Korea was not represented in the elected Japanese Diet. Japanese colonialism brought about the de-facto consequence of revolution in the sense that the traditional monarchical system was completely dissolved dur-

---

[2] Sohn Pow-key, Kim Chol-choon, and Hong Yi-sup, The History of Korea, Korean National Commission for Unesco, Seoul, Korea, 1982, p 148.

ing the period. It did not replace the system with any new national system in which Koreans could participate, however. Only with independence from Japan in 1945 did the Korean People become widely exposed to the concept of democracy.

⌐ Post-Independence Political Development

Korean exiles established a republican provisional government in Shanghai, China in 1919. Many who participated in the Anti-Japanese Independence Movement also favored the establishment of a democratic form of government. These, however, were a relatively small portion of the population. Therefore, at the time of independence, as might be expected, most Koreans were not familiar with the concept of democracy.

> Modern Korean nationalism began in 1884, grew with the later xenophobic 'Tonghak Rebellion' and 'Independence Club' (1989), and reached a peak in the March 1 Independence Movement of 1919: but a conscious democratic movement did not really get under way until after the liberation in 1945.[3]

Further, as democracy was a system brought by foreign powers, Koreans had difficulty understanding and applying the concept.

With the establishment of the 1st Republic in 1948, the modern style democratic form of government was institutionalized for the first time in Korean history. Institutionally it was organized according to the democratic models.

---

[3] Yang Ho-min, "Democracy and the Elite," Korea Journal, vol 3, 1963, p 10.

However, from the beginning the government had to deal with many problems originating from the division of the country; ideological confrontation, rebellions, the Korean war, and enormous economic and social problems associated with Japanese colonialism and Korea's isolation from world development. These problems contributed to the rise of the charismatic and personal rule of the first president, Syngman Rhee, within the framework of democratic institutions. As with many other developing nations, one party personal rule and the suspension of the civil rights followed. From the beginning, democracy was not transplanted safely.

The Korean war at the beginning of the Republic and continuous ideological confrontation deepened the rivalry and antagonism between South and North and accelerated the military build-up. Thus, by the end of 1950s the military became one of the influential social forces in the society. This was in strong contrast to traditional Korea where the military was subordinate to the civilian officials and the monarch.[4]

By the 1960s Rhee's autocratic rule and charges of election rigging brought about a series of students demonstrations resulting in the the fall of his government. After a brief civilian regime, the military, led by Park Chung Hee, responded to continued disorders with a coup. This pattern of student demonstrations and military coups

---

[4] Edwin O. Reischauer and Edward J. Baker, "A Time Bomb Is Ticking in South Korea," The New York Times Magazine, November 16, 1986. p 51.

has become a fixture of Korean politics and a threat to democratic development.

For all but a few brief periods, post independence Korean political system has been highly centralized in the national government at the expense of the provincial and local governments. Typically, mayors and governors have been appointed from Seoul and have been responsible to the national government, not the local people.

The National Assembly, too, has typically been weak and vulnerable to executive power.[5] Congressmen could be intimidated by the executive. Under Park Chung-Hee, one third of the assembly was appointed by the President and today, under Chun Doo Whan, the election system is such that the ruling party is able to directly nominate a large number of assembly members. Thus, while opposition parties can and do use the National Assembly as a forum for their grievances, the National Assembly continues to be subordinate to the President.

The only opportunity for people to vote has been presidential elections (every 4 years before 1980 and every 7 year afterward), parliamentary elections (every 4 years), and very few periodic referenda. All officials including provincial governors and mayors are appointed by the central government. Thus, post independence Korean politics has some parallel in the traditional Korean monarchy and yangban

---

[5] Chong Lim Kim and Seong-Tong Pae, <u>Legislative Process in Korea</u>, Seoul National University Press, Korea, 1981, p 4, 253.

system. As a consequence, Korean grown-ups are relatively very ignorant in their understanding of the importance of votes, elected offices, and the participation of people in relation with their understanding of the democratic norms and ideals.[6]

In short Korean society has had little experience of democracy. Despite the Korean eagerness for democracy, the concept of democracy may not have been well matched with the actual government practices. This is due to Korea's Confucian values.

Confucian Influence

Korean political culture was traditionally based on a mixture of Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, all imported at an early time from China, and a traditional Korean Shamanism. Of these, Confucianism played the most important role in politics. Confucian views, less a religion and more an ethical system, penetrated to all sectors of society. Important government positions were recruited from people educated in Confucian teachings. The society was operated and maintained based overwhelmingly on Confucian ideals and philosophy.

---

[6] Lorand B. Szalay and Rita Mae Kelly, "Political Ideology and Subjective Culture: Conceptualization and Empirical Assessment," American Political Science Review, vol 76, September 1982, pp 585-602.

> Confucianism constituted the basis of political
> ideal as well as being the mainstream of pre-mod-
> ern Korean philosophy. In other words, to histor-
> ically understand Korea it must be realized Confu-
> cianism formed the backbone of all Korean thought.

As the basic traditional Korean political system was struc-

tured and recruited by the Confucian scholars for long time,

Confucian influence on politics was overwhelming in the

Korean pre-modern society. People even adopted the Confu-

cian norms and rituals in their life as inherent laws that

no one should doubt or question.

The importation of Confucianism from China to Korea

dated back to the united Silla dynasty (668-918) or even the

three kingdom period (57B.C.-668A.D.).

> In Koguryo, the oldest of the three kingdoms, the
> Five Chinese Classics (the Book of Changes; the
> Odes; the History; the Ceremonials; the Annals)
> and the Three Chinese Histories (The Book of Han;
> Shih Chi(Historical Records) and the Book of Later
> Han) were widely read by the nobles, and so too,
> in the other two kingdoms, Silla and Paikche.
> Even before this period the effects of Confucian-
> ism, especially Confucian propriety, were found in
> the Eight Prohibited Articles of Kija as well as
> in the custom of Lolang, one of the four Chinese
> colonies established in 108 B.C. in the northwest-
> ern section of the Korean peninsula, which leads
> us to conclude that the influence of Confucian
> teaching upon Korean society has a long history,
> nearly as long as the history of Korea itself.

Thus, from the earliest period, Confucianism was one of

the important curricula for the government officials. To be

employed in important government positions or to be pro-

moted, officials had to be educated in Confucian principles.

This led to a transition from hereditary recruitment to a

more open competition system for the recruitment of govern-

ment officials. 'Dock-suh sam-poom-gwa' or Triple-Class reading examination of the Silla dynasty was an example of such a contest.

The Koryo dynasty (918-1392) developed the Confucian recruitment system. From this dynasty Confucianism played the important role in politics, while in other sectors of social life Buddhism, Taoism, or traditional Shamanism prevailed.[7] During the period, a civil service examination system called 'gwaguh' was established for the first time. Education in confucianism was very important for success. This institutionalized the civil service test system for the recruitment of important government positions and provided a revolutionary change to the bureaucracy and culture. In this sphere Buddhist teaching and Shamanism came to be replaced by Confucian teachings.

Confucianism also contributed to the centralization of the government and the strengthening of the kingship.[8] This followed the Chinese model. Confucianism during this period, however, was not overwhelmingly influential outside politics because Buddhism strongly prevailed in every sector of life among the people. Thus it was not until the Chosun dynasty that Confucianism prevailed not only in politics but also in every sector of society.

---

[7] Kim Doo-hun, "Confucian Influences on Korean Society," Korea Journal, vol 3, September 1, 1963, p 17.

[8] Sohn Pow-key et.al., p 85.

The following Chosun dynasty (1392-1910) strengthened
itself with neo-Confucianism, witnessing the most prosperous
era of Confucianism in Korean history.

> The Yi (Chosun) Dynasty was the golden age of Con-
> fucianism in Korea. During the last century of
> the Koryo dynasty there had been a marked increase
> in interest in Confucianism in Korea, so that by
> the time Yi Song-kye usurped the throne from the
> last king of the Koryo dynasty in 1392, Confucian-
> ism was already well established.[9]

As most of the government officials of the new Chosun
dynasty were Confucianests and had anti-Buddhist sentiment,
they took strong anti-Buddhist policies, encourageing neo-
Confucianism.

> The Yi (Chosun) dynasty had radically espoused
> Neo-Confucianism as a guiding principle. At the
> same time it suppressed Buddhism which had been
> followed by Koreans for more than one thousand
> years.[10]

As Buddhist influence had been very strong in every
sector of life during Koryo dynasty, Confucian officials
needed to overcome Buddhist influence connected with power-
ful Koryo landlords for the construction of new dynasty.
They took the neo-Confucianism as their ideological weapon
for that purpose. The neo-Confucianism was different from
the traditional Confucianism in their interpretation and
adoption of metaphysical Buddhism and Taoism.

> Neo-Confucianism based its theory on dualism; the
> metaphysical li or principle, and the physical
> ch'i or ether (often matter). These formed the

---

[9] Michael Daniels, "Confucius and Confucianism in Korea,"
Korea Journal, vol 19, PT 1, 1979, p 47.

[10] Yu Hong-ryul, "History of Christian Propagation," Korea
Journal, vol 2, 1962, p 6.

constituents of the universal order. This theory
recognized the ontological priority of li over
ch'i and its precedence in dignity. Neo-Confu-
cianism could be compared to li or principle, and
Buddhism to ch'i or matter, which was somewhat
turbid. The Buddhist increment in land and slaves
should be eliminated in order to bring the society
under the rule of li, or principle. Thus, neo-
Confucianism provided a political theory for the
newly rising officials and Yi Song-gye to wage
iconoclastic war against the power of the nobility
and the Buddhist temples.[11]

As a consequence of the establishment of Chosun dynasty

by the Confucian officials and anti-Buddhist policies, the

Confucian prevailed in every sector of the Korean society

for more than 500 years and pre-modern Korean society became

de-facto the Confucian state until it was exposed to the

Western influence in 19th century.

To understand the Korean political culture today, it is

necessary to comprehend its Confucian character. Confucians

taught 5 human relations; father and son, master and ser-

vant, husband and wife, young and old, and friends.[12] Three

Fundamental Principles emphasized the most basic relation-

ships: subject obedient to king, king loves subjects; wife

obedient to husband, husband love wife; son obedient to

father, father love son. To keep the society in order, they

thought every member of the society needs to know the status

and relevant behavior of each individual in human relations

so that individual and social conflicts can be avoided. So

long as people keep the 3 fundamental principles in human

---

[11] Sohn Pow-key et.al., p 119.

[12] Kim Doo-hun, p 18.

relations, Confucians thought the society would be peaceful and without disputes.

The focus was on cooperation and concessions in human relations rather than personal or group conflicts, quite contrary to the more individualistic Western philosophy. The orientation was the group or society. To reach maximum individual happiness and peace, individual interests were to be surrendered to the cause of the group. Social order would achieve individual happiness and peace; not the reverse as in the Western tradition. Thus, individual interests should be embedded into the group commonwealth and should be sought in such a way as being harmonious with the other's interests. Pursuing the personal interests itself was viewed as an earthly thing, not becoming for scholarly and civilized people or for families of good blood. Confucianism tried to minimize individual or group conflicts while encouraging cooperation.

