

THE STRUCTURAL CHANGE OF THE KOREAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

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The purpose of this paper is to investigate the characteristics of the structural change of the Korean environmental movement. At the end of the 1980s, the Korean environmental movement showed the following characteristics: First, the major actors changed from the victims of environmental pollution and the activists of the nationalist-democratic movements to the activists of the citizens' movements. Second, the interests of the participants moved from their own self-interest to more universal and global concerns. Third, in regard to the methods of resource mobilization, militant protest and demonstration were replaced by lobbying and appealing to public opinion. Fourth, while leftist environmentalism declined, belief in active environmental management and ecological consciousness proliferated. Fifth, the main issues diffused from the victims' right to public health, ecosystem preservation, and global environmental problem. Considering these new characteristics, the eco-Marxist interpretation of the environmental movement as a class-based or anti-capitalist movement is not correct. The issues, activists, interests, and ideologies of the New Environmental Movement in Korea are similar to the typical new social movements in Western Europe. But the methods of resource mobilization of the New Environmental Movement in Korea are different from those of the typical European new social movement, which is radical. The New Environmental Movement in Korea adopts realistic strategies and actively participates in institutional politics.

INTRODUCTION

What would be the most dreadful threat to the peace and well-being of mankind? Many people consider environmental pollution as the foremost threat.¹ Nowadays more and more people tend to consider the environmental problem not as a simple social issue but as a global crisis. The reason why people regard the environmental issue as a crisis is that environmental disasters concerning our health such as the contamination of drinking water occur frequently. In addition, the abnormal climate change

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¹According to a survey of environmental consciousness among Koreans which was completed by the Continent Institute and requested by the Department of Environment in 1990, The most serious problem which Koreans will face in the 2000s? 64% of the participants indicated environmental pollution, followed by population explosion (18%), deprivation of national resources (11%), and threats of war (5%). (Continent Research Institute, 1990)

occurring all over the world makes us realize that the environmental issue is not only related to health issues but also to the survival of all mankind and the earth.

In this situation, the environmental movement in Korea has developed very rapidly in spite of its relatively late start. In Korea, the environmental movement is undoubtedly one of the most significant social movements in the 1990s. A number of organizations have been established and they have been actively engaged in a variety of activities. In addition, renowned Korean mass media are taking a stand on environmental issues. For this reason, it is necessary to investigate the reasons for the development of the environmental movement in Korea and its characteristics. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the structural change of the new environmental movement in Korea through an empirical analysis, and based on that, to theoretically explore the significance of the environmental movement in Korean society.²

The history of the Korean environmental movement is not very long. Although spontaneous protest by the victims of environmental pollution had begun partially in the 1960s, it was not until the early 1980s that the professional environmental movement organizations with a specific purpose and mobilization ability were formed. The environmental movement organizations in the 1980s identified themselves as part of the nationalist-democratic movement and led the anti-pollution movement in order to protect the livelihood of the people.³ These organizations assisted the victims of environmental pollution in industrial sites to protect their interests, and contributed to publicizing the significance of environmental problems.

At the end of the 1980s, however, the environmental movement demonstrated signs of change. After the June Protest for democracy in 1987, as the political structure changed to a relatively open system, practical and institutionalized activities tended to replace radical protest. Moreover, around this time, new issues, new activists, new interests and new ideology emerged. I define the movement having these new characteristics as the New Environmental Movement. Generally speaking, in the history of Korean environmental movement, I can define the environmental movement in the 1980s as an anti-pollution movement and that in 1990s as a new environmental movement.⁴ In order to test the empirical validity of my

²See Do-Wan Ku (1994: chapter 3 and 4) for the emergence and causes of development of the environmental movement.

³Minjung: people who are alienated from wealth and political power

⁴However, the detail categorization of the history is different from this category. See chapter

argument, I will examine the following questions:

- 1) What are the leading ideologies in the environmental movement?
- 2) What are the major issues in the environmental movement?
- 3) For whom does the environmental movement advocate and for what purposes?
- 4) Who constitute the major actors in the environmental movement?
- 5) How do the environmental organizations mobilize their resources?