For the common wellbeing of the society, many virtues, typically involving personal sacrifice in the interest of social order, were taught. The Five Constant Virtues were benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and sincerity.[13] As politics was regarded as a benevolent government of the king for the people under the Mandate of Heaven, the people should in return respect and protect the king or the state with their strong loyalty. The royalty to the state or king and filial piety were the most important.

---

[13] Ibid., p 18.

Politics was understood as a business of those who had
mastered the process of self-discipline course and this
became the ethos of the society.

> the Confucian concept of self-disciplining and of
> ruling people as well as managing family and gov-
> erning country has long been the fundamental prin-
> ciples of political philosophy, thereby having
> great influence on daily life and the way of
> thinking in Korea.[14]

To keep the society and political system stable, kin-
ship and family relationships were strongly emphasized.
Ancestors were worshiped. Ancestor worship and strong fam-
ily relationship developed the strong we-feeling of the
nation, which can be viewed as the origin of Korean nation-
alism.

> Underlying the two Confucian products of Yi (Cho-
> sun) Korea was the ancestor worship and moral
> purification by means of Confucianism, which fur-
> ther helped promote the consciousness to identify
> the family ancestor and national ancestor of the
> time. The idea of ancestor worship, thus,
> extended to the national we consciousness beyond
> the consanguineous group mind.[15]

As the Korean society had been traditionally based on
the agricultural culture, it needed the collective group
working, rather than individual working. Quite contrary to
the nomadic culture, they were to live in one place over
generations without moving and thus developed the extended
family system. These inherent social characters, in combi-
nation with the Confucianism, contributed to the development
of strong kinship among family members in the society. Some

---

[14] Ibid., p 18.

[15] Ibid., p 40.

critics noted that these strong feelings of kinship and family relationships might be dysfunctional for modern democracy.[16]

In brief, the last Chosun dynasty, under the Confucian institutions and political culture, maintained the system stably for more than five centuries without any fatal challenges despite several massive scale invasions from neighboring states.[17]

Influence of Buddhism

Buddhism has influenced Korean society for such a long time as to date back to the Three Kingdom period. Because of its long history, it has influenced almost every sector of Korean society.

> We cannot think of Korean philosophy without at the same time considering of Buddhism, just as it is impossible to talk about Western philosophy without reference to Christianity. This is true at least of the Silla and Koryo eras.[18]

---

[16] Kim Jae Young, On Political Socialization, (Korean), Dae-wang-sa, Korea, 1983, pp 261-63.

[17] According to a study, only 32 times of internal conflicts are recorded including the small scale rebellions against corrupted local officials or struggles for power within the royal family members. See Sung M. Pae, Testing Democratic Theories in Korea, University Press of America, New York, 1986.

[18] Park Chong-hong, "Buddhist Influence on Korean Thought," Korea Journal, vol 4, 1964, p 4.

Since its first delivery to Korean society during the
Three Kingdom period, it could flourish widely because of
some typical characteristics of Korean Buddhism.

> Buddhism was introduced to Korea by way of China
> and became popular under circumstances peculiar to
> Korea. It is, therefore, necessary to first con-
> sider some of these features that are characteris-
> tics of Korean Buddhism; that Korean Buddhism,
> from the outset, developed revolving around the
> royal court and the aristocratic classes of suc-
> ceeding dynasties; that it was popularized among
> the masses as a miraculous religion.[19]

With the widespread of Buddhism among the people as
well as aristocrats, Buddhism deeply influenced the politics
and ways of thinking of the people. It was strongly tied
with the life and politics of the time.

> Since the Buddhism was from the beginning intro-
> duced to the Three Kingdoms as a miracle-working
> religion which brings prosperity to a country or
> happiness to an individual, it tended to comix
> with the popular beliefs and customs of the times.
> More than that, Buddhism was popularized as a
> religion which had the power to defend the country
> from all evils under the protection of the royal
> court.[20]

In this historical background, one specific character
of national defence of Korean Buddhism can be traced back to
the ancient Three Kingdom period. During the unified Silla
dynasty (668- 918), Korean Buddhism experienced its golden
period. Buddhist teachings were widely spread. Although
Buddhism was very popular at that time, the influence of
other religions was also popular and some of each teaching

---

[19] Kwon Sang-no, "History of Korean Buddhism," Korea Jour-
nal, vol 4, 1964, p 8.

[20] Ibid., p 8.

mixed together and made harmonious combination.

This popularity of Buddhism among the people was descended to the next Koryo dynasty (918A.D.-1392) and Buddhism experienced great development and prosperity, producing great Buddhist monks.

> Buddhism in Koryo, which the new kingdom inherited from unified Silla, became so popular that it pervaded the everyday life of not only the court and the aristocracy but also that of the common people and finally came to hold an important positions in the political, social and economic life of the time.[21]

One political element in Buddhism was that it was seen as having the power to protect the nation from all kinds of attack. A statue of Buddha outside Kyungju, for example, looked over the Sea of Japan and was seen as protecting Korea from Japanese invasion. A few important Buddhist events like 'Palkwan-hoe' and 'Yundeung-hoe' were institutionalized as annual national ceremonies for the purpose of national security and stability. Besides, the 'Tripitaka Koreana' (a Korean body of Buddhist writings), valued as the best of 20 other kinds in Orient, was produced during this period. During this period Buddhism was deeply connected to the concept of the nation in the mentality of the people.

Politically, however, the Buddhist system, including many monks, temples, and ministries, was outside the direct control of the state. By the end of the Koryo dynasty, they constituted a strong center of social, political, and economic power.

---

[21] Ibid., pp 10-11.

The popularity and prosperity of Buddhism not only among the people but also among the aristocracy in the end produced the corruption and abuses of power by Buddhist monks. The reaction was anti-Buddhist sentiment among Confucian scholars in the latter days of Koryo dynasty. This response finally offered the ideological background to open the new Chosun dynasty and provided basis of its anti-Buddhist policy.

The establishment of the Chosun dynasty by Confucian officials opened the decline of Korean Buddhism. Under obvious anti-Buddhist policies Buddhism experienced the most disastrous period in history. The extensive Buddhist temple land was confiscated and several measures and policies were devised to oppress the popular Buddhism.[22]

Ideologically Buddhism has many currents. Politically, however, certain themes are relevant here. First, Buddhism stresses the illusionary nature of the world and the futility of pursuit of economic goals. Likewise, political power, especially for the purpose of transforming society, is not urged by their religion. As a result Buddhism would not provide a basis for democratic political involvement, nor would it lead to opposing military and personalest rule.

---

[22] Sohn Pow-key et.al., p 131.

Influence of Christianity

Compared with the other influential religions like
Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, or Shamanism, the history of
Korean Christianity is very recent. In Korea, Christianity
is basically a late 19th and early 20th century phenomena.
The influence of Christianity in Korean society in the pro-
cess of modernization, nevertheless, has been significant.

> The introduction of Christianity, a religion alien
> to Korea, based on the principle of brotherly
> love, liberty and equality, has played a vital
> role in influencing, directing and accelerating
> the process of Korea's modernization or westerni-
> zation.[23]

To this "Hermit Kingdom" of the Far East, Christianity
came to be first introduced in early 16th century.

> Christianity was not an unfamiliar religion to
> Koreans. It had already been introduced into the
> country in the early part of the 17th century
> through China; toward the end of the 18th century
> the religion reaped its first believers from among
> the people, with the first church coming into
> being. The religion, needless to say, was Catho-
> licism. As soon as it entered the stage of win-
> ning believers, however, Catholicism was subjected
> to severe persecution by the government. The per-
> secution sprang from the understanding that Catho-
> lic doctrine would destroy Confucian social order
> and morality and that Catholic believers among the
> Koreans were resolved to overthrow their govern-
> ment in collaboration with foreigners.[24]

However, only in the end of 19th century the Christianity
could be actively spread among the people without legal bar-
riers or persecution.

---

[23] Yu Hong-ryul, p 6.

[24] Lee Kwang-rin, "Progressive Views on Protestantism(I),"
Korea Journal, vol 16, 1976 (Jan-June), p 20.

In fact, it was not until 1882 that full-fledged
missionary work began. In that year, the "Hermit
Kingdom" signed its first treaty of friendship and
commerce with a Christian country - the United
States.[25]

While the first Korean Christians had some connection
with the foreign missionaries, in particular those in China,
they established the Catholic church for themselves.

Thus Korean Catholic Church was initiated by the
Korean themselves without any outside help or
instigation, unprecedented example throughout the
history of World Christianity.[26]

Before that time, as Korean society was under the
strong influence of Confucianism, they had kept a very neg-
ative abhorance of Catholic Christianity labelling it as an
evil teaching and made every effort to keep the country from
the penetration of the teaching.[27] To the most traditional
Confucianests, it was very difficult to accept the Christian
teachings; denying the authority of the absolute kingship
which was the national symbol of Confucian society, denying
the ancestor worship, the concept of equality between men
and women and between the nobility and the common people,
and the like. Therefore, Christianity was viewed as being
incompatible with the existing Confucianism and as an evil
teaching which would contaminate the morality of the whole
country. As a consequence, the government repeatedly tried
to ban the importation of Christianity, with the cooperation

---

[25] Korea Journal, "Editorial, Development of Christianity,"
vol 2, 1962, p 1.

[26] Yu Hong-ryul, p 7.

[27] Lee Kwang-rin, pp 19-25.

of the chinese delegation, when they negotiated for the
treaties with foreign powers.[28] However, as it was beyond
their ability to resist the Western influence. American
Protestantism came to be introduced to the society, building
missionary schools and hospitals.

With the introduction of Protestant Christianity, the
Korean people could be exposed to the concept of equality
and liberty. Some modern concept of democracy was also
taught in missionary schools. As a consequence, many
social, political, and religious leaders who learned the
modern democratic values and ideals were produced from those
missionary schools and they played a substantial role in
modernizing Korean society. They performed the leading role
in democratic and nationalist movements and encouraged the
women's participation in social activity, which was not
allowed under Confucian customs.[29]

With the introduction of Western civilization and the
influx of Christianity to the Korean society in modern his-
tory, the practical school aiming at the scientific knowl-
edge and social welfare called 'silhak' came to blossom in
the society.

> Since their ideas were based on egalitarian prin-
> ciples, their concerns were more and more centered
> around public welfare programs. Yi Ik (Songho)
> solemnly stated that learning or knowledge should
> not be sought unless it is advantageous to the

---

[28] Ibid., pp 19-25.

[29] R. Darcy and Sunhee Song, "Men and Women in the South
Korean National Assembly," Asian Survey, vol 26, June
1986, pp 670-687.

daily life of the people in general...[30]

Thus, a new momentum of the society to move from the metaphysical pursuit of Confucian knowledge to the practical study for the social welfare was made. As the aristocratic Confucian scholars abhored to deal with economic things, not to mention studying economic things, the rise of the practical school was a revolutionary development of the society. It helped to ideologically dissolve the existing feudal system and opened a new way for the modernization or westernization. Among Christians, a rigid class concept (yangban or aristocracy, chung-in or intermediary class, sang-in or commoners, and ch'onin or menials)[31] which constituted the basic fabric of the Confucian feudal society came to be dissolved. When the class concept between the aristocrats and common people was lifted, the modern concept of equality could be adopted at the place. This kind of ideological change in mentality among Korean Christians was compared to the Copernicus' revolution in its character. Among Christians,

> the yangban class mingled freely with the middle class men in founding the Christian church. This was the first act of demolishing class distinction in the process of modernizing Korean society. The founding fathers of the Korean church called each other "brother" from that time on... As a first step in social modernization the believers stopped worshipping their ancestors.[32]

---

[30] Sohn Pow-key et.al., p 178.

[31] Ibid., p 150.

[32] Ibid., p 8.

As modern Korean society after independence has been
based on Western democracy, Christian ideals and values are
well reflected in the society without any conflicts with the
present political institutions or social norms. Whereas
some of the Confucian norms are not compatible with the dem-
ocratic values, causing conflicts with them, the Christian
values have been harmoniously incorporated into the present
system. In this context, even though the percentage of the
Christian in the society is not overwhelmingly high (about
25%), the influence of Christianity over the mentality of
the Korean people is very substantial.

Other Traditional Religions: Shamanism and Tonghak

Historically under the overwhelming influences of Budd-
hism, Confucianism, and Christianity, the Korean society
also developed other religions like Taoism or the Change and
the traditional Shamanism. Through the long history of
their existence in the society, many parts of the religions
are so amalgamated together into one that it is sometimes
very difficult to trace back the origin of some of the
religious rituals of the ordinary people. As was the case
with other major religions in the Korean society, most of
the imported religions were localized to fit into the soci-
ety and became a typical Korean one deviated from the origi-
nal doctrin of each religion.[33]

---

[33] Kim Jae Young, pp 253-261.

In this process of transformation of other imported religions, the traditional Shamanism played a very important role.[34] It has exercised substantial influence over the ordinary people.

> It is no exaggeration to say that most of Korea's cultural assets come from Buddhism and most of the folk cultural assets come from Shamanism. In this way, shamanism has greatly contributed to the preservation and development of folk culture.[35]

Despite the overwhelming inflow of the major religions to the Korean society throughout the history, Shamanism is still prevailing in the society with substantial influence.

Except the traditional Shamanism and other minor religions imported from the neighboring countries, 'Tonghak' or Eastern Learning was founded and developed in the process of modernization. The teaching of Tonghak was deeply rooted in the Korean culture and provided revolutionary ideals for the people to resist against the foreign penetration, which finally resulted in the Tonghak Peasants' war.

> The basic spirit animating Ch'oe Che-u's Tonghak (Eastern Learning) doctrine was the salvation of farmers from their destitute life. Although his preachings had a religious aspect, his concerns were realistic enough, calling for national stability and security, so that the people could enjoy a satisfactory life.[36]

---

[34] Ibid., p 255.

[35] Mun Sang-he, "Shamanism in Korea," Korean Thought, The Si-sa-yong-o-sa Publishers, Inc., Seoul, Korea, 1982, p 34.

[36] Sohn Pow-key et.al., p 209.

Conclusion

Korea today has very little democratic background in
its history. As the traditional Korean society has not
experienced the Western style civil revolution to dissolve
the absolute kingship, the Confucian feudal system had been
kept until it was replaced by the Japanese colonialism in
1910. Under the Japanese colonialism, as every political
right of the people was suppressed or limited by the Japa-
nese colonial government, no democratic practices nor ideals
were found during the period.

Further, even after independence, Korean politics suf-
fered from the rise of charismatic personal regimes followed
by uprisings and coups. The system has been centralized and
people have not participated. Instead they have experienced
violent changes of the political system by coups or upris-
ings.

Even in the characters of the major religions which
have given great influence in the formation of the political
culture of the people, the values or ideals which can be
compatible with democracy are hardly found. The hierarchi-
cal characters of the dominant Confucian ethics are opposed
to the egalitarian concept of democracy. Secluded Buddhism,
which does not encourage the active involvement in politics
or economy, has not given any significant contribution to
the Korean democracy, either. Korean nationalism makes it

very difficult for the society to abandon these ancient belief systems. Just as in the past Korean culture tenaciously resisted Chinese influence and Japanese assimilation, today it resists assimilation into the democratic West.

The only religion which could provide a basis for democratic thought and Western ideas is Christianity. However, as it does not have a long history of propagation in the society, overall influence of Christianity over political culture in the society is not overwhelming.

Other minor religions or traditional Shamanism which has been influential over the mentality of the ordinary people, did not have any relationship with politics or democracy.

> Liberalism and democracy, both forms of imported culture, floated merely on the outer realm of the life of the Korean people, failing to take root in the bottom of their life.[37]

---

[37] Koh Yong-bok, "Traditionalism and De-Traditionalism," Korea Journal, vol 17 (PT 1), 1977 (Jan-June), p 40.

CHAPTER III

THE BENEVOLENT LEADER AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Background

The origin of support for democratic political institutions is a major concern to the Republic of Korea, a nation which has succeeded in becoming an economic powerhouse since her independence in 1945, but which nontheless has not been able to achieve stable politics. The Republic of Korea was established in 1948, following 3 years of U.S. military government and 35 years of Japanese colonialism. However, the new Republic began with a few major difficulties all associated with the division of the country into two parts.

First of all, its legitimacy was challenged by a rival government in the north, which also claimed to be the government of Korea, competing for the loyalty of Koreans. Further, with the presence of an alternative government in the north, the Republic was not the government of Korea but an interim arrangement preparatory to a government of a reunified Korea. Moreover, about 3 years of Korean war at the beginning of the Republic ultimately led to the Republic

becoming strong militarily but weak in the development of democratic institutions. By the late 1950s the military had become the only developed and cohesive institution in the Republic together with the police organization developed since the period of Japanese colonialism.[1] In the early 1960s, under Park Chung-He, the military took direct control of the government and began a process of economic development and industrialization. Today that process has resulted in Korea's economy being classified as one of the strongest in the world and her population is among the most educated and literate. The Republic of Korea is one of many a handful of nations which have made the transition from underdeveloped to virtually developed economies.

In this historical development, the legitimacy of the regime has been continuously challenged by political, social,religious, and labor groups. The most persistent opposition has come from students. Why has the government been challenged? Why has the younger generation in particular not come to support the new Republic, given its successes economically and internationally?

In general, political socialization, the process by which attitudes toward politics and political institutions are acquired, has been regarded as particularly important in the study of the development of the new nations.[2]

---

[1] Han, Seung-Ju, "The Heritage of the 1st Republic,"(Korean translation) The Understanding of the 1950s (Hangilsa, Seoul,Korea, 1981), Series 22, pp 29-55.

[2] Dean Jaros, Socialization to Politics, (New York; Praeger,

Easton and Dennis found in the case of the United
States that the image of a benevolent leader was the first
step in children developing support for the political sys-
tem.[3] According to their theory, children become psychologi-
cally aware of the personalized leader (President) first
before they understand the most abstract representative and
popular institutions or political processes.[4] The President
forms an initial image of the national leader to the chil-
dren from the early childhood as benevolent, omnipotent, and
protective figure and is looked upon favorably. This is
because the child is able to transfer positive and nurturing
attitudes from parent to parent-like President.

Soon after its publication, however, the Easton and
Dennis theory of benevolent leader as the basis of support
for the political system was challenged. Joseph Massey
showed that in Japan growing children were supportive of
popular institutions and democratic processes without the
existence of a benevolent leader.[5] Christopher Arterton
found in a study of American children at a later period
their attitudes toward the President were not always posi-
tive but that sometimes they showed wholly negative atti-

1973), p 18.

[3] David Easton and Jack Dennis, Children in the Political
    System, (New York; McGraw Hill, 1969), pp 76-207

[4] Ibid., p 138.

[5] Joseph A.Massey, "The Missing Leader : Japanese Youth's
    View of Political Authority," American Political Science
    Review, 69 (March, 1975), pp 31-48.

tudes not only to President but also to political system. This was found even among the children of a high socioeconomic status.[6] A third study examined political socialization in the poor, rural Appalachian region of the United States and found that the children's positive image of the President may be culturally bound and that under certain cultures children had an overtly unfavorable image toward the President.[7] Therefore, in the study of the origins of support for the political system we come to understand that the theory of the benevolent leader may not uniformly apply to different countries and different political cultures. Instead, other factors appear to interfere.

In the context of the Republic of Korea, the concern is, first of all, whether or not the image of a benevolent leader is present for children. If they have a favorable image of the national leader, the concern is whether or not affection toward leader spills over to other political institutions and democratic processes.

Implicit in the Easton and Dennis analysis, of course, is that positive attitudes toward a benevolent leader can spill over even to undemocratic institutions and political processes in changing societies, not just to those further-

---

[6] F.Christopher Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate on Children's Attitudes toward Political Authority," Political Science Quarterly, volume 89 Number 2, June 1974, pp 269-88

[7] Dean Jaros, Frederic Fleron and Herbert Hirsch, "Malevolent Leader: Political Socialization in an American Subculture," The American Political Science Review, 62(1968), pp 564-575.

ing democratic goals. There is nothing implicit in the theory to suggest the benevolent leader must link only to democratic institutions or processes. Indeed, there is ample evidence that the benevolent leader can inhibit democratic development, as is the case with the charismatic leaders in totalitarian or authoritarian societies.

The situation in Korea may be particularly relevant here. Traditionally Korean culture has had strong relationship with China and Confucianism, imported from China, has affected the mentality of the Korean people for a long time. Due to the strong influence of Confucianism, loyalty and respect for the national leader (king) had been the prevailing attitudes of the society and no democratic ideals had been available until the independence from Japanese colonialism in 1945. Hence, even though they had the image of a benevolent leader created by the traditional Confucianest teaching in their mind, they did not have democratic institutions and processes to which affection toward a benevolent leader could be transferred to establish the legitimacy of democratic institutions.

Further, even since her independence in 1945, the Republic has had little experience of democracy in which political conflicts could be solved by bargaining and negotiations between conflicting social groups. This has been due to the continuous and severe challenges from within and without. Therefore, south Korean society has not had the

time and the opportunity to establish a stable democratic
political system .

Moreover, Koreans are, in general, loyal to the concept
of democracy despite of their little experience with democ-
racy in history. They appreciate democratic values widely
and have made every effort to achieve true democracy in
their territory while having experienced authoritarian rule
for a period of time since their independence.
Historically, democracy in south Korea has been given by the
United States military government to the people as an alter-
native to the Japanese colonialism. Hence, democracy is
connected to nationalism and the Anti-Japanese movement.
Institutionally, it has developed by and large according to
the American model. Thus, under the authoritarian rule, the
concept of the democracy was related with and interpreted as
anti-government (anti-Japanese) activism. Therefore, democ-
racy as taught in schools as an ideal is in contrast to
actual practice in the society.