The empirical study concerning the above questions intends to answer the following theoretical questions: In other words, is the New Environmental Movement really new in nature? Or is the movement merely another expression of the anti-capitalist class movement? Whereas the theory of the new social movements emphasizes the new characteristics of the environmental movement, Marxism or eco-Marxism defines the environmental movement as a traditional class movement. This controversy is significant in determining how we view the transformation of the social structure of Korean society. If the Marxist point of view is more appropriate, the most significant social issue in Korean society would be whether we overcome the continuing conflict between the left and the right. However, if the other point of view is more correct, then the environmental movement in Korea would be the center of new conflicts in Korean society; consequently, not only emancipatory politics⁵ but also new politics to reform the social structure would become the most important issue. My study will help to answer these theoretical questions.

The sources I use in this paper consist of the founding statements, platforms, the news letters of the activist organizations of the Korean environmental movement, daily newspapers, and in-depth interview records. The period dealt with in this paper is mainly from the 1980s.

Chapter two will discuss theoretical resources in the environmental movement by reviewing eco-Marxism and the new social movement theory. Chapter three is a discussion on the overview of the Korean environmental movement divided into four periods. Chapter four will investigate changes in the ideological formation of the Korean environmental movement by the

3 of this article.

⁵Giddens defines emancipatory politics as a politics which reduces or eliminates exploitation and inequality and gives top priority to justice, equality and participation. Whereas emancipatory politics deals with politics of opportunity in life, life politics deals with life style. The life politics refers to the post-modern system, politics of order mobilized by reflection. Reflection here relates self and body to a system of global scale. (Giddens 1991, 211-14)

discursive analysis⁶ of the major environmental movement organizations in each period. Chapter five will examine how the issues, interests, major actors, and methods of resource mobilization changed at the end of the 1980s. In the conclusion, I will point out the errors of eco-Marxism, based on my empirical study, and discuss the theoretical implications of the New Environmental Movement in Korea.

THEORETICAL RESOURCES

Is the environmental movement a completely new social movement which transforms the dominant social paradigm? Or is it basically a class movement to eliminate exploitation and inequality between the classes, that is, another expression of emancipatory politics? On one hand, scholars argue that the New Social Movements are a discourse limited to the Western Europe, and the Korean environmental movement is still based on emancipatory politics. (Yong Chang Kim 1991; Sang Chul Park 1991, Byung Doo Choi 1993) On the other hand, an argument is raised that the new environmental movement began to emerge as a new politics which can be distinguished from emancipatory politics (See Jae Lee 1992) We will examine the theoretical foundations of these two arguments.

Eco-Marxism

The Marxists have insisted that the fundamental cause of the environmental crisis comes from the capitalist economy. For the purpose of increasing profit, capitalism creates an economic structure of mass production and mass consumption while wasting resources; environmental pollution necessarily results and ultimately develops into an environmental crisis. Traditional Marxists distinguished industrialism and capitalism; whereas the nature of capitalism was regarded as vicious, that of industrialism was not. Expansion of production was taken for granted in achieving affluence for the people.

However, eco-Marxists who recognize the environmental crisis these days take a more cautious attitude toward industrialism. J. O'Connor, the most well-known eco-Marxist, advocates eco-socialism which transcends not only capitalism but also industrialism. Nevertheless, he still emphasizes that capitalism is the most fundamental cause of the environmental crisis. He characterizes the environmental movement as an anti-capitalist movement; even if the ideology of the environmental movement might not be anti-

⁶This methodology will be explained at ch. 4.

capitalist, the environmental movement ultimately, although not intentionally, impairs capital accumulation. Even if the struggle surrounding the conditions of production seems to transcend class, O'Connor argues, such a struggle can be considered as part of the class struggle, in the sense that it opposes the domination of capital over nature. (O'Connor 1988, 33-38)

In Korea, Byung Doo Choi is the most representative scholar who approaches the environmental crisis and the movement from a Marxist point of view. Choi argues that the origin of the environmental problem in a capitalist society lies in the process of value production and the subsequent confrontation between the production process of use value and that of exchange value. In other words, the fundamental cause of the environmental problem can be found in the capitalist social structure which generates anarchy of production, mass production and mass consumption. He considers the environmental movement as the necessary consequence of capitalism and further argues that the environmental movement must be anti-capitalist in its character. (Byung Doo Choi 1992, 319-322)

According to Choi's theory, whether the participants have the intention of engaging in an anti-capitalist movement or not, all environmental movements contain a characteristic of the class struggle, because all the social movements are organized by people who are ultimately dominated by capital.⁷ His argument is very hard to analyze because the concepts of class and class movement are too broadly defined. In this paper, I will analyze the class character of the environmental movement and conduct an empirical review. By analyzing the class character and the interests of the major actors, the interests and ideologies of the environmental movement, I will examine the validity of the eco-Marxists propositions.