This leads to the hypothesis that Korean children might
have an image of a benevolent leader due to the strong
influence of the traditional Confucianism but that the image
of the benevolent leader has been developed from, and con-
nected to, the mentality of the past, not the democratic
institutions and processes. Another hypothesis is also pos-
sible. While democratic ideals are found, these ideas are
not connected to the processes necessary for their implemen-

tation; namely political parties, political conflict, division of powers, and the like.

The first question, therefore, is whether or not the young Koreans have the image of a benevolent leader. Then, if the benevolent leader is present, we will examine whether or not the image of the benevolent leader is linked to democratic institutions and processes.

Survey

In the summer of 1983, a questionnaire concerning politics was prepared by Dr. Robert Darcy, professor of Oklahoma State University, with the aid of Dr. Hyun C.Min and Dr. Park Young Horn of the Academy of Korean Studies, and was administered to Korean elementary school students in various parts of the country. About 2,100 elementary school students, ranging from 1st to 6th grade completed the survey in their classes under the supervision of their teacher. Before answering the questionnaire, respondents were told the questionnaire would be used only for research purposes and that each personal answer would be confidential, having nothing to do with grades.

Benevolent Leader Alive

The Korean Republic has adopted a presidential system modeled roughly on the American. Thus, the role as head of the nation has been given to the President and the President has played the role of national leader. In many ways the President, under 5th Korean Republic, fills the traditional role held by the king under Confucianism before the 1910 Japanese occupation. Thus, either through the transference from parents to the most visible government personage or through the culture's retention of traditional image of the national leader as benevolent, the Korean school children are expected to view the President as a benevolent leader. Table 1 shows that overwhelming percentage of growing children have positive attitudes toward the president.

An overwhelming majority of children consider the President as considerate and faithful to the people. The remarkably high percents showing the positive perception are enough to tell that a favorable concept of the national leader occupies the imagery of the growing children. Just like the people relied on the King in traditional society during Yee Dynasty before Japanese occupation, children rely on the president as national leader. Thus, it might be said that the Korean president occupies a place similar to the king.

Table 2 shows they also view positively the President's performance. He is seen as honest, helpful, and doing his duty well. Without doubt the positive image on the President is well established in the imagery of the Korean children.

One thing to be noted is that positive attitude does not decline as children grow up, unlike the pattern in the United States.[8] The remarkably high percentage of the children showing positive attitude and the gradual increase in positive attitudes with grade shows a good contrast with the Japanese case studied at the early of 1970. There was a remarkable decrease of the proportion of children viewing the leader positively as they grow up, as shown in Table 3.

According to the Massey's study,[9] a substantial portion of Japanese children come to acquire cynical and negative perceptions of national leaders as they grow up. This is due to their exposure to a variety of criticisms of the national leader which can be observed in free democratic society. This decline in positive attitudes is also related with the greater sophistication or differentiation of Japanese (or American) children's political outlooks. As they grow older, Japanese and American children come to develop partisan attachments or other loyalties which can conflict with attachments to a political leader or even a non-partisan figure such as the Japanese Emperor.

---

[8] David Easton and Jack Dennis, all pp 183-91

[9] Joseph A.Massey, pp 31-48

It can be inferred that Korean children have had little exposure to criticisms on the President and developed little by way of partisan attachments that will challenge their view of the President.

In short, we can notice that growing children have clear and affectionate leader in their imagery from the early of childhood and that this positive attitude has been built up and reinforced as they grow older in the Korean case.

Affection to Institutions

Does this positive attitude toward national leader spill over to other political institutions as suggested by the Easton and Dennis theory? Table 4 shows that the positive attitude toward President has spilt over to other political institutions with overwhelming percentages.

Children also have very favorable attitudes toward other political institutions. They consider congressmen and politicians as unselfish and considerate of the people's wish and national policy and elections as effective and advantageous for all the people. The percentage in favor of the effectiveness of the election is relatively lower in comparison with the overwhelmingly high percentages in favor of other political institutions. It can be also noted that the averages for President are somewhat higher than those for the congress, political parties, and elections.

One thing more to notice here is that the percentage showing a positive attitude also increases, or at least maintain a similar ratio, as children grow up, which implies that political environment has built up and fortified the positive image on political institutions as children grow up. Therefore, a problem is observed that the favorable attitudes and awareness of the political objects seem to go together at early age without the development of the process of differentiation of political objects as they grow up.

In addition to their favorable image on democratic institutions, children also have a positive understanding of the democratic ideals and norms as shown in Table 5. The majority of the growing children have a good understanding of the democratic ideal and norms. In their understanding,however, it is observed that the percentages showing positive understanding of democratic norms and civil rights are notably lower than those of democratic institutions shown in Table 4. Hence, we may conclude that children are much more familiar and friendly with political institutions than democratic norms and civil rights. Nevertheless, when a benevolent leader is brought into conflict with "the will of the people" the students overwhelmingly choose "the will of the people."

Furthermore, the understanding of democratic values is also increasing as children grow up. A regression analysis of responses on grade indicates a positive slope for each

item. Thus, the percent "Yes" in criticizing the government rises .24% for each grade and the percent "No" on the will of the people rises 1.10% for each grade. It may be understood that the political environment in favor of democratic ideal and norms has prevailed in Korean society and that people have come to have an aspiration for democracy from their early childhood.

In brief, Korean children have a very positive understanding of democratic values and institutions in their minds from early in their childhood and these favorable attitudes are being fortified, not weakened, as the child grows up despite their short history of democracy in that society.

No Affection toward Political Processes

Now we turn from political leaders and democratic values to the processes needed to implement them. The transfer of positive attitudes toward the national leader and other democratic values to democratic processes lags. As was the case with the Easton and Dennis study, the Korean children have more negative attitudes toward the democratic political processes, which are necessary for meaningful involvement of the people in political life. The majority of the children express indifferences to actual politics, as shown in Table 6 and Table 7, respectively.

In contrast to the children's overwhelmingly favorable attitudes (91.5%) toward the political party itself, which is one of democratic political institutions, notably less (41.4%) than a majority of the children show positive attitude toward the competition between the political parties, which is one of important democratic political processes. They think that democracy operates best when political parties do not compete but, instead, are harmonious with one another. They do not perceive politics as a continuous process of bargaining and negotiations between conflicting social groups. Instead, they have the obscure perception of the democratic political process as something that can be run without competition between the political parties.

This view of politics is similar to one found in "the subject political culture" of the centralized authoritarian structure,[10] as well as in certain American communities.[11] The child is well aware of the democratic values and political system but nontheless is keeping a passive and indifferent mentality toward institutionalized political participation.

---

[10] Gabriel A. Almond and G.Bingham Powell Jr., Comparative Politics, The Little, Brown Series, 2nd edition, p 35; see also Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture, Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1965, pp 11-26. As the authors noted, a political culture may or may not be congruent with the structure of the political system.

[11] Edgar Litt, "Civic Education, Community Norms, and Political Indoctrination," American Sociological Review, 28(February,1963), pp 69-75.

It follows that the positive image growing children
have of the President and other political authorities has
not been formulated by the influence of the democratic pro-
cesses or leadership but possibly by the influence of the
traditional Confucianism of the society. We can note, how-
ever, that there is a tendency toward more positive images
of democratic processes with grade. Regression analysis of
responses on grade indicates negative competition responses
decline by 1.77% per grade and negative election responses
by 2.3% per grade. This is similar to the findings of
Easton and Dennis.[12] The majority of the children are also
indifferent to politics, as shown in Table 7.

Amazingly, despite their very positive understanding of
democratic norms and institutions, a majority of the chil-
dren do not like to talk about politics with their family
nor with their friends. They show the obvious indifference
in the activity and participation in politics. One thing to
notice in Table 7 is that the children have much less chance
to talk about politics with friends than with family, which
implies that they feel much more at home with family than
with friends when they talk about politics. Another is that
this indifferent attitude is decreasing in percentage as
they grow up. This trend may give a somewhat favorable
vision for democracy in Korea in relation to the gradual
increase in understanding of other democratic norms, ideals,
and institutions as children grow up, despite the severity

---

[12] David Easton and Jack Dennis, op.cit, pp 111-64

of the problem that a majority of the children have negative attitudes and political indifference from the early of their childhood.

On the other hand, as is the case with American and Japanese children, interest in politics does increase with grade, only slightly. Thus, regression analysis indicates there is an increase of 1.59% in talking politics with friends and an increase of .79% in talking politics with family per grade.

As a result of their political indifference, the children are very ignorant of actual performance of the democratic political processes as shown in Table 8. Korean children are very ignorant of the participative political institutions like elections. A majority of the children are very well aware of authoritative political institutions and processes like congress, executive government (President), and national policy, whereas they are mistaken about the details of participatory institutions. Further, regression analysis indicates that errors increase with grade, rather than decrease. Wrong answers on parliamentary elections increase by .43% per grade; on presidential elections by an astonishing 4.01% per grade; and on the election of mayors by .78% per grade. This can be attributed in part, perhaps, to the many changes in political institutions undergone with the shift from the 4th to 5th Republic. Information acquired earlier would now be no longer accurate in many

areas of politics. But it is also indicative of a broader problem in educating Korean children in the nature of their political system.

It is concluded that Korean society needs to improve the understanding of the democratic political processes. When legitimate participation in political processes is not properly institutionalized, the next and only way to express political demands would be resorting to the violence. From this perspective it is easily understood that the growing children, who can not perceive of the legitimate way of political participation from the early stage of the child- hood, would be tempted to resort to the violence when they grow up and have progressive demands which are difficult to be accepted by the existing system.

Conclusion

In general, it has been understood by the Easton and Dennis theory that children's affection toward a national leader begins before they recognize the existence and impor- tance of political institutions and that this positive attitude of the children toward national leader spills over to other political institutions and processes.

Other studies shows that under certain social circum- stances children may not have positive attitude toward national leader. Further, research from Japan shows that

children can support political system without the image of benevolent leader at all. We examined that the Easton and Dennis theory in a country with little experience of democracy.

It was found that the overwhelming majority of the growing children had a favorable image toward the national leader (President) and that this favorable attitude spilt over to the other political institutions in compliance with the Easton and Dennis theory.

However, as this positive attitude toward national leader in their mentality was connected with the past, not with the mentality created by modern leadership, the favorable attitude toward national leader had not spilt over to other democratic political processes, which were not familiar to them, while the attitude did spill over to the other authoritative political institutions of democracy.

Therefore, though the overwhelming majority of the children showed very positive understanding of the democratic norms, values , institutions, and civil rights, majority of them were indifferent and ignorant of the participative political processes. It may be said that the mentality of the today's Korean children shows the one found in what Almond and Powell categorize as "the subject political culture."