The Theory of the New Social Movements

Since the end of the 1960s, new movements of new forces pursuing new issues and new values emerged in Western Europe, which can be distinguished from the existing social movements centering on the labor

⁷The following quotation clearly demonstrates Choi's interpretation of the environmental movement as a class movement:

In the case of the environmental movement, the environmental problem resulted from capitalist accumulation and government policy supporting it, the imbalance between the regions is becoming serious. **Therefore, the environmental movement not only contains the character of the class struggle but also seeks to accomplish the class interests.** (Bolds are mine; Byung Doo Choi 1993, 253)

movements. The new movements consisted of the environmental movement, the feminist movement, the peace movement, and the gay and lesbian movement. Scholars named these new movements the New Social Movements. Inglehart argues that changes in value systems provided important resources for these new movements. Based on various research data, he concluded that the post-war generations who spent a more affluent adolescence after the war came to have a more post-materialist attitude and consequently they took part in the New Social Movements more actively (Inglehart 1977). Offe criticizes Inglehart as psychologizing approach and explained that the social movements result from a structural crisis in the welfare states. He defines the new politics of the New Social Movements as that of a new paradigm which is the opposite of the paradigm that dominated Europe after the end of World War II. The old paradigm was based on a comprehensive growth-security alliance of the issues of economic growth, national wealth distribution, and national security (Offe 1985, 824) On the contrary, the new paradigm is directed towards individual freedom and identity focusing on the issues of peace, the environment, human rights, and unalienated labor.

See Jae Lee (1992), in his research, emphasizes the need of paradigm conversion in approaching the environmental movement in Korea. He criticizes the approach to feminist, environmental, urban, and educational issues through the expansion of class analysis, and calls for a new paradigm to deal with these issues. Lee conceptualizes feminist, educational, and environmental movements in Korea as the new social movements. He defines the preceding social movements as the inner-market movement and the new social movements as the outer-market movement. While the major motive of the inner-market movement is profit, the outer-market movement pursues protection of the living, a new value system, and ecological preservation.

See Jae Lee argues that living is the center of all new social movements in the 1990s, and living can be the framework through which we can recognize the world. According to him, the emphasis on harmonizing economic development and environmental protection has to give way to making the environment and living a priority. For this purpose, we need to formulate a new value system based on post-materialistic values, life ethics, and new austerity which can be put into practice.

Lee's theory overcomes not only the mechanical Marxist approach which views the environmental movement as an anti-capitalist class movement of the oppressed, but also the approach of resource mobilization theory (McCarthy and Zald 1977) which reduces the environmental movement to

the collective action of interest groups preserving their own interest. The environmental movement is not merely a protest movement of the oppressed classes or the rational choice of interest groups, but is also the movement which contains an historicity (historical meaning) of creating a just and sustainable society (Touraine 1977).

We can critically discuss both arguments by investigating whether the environmental movement is the transformation of a class movement which reproduces the traditional right-left conflict or a new movement based on new ideology.

THE HISTORY OF THE KOREAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

The Korean environmental movement began with industrialization. While it is true that rapid economic growth provided economic affluence, at the same time it exacerbated environmental pollution. The people enjoyed material affluence, but they also desired a cleaner environment, and this desire influenced the development of environmental movement. In this chapter, I will present the Korean environmental movement in four historical periods and examine the characteristics of each period.

In the 1960s and 1970s, there were no environmental organizations with a concrete ideology and organizational structure except for the victims' movement. This period can be named the prehistory of the environmental movement.