What we have found in Korea, then, parallels to what can be found in European and American contexts; a subject

rather than activist and participatory view of democracy.
To a great extent this must be attributed to the surrounding
environment with its Confucianism, hierarchical and consen-
sual norms. But schools can contribute to an understanding
of participatory processes.

To answer the final question of how to establish a sta-
ble government and democracy in changing Korean society, we
need to suggest, as a result of examination of the mentality
of the growing children, that Korean society needs to pro-
mote the understanding of the legitimate political processes
so that the conflicting demands of the diverse social groups
can be met by bargaining and negotiations through legiti-
mately institutionalized political processes.

TABLE I

CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF PRESIDENT
BY GRADE (PERCENTS)

Grade	Considerate*a	Faithful*b
1	94.7	96.8
2	94.1	94.1
3	96.9	94.0
4	86.8	93.9
5	90.8	91.7
6	94.5	94.3
Average	93.3	94.1 (N=2,100)

Items
*a; President makes every decision
   after consideration of what
   people wish to do.(% Yes)

*b; President works faithfully for
   the people rather than the party
   to which he is belong.(% Yes)

TABLE II

CHILDREN'S ATTITUDES TOWARD PRESIDENT
BY GRADE (PERCENTS)

Grade	Competence*a			Helpful*b			Honest*c		
	Yes	Mid	No	Yes	Mid	No	Yes	Mid	No
1	79.9	19.6	3.6	71.9	23.1	5.0	61.6	34.5	2.8
2	74.6	22.8	1.8	62.5	29.4	7.7	54.0	42.3	2.2
3	57.8	37.1	5.0	54.0	36.0	9.7	42.9	50.5	6.2
4	79.0	20.2	0.6	71.9	25.5	2.3	84.5	13.5	1.6
5	80.3	19.0	0.6	79.7	17.8	2.2	83.8	15.9	0.3
6	80.6	18.5	0.9	73.6	23.7	2.5	74.7	23.2	1.8
Average	73.8	23.8	2.2	68.1	26.6	5.9	65.8	31.0	2.8
							(N=2,100)		

Items	Response
*a; Do you think that President is carrying out his job well?	Yes Middle No (very well) (not at all)
*b; Do you think that President pays much attention to the life of the people to help them?	Yes Middle No
*c; Is President honest,or not?	Yes Middle No

TABLE III

DECREASE OF PERCENTS SHOWING PSITIVE
ATTITUDE TOWARD PRIME MINISTER
AMONG JAPANESE CHILDREN

Grade	Competence*a	Liking*b	Honesty*c
3	74	36	68
8	37	5	7
Average	54.3	15.6	30

Remarks:

1 The question of *a and *c are the same as those in Table 2.

2 The question of *b was "Do you like the Prime Minister or dislike?" and the positive answer was "Yes(Like very much+Like)."

3 The Japanese data were cited from Joseph A.Massey, "The missing Leader : Japanese Youth's View of Political Authority," The American Political Science Review, vol 69 (March, 1975), p36

TABLE IV

PERCENTS SHOWING POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD
POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Grade	Congress*a	P/Party*b	Election*c	Policy*d
1	89.0	94.7	83.6	96.4
2	87.5	91.9	70.2	93.4
3	87.8	90.3	74.5	92.8
4	75.8	82.3	77.7	94.5
5	91.4	94.0	67.3	97.8
6	91.6	95.2	74.5	92.3
Average	87.5	91.5	74.6	94.2
				(N=2,100)

Item	Positive response
*a; Congress makes political decisions without consideration of what the people wish to do.	No
*b; Political party is a group of people thinking only of their own interest.	No
*c; It is well expressed through election what the people want government to do.	Yes
*d; National policy of the government is advantageous only for the rich.	No

TABLE V

PERCENTS SHOWING POSITIVE UNDERSTANDING OF
DEMOCRATIC NORMS AND IDEAL

Grade	Criticism*a	Rule by the People*b	
1	64.4	77.6	
2	78.7	76.1	
3	84.3	87.6	
4	65.5	63.9	
5	68.3	83.5	
6	76.1	85.6	
Average	74.0	80.2	(N=2,100)

Items	Positive Response
*a; If it is in democratic society, people should enjoy the right to criticize the government	Yes
*b; Politics should be performed according to the will of the enlightened leader, instead of the will of the people.	No

TABLE VI

PERCENTS SHOWING POSITIVE ATTITUDE
TOWARD POLITICAL PROCESSES

Grade	Political Competition*a	Fair Election*b
1	31.7	33.8
2	33.8	40.1
3	50.3	35.0
4	40.0	38.7
5	49.8	21.3
6	37.4	30.1
Average	41.4	33.0

Items	Positive Response
*a; When political parties compete each other, democracy may well be run.	Yes
*b; As election is always won by the ruling party, it does not express effectively what people wish to do.	Yes

TABLE VII

PERCENTS SHOWING POSITIVE SELF-INVOLVEMENT
IN POLITICAL PROCESSES

Grade	Political discussion with friends*a	Political discussion with family*b
1	26.7	48.4
2	33.5	40.8
3	33.7	41.0
4	31.9	42.9
5	36.8	45.1
6	36.2	51.5
Average	33.5	45.0 (N=2,100)

Items	Positive response
*a; Do you like to talk about government activities or politics with your friends?	Yes
*b; Do you talk frequently with your family about government activities or politics?	Yes

TABLE VIII

PERCENTS SHOWING IGNORANCE OF THE ACTUAL PERFORMANCE
OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

Grade	Parliamentary election*a	Presidential election*b	Mayor election*c
1	35.2	39.8	57.7
2	43.8	46.0	58.5
3	56.7	19.3	43.3
4	41.9	67.1	58.1
5	48.3	69.9	63.2
6	38.5	44.0	57.4
Average	44.9	45.3	55.3 (N=2,100)

Items	Ignorant response
*a; One congressman is elected from each district(Two congressmen).	Yes
*b; President of Korea is elected (by the electoral college)	directly by the people + by the National Assembly
*c; Governors or Mayor of Seoul city are chosen_____ (by the appointment)	by popular elections

NOTE ; In the parentheses are the correct responses.

CHAPTER IV

PARLIAMENTARY VOTING SYSTEM

Background

In the previous chapter the conflict between democratic
ideals and Confucian values was explored in the political
socialization of growing children. The conclusion was that
while democratic ideals were accepted and internalized, they
were not applied to actual practices which remained Confu-
cian. Thus, children favored democracy but had little sym-
pathy with political disagreement, with party conflict and
had little knowledge of their own election system and gov-
ernment institutions. They adopted Confucian modes for
interacting with Korean democratic institutions. We can see
this same problem of reconciling democratic values and Con-
fucian practice in Korea's electoral institutions them-
selves.

In recent years, South Korea has been heated with
debates over a governmental election system. Since the
establishment of the 5th Republic at the early 1980s, The
Korean government has contended with continuous and unprece-

dented challenges by opposition groups. This eventually led
to a demand for changing the existing indirect method of
electing president to a direct popular election. This chal-
lenge became particularly heated after the unexpected suc-
cess of the opposition New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP) in
the February 1985 parliamentary election.

In response to these challenges by the opposition NKDP,
as well as by other groups, the ruling Democratic Justice
Party (DJP) have prepared an alternative to the present
presidential system. This would be a change to a parliamen-
tary system with a weakened president.[1] Ironically, the
expected proposal of the parliamentary system by the ruling
party was what the opposition party and its predecessors had
demanded and the government rejected since the beginning of
the Republic.

Either of these expected changes will require a consti-
tutional amendment. To achieve this the ruling DJP needs to
have two thirds of the parliamentary votes and the majority
in a popular referendum. At present, DJP has a majority
(53.6%) of the parliamentary seats and may be able to con-
nect on some support from the small Korea National Party
(7.6%).[2] As the opposition NKDP has only 32.6% of the seats,
the government is in the stronger position to push its plan

---

[1] The Jung-Ang Ilbo, January 1, 1987.

[2] Korea Annual 1986, Yonhap News Agency, Seoul, Korea, pp
79-88; After the 12th election, the Democratic Korea Party
lawmakers en masse joined the NKDP and the number of the
NKDP lawmaker amounted to 103. This number again fell to
90 after the formation of the New Conservative Fraternity.

in the National Assembly. This can be done, if judged nec-
essary, without compromise with the major opposition party.
This is the worry of the NKDP.

Considering the fact that the parliament has been his-
torically very vulnerable to the executive power in Korea,[3]
it is expected that the ruling DJP and executive will suc-
cessfully pass the proposal for the Constitutional Amendment
to parliamentary system in compliance with their will, as
the ruling Democratic Republican Party was successful in
pushing through a 1969 Constitutional Amendment in the total
absence of opposition lawmakers in the parliament[4] in a sim-
ilar situation.

If the government plan succeeds, the next formal polit-
ical contest between the ruling DJP and the opposition NKDP
will be a parliamentary election for the new parliament. To
make peaceful transition of power possible by fair competi-
tion and to make the distribution of seats proportional to
the votes of the people in the next election, the parliamen-
tary election system needs to be changed.[5]

---

[3] Chong Lim Kim and Seong-Tong Pae, Legislative Process in
    Korea, Korean Studies Series No.3, Seoul National Univer-
    sity Press, 1981 p 4, 253.

[4] Korea Annual 1984, 21st Annual Edition, Yonhap News
    Agency, Korea, 1984, p278.

[5] Byun, Jae Ok, "We Need To Change the Parliamentary
    Election System , First of All" Shin-Dong A, (Dong-A-Il-
    Bo-Sa, Seoul, Korea), June 1986, vol 321, pp 318-25.

In modern representative democracy, the executive is checked by and responsible to the parliament.[6] Hence, the legitimacy of the government depends on the legitimacy of the parliamentary election system. When partisan elections are not viewed as legitimate, the society faces continued debate and controversy challenging government legitimacy. This undermines not only the legitimacy of the government but also the stability of the society.

This is particularly important in the Korean case where the government has given a great priority to social stability. Due to the influence of modernization, the society has already experienced "changes in the patterns of life" and "increased mass participation"; two key elements of political modernization.[7] Without institutionalizing proper mass participation, however, the stability of the society will be undermined by demands for political changes.

As a matter of fact, the legitimacy of the 5th Republic has been strongly questioned and severely undermined due to its method of translating popular votes into seats in the parliament. Minority parties gain nowhere near the number of seats they see their votes entitling them.

---

[6] Arend Lijphart, Democracies: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1984, p 68.

[7] Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1968), pp 32-59.

The Parliamentary Election System

The South Korean political system has almost always been presidential, similar to the American model, and the parliament, called the National Assembly, is unicameral. Currently, members of the parliament are elected in two-member districts by single-ballot plurality vote and an additional one third of the whole seats of the parliament are then allocated to each party depending on the number of seats of each party accumulated from district contests. In this allocation, however, two thirds of the additional at-large seats are given to the plurality winner party to help guarantee a stable government supported by a parliamentary majority. This favorability to the plurality winner is one of the controversial factors which have undermined the legitimacy of the regime.

Table 9 compares the percents of popular votes and parliamentary seats of each party in the 11th and 12th parliaments. At a glance, we can see that the system is very advantageous to the plurality winner.

The plurality winner, DJP, has been expanded from 35.3% of popular votes to 54.7% of seats in the 11th election and from 35.6% of votes to 53.6% of the seats in the 12th parliamentary election. These are 52.1% and 50.1% increases, respectively. The next largest party, the opposition DKP, also gained a 35.6% increase in seats over popular vote in

1981. These two parties gained an expansion of the seats
from the popular votes by two ways; one is by the plurality
in district contests and the other by the allocation of the
additional seats.

First, as members of the parliament are elected by plu-
rality in two member districts, the electoral system is very
advantageous to the two biggest parties. Above all, the
traditional stable two, or one and half, party system in the
form of government-opposition duality established since
1950s gives an unchallengeable chance to the two largest
parties to win in the district contests. In this situation,
challenges from other minor parties could not be a threat
real enough to win either one of the two district seats
except some exceptional cases. Thus, the existing two larg-
est parties can have the best chances to win in the district
contests by plurality. In this context, this system has
been criticized as a "Winning together election system"
(Dong-ban dang-sun che-je).

This advantage plays a role in expanding the seats of
the two biggest parties in the 11th election and, as a con-
sequence, with relatively less percentages of popular votes
per seat, in average, compared with those of other minority
parties (like the. Korea National Party) or independents,
they have won seats in the district contests. This is
because most of the votes for the largest parties are
related with seats by winning in the district contests as

the first or second plurality winner except a few districts, whereas the votes for other minor parties or independents are not effectively related with seats when they failed to be plurality winner in the district contests.

This explanation is more supported by the assumption that the ruling party could have obtained 68.5% of the district seats in 12th election if the electoral system had been a single member district system.[8] In the 12th election, however, only the major ruling party enjoy the expansion of the seats, excluding the 2nd major party, when the latter obtained much more percent of votes than in the previous election. This is because the second party failed to win a seat in about a third of the district contests and the votes are not related with district seats.

Second, by the allocation of the additional seats, the largest party nationally expands its proportional share of seats, while all other parties are deflated. Therefore, a 6.4% difference in popular votes between the first and the second parties produced a 29.3% difference in total parliamentary seats after the allocation of the additional seats in the 12th election.

The 12th election also observes the unexpected emergence of the NKDP, as the second major party, taking the place of the former major opposition party DKP. This might be an instance of Taagepera's claim that the two member dis-

---

[8] B. C. Koh, "The 1985 Parliamentary Election in South Korea," Asian Survey, vol.XXV, No.7, July 1985, pp 883-97.

trict system can facilitate, compared with the single member district, the emergence of a new major party "in the unusual circumstances where the public is severely dissatisfied with both major parties."[9]

Considering the in-built character of the two member district system that no party can be guaranteed the majority of the seats unless it runs two candidates in a district,[10] the additional seat allocation system is the mechanism to guarantee the plurality winner to be the comfortable majority in the parliament to secure the stable government in the Korean case.

Stable Government in Exchange for Fairness

As a matter of fact, there are many ways of translating popular votes into parliamentary seats. One possible way is the normative or fair model, which means that the percents of popular votes each party obtained should be exactly the same as the percents of parliamentary seats. This model is based on the assumption that the parliament should be the

---

[9] Rein Taagepera, "The Effect of District Magnitude and Properties of Two-Seats Districts," in Arend Lijphart and Bernard Grofman ed., Choosing an Electoral System (Prager, 1986), p 92.

[10] As Korea has been in very stable two party system, it is hardly possible to conceive of the winning two seats by one party in the same district. Actually, the new opposition party did run two candidates in few districts in Kwangju city where the opposition party was convinced of the overwhelming victory in the 12th election only to fail when the candidates divided the party's votes.

exact reflection of the political distribution of the people as reflected in their votes. With the invention of the several methods of proportional representation by the end of the nineteenth century, this assumption came to be approximated in actual contests and many Western democracies are using these methods, trying to keep the norm of proportionality.

Nowadays in actual political situations, however, it is not possible to find this idealistic system in practice. This is because of the political considerations aimed at securing stable government supported by parliamentary majorities even where popular majorities do not exist, as well as technical problem which hinder the exact and fair translation of the votes into seats. Generally, popular votes are translated into parliamentary seats so as to favor the winning party and guarantee stable governments supported by the parliamentary majority. As a result, the idealistic fair line (diagonal) is distorted into empirical cubic curve.[11]

Therefore, it follows that the problem of a voting system in the translation of popular votes into seats is the degree of exaggeration in favor of the plurality winner

---

[11] The formula studied in the United States was

$$y = \frac{x^3}{3x^2 - 3x + 1}$$

where y is proportion of seat and x is proportion of vote. See James G. March, "Party Legislative Representation as a Function of Election Result," Public Opinion Quarterly, vol 21 (1957-1958), pp 521-42.

party, not the exaggeration itself.[12] In all democracies, we can find that the seats of the majority party are exaggerated to some extent at the sacrifice of the minority parties to help facilitate forming a stable government of the majority party or a majority coalition, as shown in Table 10.

In the Korean case, however, due to the notable ratio of the exaggeration in favor of the plurality winner party by the allocation of the additional seats, the other minority parties have to stand the severe deflation in their parliamentary seats, as shown in Table 11. Compared with other Western democracies, the ratio of under- and overrepresentation of seats is notable in the Korean case.

Additional Seat System

As a means to guarantee the stable government of the plurality winner , the Korean voting system has adopted the additional seat system. Similar examples can be found in a few Western democracies like Sweden, West Germany, and Iceland. As a consequence, a third of the whole parliamentary seats are to be distributed to the parties in proportion to the percentages of district seats each party obtained, excluding minority parties of less than 5 seats[13] to dis-

---

[12] We can find a similar argument that the question of representativeness is a matter of degree, not kind in Richard Rose, "Electoral Systems: A Question of Degree or of Principle?" Choosing Electoral System (Arend Lijphart and Bernard Grofman ed., Prager, 1986), pp 73-81.

[13] Korea Annual 1984, p 59.

courage fragmentation of political parties.

In most Western democracies, this additional seat system has been generally adopted as a means to facilitate the proportionality of each party to complement the weakness of the unproportionality of the district plurality contests, by which the plurality winner(s) take(s) all the seats and the remaining votes for the plurality losers are not related with the seats. When popular votes for the minority parties are not related to seats in district contests, the additional seats are allocated to each party in proportion to the national votes accumulated from district contests. Thus, in most countries additional seats make the total parliament more proportional than the district election results. Therefore, it is generally understood that this additional seat allocation system is in favor of the smaller parties and for minority representation.[14]

The Korean case is the opposite. As the voting system allows a fixed two thirds of the additional seats to the plurality winner party and the remaining seats in proportion to the number of seats each minority party obtained, this system is used to manufacture a single-party absolute majority in the parliament,[15] not to increase proportionality.

---

[14] James Kuklinski, "Cumulative and Plurality Voting: An Analysis of Illinois' Unique Electoral System," Western Political Quarterly, vol 26 (1973), pp726-46; See also Jack Sawyer and Duncan MacRae,Jr., "Game Theory and Cumulative Voting in Illinois; 1902-1954," American Political Science Review, vol 56(1962), pp 936-46.

[15] Douglas W. Rae, The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1967, pp 74-77.

According to Rae's argument, this type of "manufactured majorities," not "earned majorities," are quite common (62.5% of his observed 43 one-party parliamentary majorities) in Western democracies but nontheless bonuses to the plurality winner party was never as large as in the Korean case. The average difference of the observed 117 cases between the seats and votes was only 3.8%.[16]

As a consequence, the empirical cubic curve moves to the far left away from the normal position, as shown in Table 12. Other characteristics of the Korean voting system and political culture also contribute to the deviation of the cubic curve. For instance, the multiparty system established since the 5th Republic is one of the important causes.[17] Generally, the larger number of seats the district elects, the lower is the break-even point, where an empirical cubic curve meets the ideal proportional line.[18]

The ideal proportional line is one on which the percentage of votes matches exactly the percentage of seats; over the line represents overrepresentation and below the line underrepresentation. It has been confirmed by Rein Taagepera that in two seat district system the empirical cubic curve for the countries studying produces underrepre-

---

[16] Douglas W. Rae, pp 74-77.

[17] Korean party system can be viewed as one-and-half system in the context of the distribution of seats of each party in the parliament (The share of seats of the major three parties is 53%:29.3%:9.1% in the 11th parliament and 53.6%:24.3%:12.7% in the 12th).

[18] Rein Taagepera, pp 91-101.

sentation for parties gaining below 32% of the vote and
overrepresentation for parties gaining above 32%.[19]

In the 1981 election, the break-even point was 16.6% of
vote.[20] Unlike in other democracies, the plurality winner
party enjoys a unique advantage over other parties below the
break-even point. Due to the allocation of the additional
seats(2/3 x 1/3 = 2/9, or 22.2% of the whole seats), the
winning party can get the majority of seats on obtaining
about 28% of seats in district contests; something not pos-
sible in other systems.

In the 12th election, however, the empirical curve
moved to the rightward again and the break-even point was
about 30.1%.[21] This shows the Korean people's tendency of
the preference of two party system. From the new multiparty
system established in 1981, the system is returning back to
the old two party system.

The choice of a best electoral system for a society
"depends on the society that has to use it, on the nature of
tis institutions and on the relationships among its politi-
cal forces."[22] As the South Korean society has given a great
priority to the stability of the society, the 5th republic

---

[19] Ibid.

[20] The actual equation for the 1981 Korean election is:
Seats=-1.58+.95(vote)+(vote^3).

[21] The exact formula was;
Seats=15.05 -0.86(Vote) +0.0015(Vote^3).

[22] Maurice Duverger, p 36.

devised the artificial fixed ratio of 22.2% of the additional seats to make a single-party absolute majority in the parliament.

This mentality in favor of a single party absolute majority might come from Korea's modern political history and culture. Over the 40 years since the independence in 1945, coalition government has been abhored and regarded as unstable. They have had the view that strong government means not being challenged by an opposition, rather than a government supported by continuous bargaining and negotiation processes among conflicting social groups.

As Korean society is very homogeneous to a degree not found in other societies, a majoritarian democracy, in which political decisions can be made by the majoritarian principle but in which the government power swings over time between the ruling party and the opposition party,[23] might be ideal. Therefore, the observed manufactured one-party absolute majority might fit for the society except for the presence of other political factors. These factors have prevented the swing in political power between the ruling party and opposition. The society has never experienced a peaceful transfer of power from the ruling party to the opposition party in modern history. The manufactured majority serves not to provide stability to a temporary majority, but rather prevents political power transfers or sharing,

---

[23] Arend Lijphart, Democracy: Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1984, pp 3-20.

and hence creates tensions and instability for the political system itself.