The Korean environmental movement started from the collective action of victims. Though their action, because it lacked organization and continuity, can hardly be defined as a social movement, their collective action was a basis of the environmental movement. After the economic development plan was executed in the 1960s, the pollution around the industrial sites became a serious problem, and the residents of the surrounding areas began a campaign for damage compensation. In addition, the Nature Conservation Association (founded in 1963) and the Association for the Protection of Wild Animals (founded in 1969) were established during the 1960s, though their social influence was trivial. With the increase in environmental pollution in the 1970s, the campaign for damage compensation became more active, and environmental movement organizations such as the Association for the Preservation of the Nakdong River (founded in 1978) and the Pollution Research Society (Gonghaeyonguhoe: founded in 1979) were established.

There were not many professional environmental organizations in this period, and they did not have the resources to support the victims' movements. At the end of the 1970s, as environmental pollution became a

serious social problem, the government initiated the environmental protection movement in 1977.⁸ During this time, the press was the only force which could raise the environmental issue in public and represent the victims.

The second period, between 1980 and 1987, is the era of the anti-pollution movement. After 'the Spring of Seoul' in 1980 was suppressed by military power, the democratic movement was temporarily withdrawn; soon, a new nationalist-democratic movement developed. The environmental movement became active along with the democratic movement, and the anti-pollution movement became a part of the nationalist-democratic movement. In 1982, the Korean Pollution Research Institute (PRI) was established by radical Protestant and Catholic clergymen. This institute made great efforts in supporting victims, researching the pollution problem, and educating the public. Other organizations established in this period are the Association for the Preservation of Youngsan Lake (founded in 1983), the Anti-pollution Campaign Association (founded in 1984), the Anti-pollution Citizens' Movement Association (APCMA; Kongminhyop: founded in 1986), and the Youth Association of the Anti-pollution Movement (YAAPM; Kongchunghyop: founded in 1987).

It was a remarkable achievement that regional organizations for the protection and survival of the local environment, such as the Association for the Preservation of Youngsan Lake (founded in 1983), the Association for the Preservation of Samhak Island (founded in 1986), and the Association for the Preservation of Yudal Mountain (founded in 1987), accomplished their goal with the successful mobilization of local residents (Mokpo Green Research Association 1988; Joongrae Cho & et al. 1987).

Different from the regional movements, the professional environmental organizations led by youths strongly identified themselves as part of the nationalist-democratic movement. The anti-pollution movement organizations recruited their members from students and anti-government activists with a nationalist-democratic inclination, for example, Yul Choi, the core member of the Pollution Research Institute. The declaration published during the evacuation campaign in the Ulsan and Onsan industrial sites, led by the Pollution Research Institute, shows such an inclination.

The pollution requiring such a voluntary migration is not limited to the

⁸The environmental protection movement led by the government was concerned with the garbage littered by hikers, not industrial development by the government or business enterprises which destroyed the environment on a large scale.

Ulsan and Onsan residents but is a matter concerning the quality of life of the whole nation. It is important to realize that **the pollution problem was created by a few government-supported conglomerates and military dictatorship**. Thus, not only the residents in industrial sites such as Ulsan and Onsan but people all over the nation have to commit themselves to a more basic and broad anti-pollution movement in order to **terminate the anti-nationalistic and anti-popular conglomerates and military dictatorial regime causing the problem**. (bold-faced by author; Kisayun 1987, 164-166)

Because of this inclination, the ruling power regarded the anti-pollution movement as an anti-government movement, and tried to prevent the local resident movement from allying with professional environmental organizations (Joongrae Cho and et al. 1987; Dowan Ku 1994, Chap. 6).

The third period, between 1988 and 1991, is the emerging era of the new environmental movement. I distinguish this period because during this period diverse social movement organizations formed, made progress, and sought new ideologies and movement strategies as Korea was in the process of democratization. As democratization progressed after the collapse of Doohwan Chuns regime by the June Protest of 1987, the environmental movement changed in character. The first important change in this period was that citizens became the major actors in the movement. Diverse professional environmental organizations were established by the expanded political opportunity structure and citizens' organizations began to actively join the environmental movement. Secondly, the victims' movement exercised greater social influence. It expanded not only in size, but also changed in quality in that the campaign for damage compensation expanded to include a damage prevention movement. Thirdly, the interests of the environmental movement moved beyond the interests of local residents to the general issue of the life and health of all citizens.