Table 13 shows the general comparison of the ratios between the contested district seats and the additionally allocated seats in other Western style democracies adopting the additional seat system. As the percents of the additional seats range from 11.4% to 50% in other Western democracies, the 33.3% of the Korean case may not be any matter.

Conclusion

The present South Korean parliamentary voting system, adopted with the 5th Republic in 1980, uses the additional seat system not to achieve better proportional representation or minority representation but rather to exaggerate the seats of the plurality winner enough to manufacture a single-party absolute majority by the allocation of the additional seats at the cost of the fairness in translating votes into seats. This is because the society has given a great priority to the stability and a stable government. They preferred a stable government able to make a decision at the cost of fairness rather than a parliament of honest reflection of opinions according to the distribution of the popular votes.

Therefore, although the two member district system and the additional seat system open the way for minority repre-

sentation, they are working the opposite way; to manufacture
a single-party absolute majority. In the cases of the West-
ern democracies, the exaggeration of the seats from the pop-
ular votes is by and large so proportional that the exagger-
ation, or the ratio of the over- and underrepresentation,
were neglectable, whereas the ratio of the artificial over-
representation for the plurality winner party amounted more
than 50% in the Korean case; hardly neglectable.

As a consequence, by the allocation of the additional
seats, the empirical cubic curve showing the relationship
between the popular votes and parliamentary seats moved far
leftward. The break-even points found in the 11th and 12th
election outcomes were 16.5%, 30.1% respectively, deviated
from the average 32% in two member district system.

Underlying the preference of the electoral system able
to manufacture parliamentary majority is the traditional
Confucian mentality. Despite widespread democratic egalita-
rian values, hierarchical ruling-obedient relationship is
still prevailing in the mentality of the people as well as
ruling elites. Thus, the political process is viewed not as
a continuous process of bargaining and negotiation but only
as a process of zero-sum style power struggle with little
room for negotiation.

Strong leadership and central power have been favored
at the cost of people's participation in a separation of
power system. This has come to be seen as illegitimate when

looked at from the standards of democratic values and has been the cause for challenges.

Therefore, it is concluded that for the institutionalization of democracy, Korean society needs to develop not only the political institutions themselves but also the surrounding social environments. People need to be exposed to democratic practices and participation in social life. Without such experience, they will have difficulty making democratic institutions work democratically.

TABLE IX

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE PERCENTAGE OF VOTES
AND THOSE OF SEATS

(1981 election)

(1985 election)

Legend DJP = Democratic Justice Party
        DKP = Democratic Korea Party
        NKDP = New Korea Democratic Party
        KNP = Korea National Party
        ETC = Other small parties and independents

Total seats mean the district seats plus additionally
allocated seats.

Source: 1981 statistics are from The Parliamentary Election
Status: The Eleventh (kuk-whoi-eui-won sun-guh sang-whang),
the Central Election Management Committee, Korea, 1981.
        1985 statistics are from B. C. Koh, "The 1985 Par-
liamentary Election in South Korea," Asian Survey, vol. XXV,
No.7, July 1985, pp 883-897.

TABLE X

EXAGGERATION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY SEATS IN FAVOR OF
THE MAJORITY PARTY OR COALITION

Nation	Year	Party	Vote(%)	Seat(%)	Exaggeration
Canada	1980	Liberals	44.3	52.1	+17.6%
France	1981	Socialist	37.8	56.3	+48.9
Germany	1980	Christian Demo. Union	44.5	45.5	+2.2
Israel	1981	Coalition	37.1	40.0	+7.8
Italy	1979	Christian Democrats	38.3	41.4	+11.6
Japan	1980	Liberal Democratic	47.9	55.6	+16.1
United Kingdom	1979	Conservative	43.9	53.4	+21.6
U.S. House	1980	Democrats	49.5	55.6	+12.3

Source: Thomas T. Mackie & Richard Rose, The International Almanac of Electoral History, 2nd edition, Facts on File,Inc., New York, 1982; Statistical Abstract of the United States 1980, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington D.C., 1980, pp 507-508.
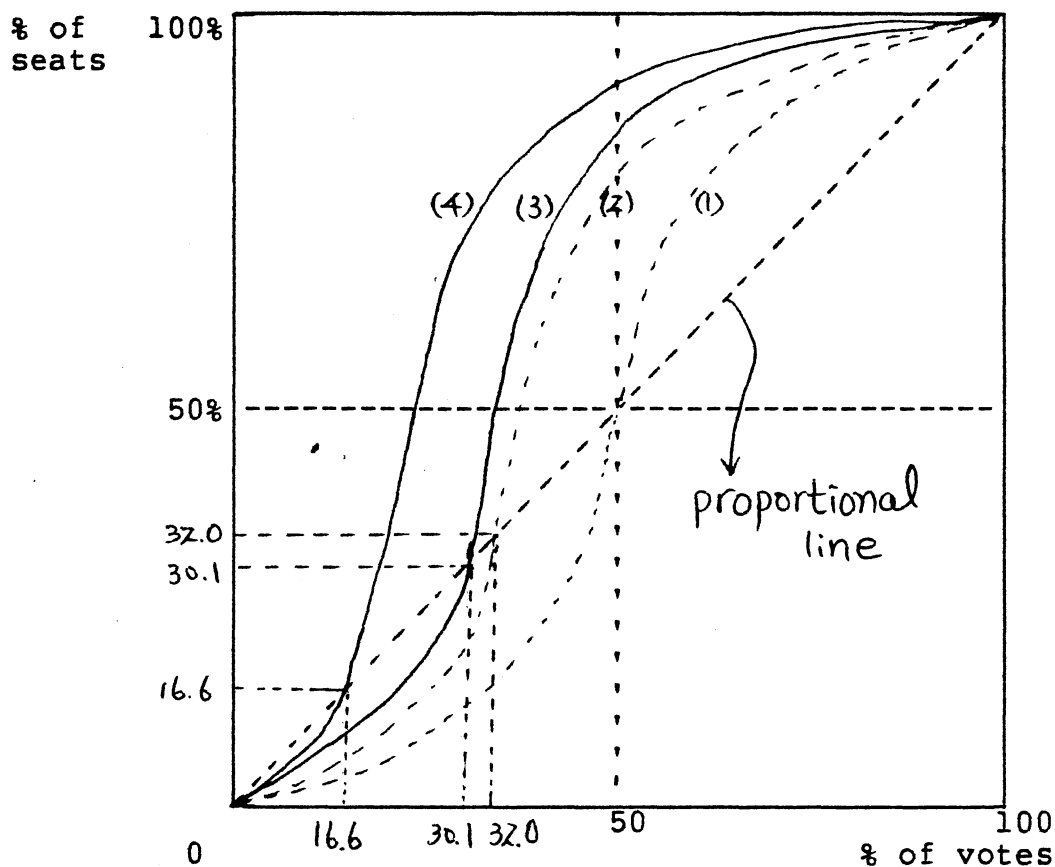
TABLE XI

REPRESENTATION OF EACH PARTY IN KOREA AND OTHER
WESTERN ADDITIONAL SEAT SYSTEMS

Nation	Year	Party	Vote(%)	Seat(%)	Over(+) or Under(-) Representation
Korea	1981	Democratic Justice	35.6	54.7	+53.6%
		Democratic Korea	21.6	29.3	+35.6
		Korea National	13.3	9.1	-31.6
		Others	29.5	6.9	-76.6
Korea	1985	Democratic Justice	35.3	53.6	+51.8
		New Korea Democrat	29.2	24.3	-16.8
		Democratic Korea	19.5	12.7	-34.8
		Others	16.0	9.4	-41.2
Denmark	1981	Social Democrats	32.9	33.7	+2.4
		Conservatives	14.5	14.9	+2.7
		Liberals	11.3	12.0	+6.2
		Socialist Peoples	11.3	11.4	+0.8
		Progress Party	8.9	8.9	+2.2
		Others	21.1	18.9	-11.4
Germany	1980	Christian Democratic Union	44.5	44.5	+2.2
		Social Democrats	42.9	43.9	+2.3
		Free Democratic	10.6	10.7	+0.9
		Others	2.0	0.0	None
Iceland	1979	Independence P II	35.4	35.0	-1.1
		Progressive Party	24.9	28.3	+13.6
		United Socialist/ Peoples Alliance	19.7	18.3	-7.1
		Social Democrats	17.4	16.7	+4.0
		Others	2.6	1.6	-38.5
Sweden	1979	Social Democrats	43.2	44.1	+2.1
		Conservatives	20.3	20.9	+2.9
		Agrarian/Centre	18.1	18.3	+1.1
		Peoples Party	10.6	10.9	+2.8
		Communist Party	5.6	5.7	+1.8
		Others	2.2	0.0	None

Note: Over- and under-representation is calculated by the formula,
    (Seat/Vote -1)x100%.
Source: Calculated from Thomas T. Mackie & Richard Rose,
op.cit.; and The Parliamentary Election Status: The Eleventh, op.cit.; and B. C. Koh, "The 1985 Parliamentary
Election in South Korea," Asian Survey, op. cit.

TABLE XII

THE MOVEMENT OF EMPIRICAL CUBIC CURVE

NOTE

1. Dotted curve (1): basic cubic curve found in two party
                      system.
2. Dotted curve (2): average cubic curve found in two-member
                      district system.
3. Solid curve (3): Korean 1985 election result.
4. Solid curve (4): Korean 1981 election result.

TABLE XIII

COMPARISON OF ADDITIONAL SEAT SYSTEM
WITH OTHER DEMOCRACIES

	District seat No	%	Additional seat No	%	Total seat No	%
Sweden	310	88.8	39	11.2	349	100
Iceland	49	81.7	11	18.3	60	100
Denmark	135	77.1	40	22.9	175	100
W.Germany	248	50.0	248	50.0	496	100
S.Korea	184	66.7	92	33.3	276	100

Source; Abstracted from the Richard Rose ed., Electoral Behavior: A Comparative Handbook, The Free Press, New York, 1974. and Thomas T. Mackie & Richard Rose, The International Almanac of Electoral History, Second edition, Facts on File,Inc, New York, 1982; Eric Lindstrom, The Swedish Parliamentary System, The Swedish Institute, Stockholm, Sweden, 1982

CHAPTER V

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Korean society has had little experience with democ-
racy. Despite three decades of experience with republican
institutions, democracy has not been institutionalized.

As a study to find the origins of the problem as to why
the Korean society could not succeed in the establishment of
institutionalized democracy, 3 dimensions of the political
system were studied: the ideological and historical back-
ground which formulated the current political culture; chil-
dren's attitudes of politics as a origin of political sup-
port; and finally the Korean parliamentary voting system as
a problem in using a democratic institution.

First, today's Korean society is being influenced by a
few religions which have exercised great influence in the
formation of the Korean political culture. Among them, the
influences of Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, and tra-
ditional Shamanism are the most dominant. Of the 4 sources
of major religious influences, Confucian ethics and Chris-
tian values play the most important role in the context of
the political life of the people. The others are less
involved in actual politics or political behavior.