During this period, the nationalist-democratic movement declined gradually, and a new citizens' movement developed, which competed with it. Such a political structure increased opportunity, and this influenced the environmental movement. In 1988, the YAAPM and the APCMA, which developed the anti-pollution movement, united to create the Alliance for the Anti-pollution Movement (AAM: Kongchuryon), and led the environmental movement.⁹

On the other hand, from the end of the 1980s, citizens' movement organizations such as the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ):

⁹Yul Choi, core member of PRI has joined this association. At first, Yul Choi and Jinok Suh have taken the co-chair, and later, Yul Choi has become chair.

Kyongshilyon), the YMCA and the YWCA actively joined the environmental movement. They criticized the radical strategy of the existing anti-pollution movement and insisted upon more professional and mass-oriented activities.

In 1989, the Hansalim Club was organized to develop and diffuse the ecological thoughts in Korea. This club is important not because it has real influence but because it is the first club for ecological community. The Hansalim Club originated in the Hansalim Cooperative Association in Wonju, founded in 1984, which developed organic agriculture without chemical fertilizer, pesticide, and weed killer. This Cooperative campaigned for direct sales of organic agricultural product and engaged in life movement through land-reviving agriculture. The Hansalim Club is a life (Saengmyong) movement organization led by Jiha Kim (KyungAe Choi 1991, 91-92).¹⁰ Although the club is not well known to the public, it has historical significance in that it contributed to promoting an ideology stressing ecology in the Korean environmental movement. The Hansalim Club has few members (250 persons as of 1993) and social influence compared with the above organizations. Whereas during this period, the existing anti-pollution movement organizations expanded their influence, various new ideologies and organizations emerged and initiated the New Environmental Movement.

The fourth period, from 1992 to the present, is the expanding stage of the new environmental movement. The year 1992 is critical because the Rio Environment Conference (UNCED: the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) was a turning-point; after this conference, the Korean environmental movement changed greatly. Firstly, the new environmental movement replaced the anti-pollution movement. The anti-pollution movement organizations, represented by AAM, had regarded huge corporations and the government as the violators, and the people as the victims; therefore, they defined the environmental movement as a hostile struggle between the two. After the Rio Environment Conference, however, they began to pay attention to the global environmental issues and the modest mass movement.¹¹

¹⁰The Hansalim Club and The Hansalim Cooperative Union are closely related but different organizations. The first is a kind of intellectuals' circle and the other is a kind of cooperative association.

¹¹The AAM, in early 1992, participated in organizing the Korean Committee for the United Nations Environmental Development Conference led by citizens environmental organizations. This committee received grants from conglomerates to attend the Rio Conference. Some members of the AAM criticized receiving the grant, saying they would be going to Brazil on conglomerate's money. They insisted that the administrative staff of the

Secondly, after the Rio Environment Conference, the environmental problem became an important social and political issue. Therefore, the government and huge corporations had to treat the environmental problem more seriously. In general, after 1992, the environmental movement in Korea became one of the most important social movements.

THE IDEOLOGICAL CONFIGURATION OF THE KOREAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the structural change of the environmental movement in Korea. In this chapter, I will focus on the ideological changes of the environmental movement. The materials for this analysis are the founding statements of professional environmental movement organizations and the in-depth interview data of those leaders. The statements of the victims' organizations are not included because they do not deal with general environmental issues. The characteristics of the victims' movements will be studied in the next chapter.

The major samples are official founding statements, platforms, public statements, and news letters of important organizations supplemented by interview data. The method of analysis I use here is a qualitative content analysis (Mankap Lee, Wansang Han, Kyungdong Kim 1979, 194-210). Although quantitative content analysis is more often used in analyzing texts than the qualitative method, it has limits in effectively analyzing dynamic and qualitative changes in ideology. I will choose words and sentences often used in the texts, then infer their meanings to analyze the ideological characteristics of the environmental movement. Using qualitative content analysis, we can infer the meaning of statements by considering the socio-political context of the period and the characteristics of the writer. This method is useful to infer the different meanings of signifiers used by different writers.¹² The reliability of this method, however, can be limited due to the inference of meaning. This problem can be solved by reducing biases with a strict analysis of social context.¹³ I will compare and analyze

AAM had betrayed the spirit of the AAM founding statement, and finally left the AAM in March, 1992. Through these disputes, the AAM clearly changed its inclination from a radical line to a practical and reformist line (Interview with former AAM official: January, 1994).

¹²Pêcheux (1982, 111) says, the meaning of words, expressions, and propositions vary according to each user, and insists that discursive formations construct the meaning and even subject.

¹³Content analysis of statements has a limit in that it cannot catch the concealed intention of the writer. Though the government, for example, advocates that environmental protection has priority over development, it may prefer the latter to the former. We need an empirical case

the statements focusing on the following issues:

- 1) Cause of the environmental crisis (the polluter and the victim),
- 2) Plan, platform, and major actors of each organization,
- 3) Value orientations of each organization: issues of economic development, scientific technology, nuclear weapons, anthropocentrism/eco-centrism, political ideology and alternatives.

The first issue can serve as the basis from which to infer the characteristics and intensity of social conflict each organization presents. Examining the second issue, we can infer the major field of action and characteristic of the organization. Finally, an investigation of its value system helps us to infer the ultimate goal of the organization.

At first, I will examine the statements of the PRI, then the AAM, the CCEJ, the YMCA, and the Hansalim Club. Finally, the statements of the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM: Whankyongyonhap), developed from the AAM in 1993, will be examined.

Environmental Statements of the Anti-pollution Movement Period

During 1980s, the PRI, the YAAPM, and the APCMA were organized. The PRI has coordinated the movement of other environmental organizations and has supported victims such as the Onsan residents. The ideology of PRI is similar to that of YAAPM; thus, we can consider the statements of PRI representative of the ideology of the anti-pollution movement.¹⁴

A sample of the PRI's statements are its founding statement in 1982, the anti-pollution declaration of 1986, and etc. I have chosen these statements because they represent the ideology and goal of this institute and have a consistent message in general, although the political terminology changed radically in the time period.

The PRI prescribes that the pollution comes from political factors such as a monopoly, oppression, and the division of Korean peninsula.¹⁵ The

study to examine the inconsistency between the two (Do-wan Ku 1994).

¹⁴The PRI was not the only environmental movement organization in that period. The PRI, however, represents the anti-pollution movement which was the main stream of the environmental movement at that time.

¹⁵Until the 1980s, the terminology 'konghae (pollution)' had been used more widely than environment or environmental contamination. Anti-pollution activists thought the term 'environmental contamination' did not differentiate between the violator and the victim, and preferred the term pollution because it emphasizes the responsibility of government and enterprise. Environment and Environmental contamination has become popular, however,

violator is the group which maintains the monopoly, oppression, and national division while the victim is us or the masses.

...Pollution represents the integrated problem of all contradiction in our society. Pollution, the product of monopoly, oppression, and the division of Korean peninsula, destroys our life, consciousness, and the fatherland we stand on....The termination of the anti-popular regime, which imports the pollution industry on behalf of the multinational corporations and allows the pollution emission of monopoly capital, is the shortcut solution for the pollution problem of our country (1986 Anti-pollution Declaration: *Pollution Study*, Vol. 13, July 20, 1986).

The PRI selected support for the victims' movement and publicity of the actual condition of pollution as its major activities. Its purpose is the recovery of the land of beautiful rivers and mountains by helping the people to acknowledge the pollution problem systematically and through support for the victims to expel pollution by themselves. It (its manifesto) insists that the major group to be mobilized for this purpose is 'people', and 'people' have to initiate the anti-pollution campaign.

The PRI criticized the imprudent economic development. It argued through its manifesto that economic expansion at the cost of pollution deprived us of the right to live a healthy and pleasant life. PRI's political line is in the same direction as the democratization movement, which can be found in the following citation:

If the pollution problem can be solved only by a mass movement, democratization including the implementation of a local autonomy system and freedom of speech is the inevitable condition to solve the pollution problem. Democratization has an inseparable relationship with the solution of the pollution problem (1986 Anti-pollution Declaration: *Pollution Study*, Vol. 13, July 20, 1986).

We can conclude that the statements of the PRI were influenced significantly by the statements of the nationalist-democratic movement at that time.