80

As the Confucian ethics had overwhelmingly prevailed not only in politics but also in every sector of pre-modern Korean society, the Confucian influence over the present life and politics is very significant. Although the Confucian system was dissolved several decades ago, the influence in the mentality of the people is so great that it cause conflicts with egalitarian democratic ideals.

Since the egalitarian Christian values could go together with democratic ideals, the propagation of Christianity in modern history contributed to the development of Korean democracy and its influence has also been significant. However, as the percentage of Christian population is not overwhelming in the society, its influence, vis-a-vis Confucian influence, has been limited.

In this cultural situation, attitudes of the growing children toward politics were studied. As expected, the child shows a very positive attitude toward the political leader and democratic institutions. Since the society is still under the Confucian influence, the children show overwhelmingly favorable attitudes toward political institutions as is the case in a Confucian state. The percentages with positive attitudes are much higher among Korean children than among American or Japanese children. Thus, it is inferred that the democratic institutions and national leader can be supported by the Confucian mentality without friction. According to Confucian ethics, religious, people

are to support the state and king (national leader) uncondi-
tionally. Therefore, a national leader, even one heading
democratic institutions, did not cause conflicts with the
prevailing Confucian ethics. The children well understood
the democratic institutions and norms.

However, the growing children showed their ignorance of
the understanding of democratic processes like voting. This
might be because they are not familiar with democratic prac-
tices and performances. It was only after independence that
the people experienced voting. Even after independence,
chances for voting have not been frequent. As the political
system has been centralized so far, the periodic elections
for the national governments, excluding local governments,
have been the only chances for the people.

As a consequence, despite the overwhelmingly favorable
understanding of the democratic institutions and norms, the
growing children show a mentality found in a subject politi-
cal culture and are indifferent to politics or political
talking with family or friends.

The conflicting mentality is directly reflected in the
operation of the democratic institutions. The parliamentary
election system was studied as an example of a political
problem originating from the mental conflicts between the
conventional Confucianism and democratic values.

Among the political elites of the society the Confucian
mentality of obedience to rulers is still prevailing

strongly. There is little room for negotiation or coalition formation, we can observe in Western democracy. Thus, the parliamentary election system is structured in favor of the ruling party so that the winning party can make a majority easily. As a consequence, despite about 40 years of experience of democratic institutions, political processes have not been democratic but authoritative.

The Korean experience indicates democratic institutions do not necessarily bring about the creation of a democratic political culture. Instead, the dominant political culture can influence how democratic institutions are used. In the Korean case the culture has been strongly shaped by Confucian ethics. For democratic institutions to function democratically in Korea, social relations will have to change from hierarchical and Confucian to egalitarian and democratic. For the ordinary citizen such a change will help provide participatory skills. For the political elite, the result will be a recognition of the need for compromise and coalition.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arend Lijphart, <u>Democracies</u>: <u>Patterns</u> <u>of</u> <u>Majoritarian</u> <u>and</u>
    <u>Consensus</u> <u>Government</u> <u>in</u> <u>Twenty-One</u> <u>Countries</u>, Yale Uni-
    versity Press, New Haven, 1984, p 68.

B. C. Koh, "The 1985 Parliamentary Election in South Korea,"
    <u>Asian</u> <u>Survey</u>, vol XXV, No. 7, July 1985, pp 883-97.

Byun, Jae Ok, "We Need To Change the Parliamentary Election
    System, First of All," <u>Shin-Dong-A</u>, Dong-A-Il-Bo-Sa,
    Seoul, Korea, vol 321, June 1986, pp 318-25.

Chong Lim Kim and Seong-Tong Pae, <u>Legislative</u> <u>Process</u> <u>in</u>
    <u>Korea</u>, Seoul National University Press, Korea, 1981, p
    4, 253.

David Easton and Jack Dennis, <u>Children</u> <u>in</u> <u>the</u> <u>Political</u> <u>Sys-</u>
    <u>tem</u>, New York; McGraw Hill, 1969, pp 76-207.

Dean Jaros, <u>Socialization</u> <u>to</u> <u>Politics</u>, New York; Praeger,
    1973, p18.

Dean Jaros, Frederic Fleron and Herbert Hirsch, "Malevolent
    Leader: Political Socialization in an American Sub-cul-
    ture," <u>The</u> <u>American</u> <u>Political</u> <u>Science</u> <u>Review</u>, vol 62,
    1968, pp 564-75.

Douglas W. Rae, <u>The</u> <u>Political</u> <u>Consequences</u> <u>of</u> <u>Electoral</u>
    <u>Laws</u>, New Haven; Yale University Press, 1967, pp 74-77.

Edgar Litt, "Civic Education, Community Norms, and Political
    Indoctrination," <u>American</u> <u>Sociological</u> <u>Review</u>, vol 28,
    February 1963, pp 69-75.

Edwin O. Reischauer and Edward J. Baker, "A Time Bomb Is
    Ticking in South Korea," <u>The</u> <u>New</u> <u>York</u> <u>Times</u> <u>Magazine</u>,
    November 16, 1986. p 51.

Eric Lindstrom, <u>The</u> <u>Swedish</u> <u>Parliamentary</u> <u>System</u>, The Swed-
    ish Institutes, Stockholm, Sweden, 1982.

F. Christopher Arterton, "The Impact of Watergate on Chil-
    dren's Attitudes toward Political Authority," <u>Political</u>

Science Quarterly, vol 89, Number 2, June 1974, pp 269-88.

Gabriel A. Almond and Bingham Powell Jr., _Comparative Politics_, The Little, Brown Series, 2nd edition, p 35.

Han, Seung-Ju, "Heritage of the 1st Republic,"(Korean translation) _The Understanding of the 1950s_, Hangilsa, Seoul, Korea, 1981, pp 29-55.

Jack Sawyer and Duncan MacRae Jr., "Game Theory and Cumulative Voting in Illinois; 1902-1954," _American Political Science Review_, vol 56, 1962, pp 936-46.

James G. March, "Party Legislative Representation as a Function of Election Result," _Public Opinion Quarterly, vol 21, 1957-58, pp 521-42_.

James Kuklinski, "Cumulative and Plurality Voting: An Analysis of Illinois' Unique Electoral System," _Western Political Quarterly, vol 26, 1973, pp 726-46_.

Joseph A. Massey, "The Missing Leader: Japanese Youth's View of Political Authority," _American Political Science Review_, vol 69, March 1975, pp 31-48.

Joan Edelman Spero, _The Politics of International Economic Relations_, Third Edition, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1985, p 100.

The Jung-Ang Ilbo, January 1, 1987.

Kim Doo-hun, "Confucian Influences on Korean Society," _Korea Journal_, vol 3, September 1, 1963, p 17.

Kim Jae Young, _On Political Socialization_, (Korean), Dae-wang-sa, Korea, 1983, pp 261-63.

Koh Yong-bok, "Traditionalism and De-Traditionalism," _Korea Journal_, vol 17 (PT 1), 1977 (Jan-June), p 40.

Kwon Sang-no, "History of Korean Buddhism," _Korea Journal_, vol 4, 1964, p 8.

Korea Journal, "Editorial, Development of Christianity," vol 2, 1962, p 1.

Lee Kwang-rin, "Progressive Views on Protestantism(I)," _Korea Journal_, vol 16, 1976 (Jan-June), p 20.

Lee Myung Gu,(tr), and Subjective Culture: Conceptualization and Empirical Assessment," _American Political Science Review_, vol 76, PT2, 1982 (Sep-Dec), pp 585-601.

Michael Daniels, "Confucius and Confucianism in Korea,"
     Korea Journal, vol 19, PT 1, 1979, p 47.

Mun Sang-he, "Shamanism in Korea," Korean Thought, The Si-
     sa-yong-o-sa Publishers, Inc., Seoul, Korea, 1982, p
     34.

Newsweek, "Crisis in Korea," June 29, 1987, p 28.

Park Chong-hong, "Buddhist Influence on Korean Thought,"
     Korea Journal, vol 4, 1964, p 4.

The Parliamentary Election Status: The Eleventh (kuk-whoi-
     eui-won sun-guh sang-whang), the Central Election Man-
     agement Committee, Korea, 1981.

Rein Taagepera, "The Effect of District Magnitude and Prop-
     erties of Two-Seats Districts," in Arend Lijphart and
     Bernard Grofman ed., Choosing an Electoral System,
     Praeger, 1986, p 92.

Richard Rose ed., Electoral Behavior: A Comparative Hand-
     book, The Free Press, New York, 1974.

R. Darcy and Sunhee Song, "Men and Women in the South Korean
     National Assembly," Asian Survey, vol 26, No 6, June
     1986, p 670-687.

Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies,
     New Haven; Yale University Press, 1968, pp 32-59.

Sohn Pow-key, Kim Chol-choon, and Hong Yi-sup, The History
     of Korea, Korean National Commission for Unesco, Seoul,
     Korea, 1982, p 85. Sam-min-ju-eui,(Korean) by Son Mun,
     Sam-sung Cultural Foundation, Korea, 1974, pp. 99-117.

Statistical Abstract of the United States 1980, U.S. Depart-
     ment of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington
     D.C., 1980.

Sung M. Pae, Testing Democratic Theories in Korea, Univer-
     sity Press of America, New York, 1986.

Thomas T. Mackie and Richard Rose, The International Almanac
     of Electoral History, 2nd edition, Facts on File Inc.,
     New York, 1982.

Yang Ho-min, "Democracy and the Elite," Korea Journal, vol
     3, 1963, p 10.

Yonhap News Agency, Korea Annual 1984, Seoul, Korea, p 278.

Yonhap News Agency, <u>Korea Annual 1986</u>, Seoul, Korea, pp 79-88.

Yu Hong-ryul, "History of Christian Propagation," <u>Korea Journal</u>, vol 2, 1962, p 6.

Wall Street Journal, June 22, 1987.

VITA

Kidae Kim

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: KOREAN POLITICS: DEMOCRATIC VALUES IN A CONFUCIAN
SOCIETY

Major Field: Political Science

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Daegu, Korea, March 15, 1956,
the fourth son of Geun-Hee Kim and Mahl-Jee Yi.

Education: Graduated from the Attached High School of
Kyungpook National University, Daegu City, Korea,
in January, 1974; received Bachelor of Arts
Degree in English Education from Kyungpook Na-
tional University in February, 1978; completed
requirements for the Master of Arts degree at
Oklahoma State University in December, 1987.

Professional Experience: English Teacher at An-Dong
Girls' Middle School, Kyungpook, Korea, March,
1978, to December, 1978; Staff of Hyundai En-
gineering and Construction Co. Ltd., June, 1981,
to August 1984; Research Assistance, Department
of Political Science, Oklahoma State University,
March, 1986, to August 1986, and January 1987,
to May 1987; Teaching Assistance, Department of
Political Science, Oklahoma State University,
August 1986, to December 1986.