Environmental Statements of the Emerging Era of the New Environmental Movement

Many professional anti-pollution organizations with various ideologies

after many pointed out 'konghae', the Japanese translation of public nuisance, is not proper terminology and a differentiation between violator and victim is meaningless

and value orientations were established during the period of anti-pollution movements in Korea. The people-oriented ideology in the anti-pollution movement period has been changed in a complex way with the emergence of many organizations with various ideologies. The causes of ideological diversification are expanded political opportunity structure after the demonstration of June, 1987 and the collapse of socialist countries.

In this part, I will examine the statements of four major organizations: The AAM, YMCA Seoul, the CCEJ, and the Hansalim Club. These organizations represent the Korean environmental movement in that period in their social and ideological influence.

The AAM had been very active with 5,000 members before it was changed into the KFEM. The AAM took the lead in the environmental movement following the ideology of the PRI. AAM's statements are taken from its manifesto, principles, and the articles in its bulletin *Survival and Peace* during 1988-1993 (*Survival and Peace*, Vol.8: 4; Vol.14: 22-23).

The CCEJ and YMCA have led the citizens' environmental movement on the basis of their many members and ability to mobilize media. The CCEJ was established in 1989 defining itself as a citizens' movement organization different from an radical movement organizations and developed new strategies and executive methods different from those of the nationalist-democratic movement. While CCEJ had focused on economic development and social equality, after the Phenol incident in 1991,¹⁶ it emphasized the environmental problem and established an environmental research department in its organization, and founded the Center for Environment and Development (CED) in November, 1992. I will examine the materials of the YMCA citizens' movement headquarters and the manifesto of the CED.

The Hansalim Club has initiated ecological ideology in the Korean environmental movement. Though its ideology has not been realized in the social movement, it has had an important effect upon the ideology of other organizations. Its ideology is based on the Green Movement in Germany and the Mondragon Workers' Union Movement in Spain.¹⁷ Jiha Kim is one of the theoretical leader of this group. I will examine the Hansalim Declaration (*Hansalim Club* 1990, 6-43) adopted at the inaugural meeting in 1989 and Jiha Kim's statement (Jiha Kim 1992, 158-160, 226-234), which are related in ecological context.¹⁸

¹⁶A serious water pollution incident at Nakdong River in March, 1991.

¹⁷See Hansalim club (1990) and White and White (1992) for Mondragon Workers Union.

¹⁸There are other ecological organizations and journals except the Hansalim Club. First, the Noksaeakpyongron (*Green Review*) is an important ecological journal. It was first published in 1991 by Jong Chol Kim. Though the Hansalim Society declined, the Noksaeakpyongron has

Table 1 shows the differences of each organizations statements on the issues. At first, the statements of the AAM and PRI are not so different. AAM blames the pollution problem on the political rulers, and thus, insists that social reformation is the only way to solve the pollution problem. AAM's political inclination is to see the anti-pollution movement as part of a mass movement or nationalist-democratic movement.

The statements of the CCEJ and YMCA place the blame the environmental problem on the government's loose regulations, the absence of civic ethics, or a distorted economic structure, ideology, and culture. Unlike the AAM, they do not differentiate between the polluter and the victim of environmental contamination. Therefore, their major activity focuses on changing the life style of citizens or enhancing environmental awareness. They insist that the environmental movement in everyday life, an environmental monitoring and campaign, and the presentation of alternative policy are needed to solve the environmental problem.

They support the harmony of economic development and environmental preservation. They regard businesses not as hostile enemies to environmental improvement but think they can make an effort together with them to improve the environment. These two organizations call themselves and their sympathizers 'citizens', which differs greatly from the concept of people used by the AAM. They see a citizen as someone who has emerged as a self-regulating activist in a reformist citizens' movement, whereas people indicates people who belong to a politically oppressed and economically alienated class.

The statements of the Hansalim Club and Jiha Kim show new characteristics. They consider industrial culture as the cause of the environmental problem and oppose the differentiation between violator and victim. Because of such a diagnosis, they do not think 'people' or 'citizens' are their main actors. They try to change over institutionalized and industrialized society to unalienated community. In order to construct such a community, they pay attention to marginal people and try to initiate a culture transformation movement for ecological community.

On the basis of such a viewpoint, they criticize a social structure that pursues only economic development. Furthermore, they criticize positivistic science and anthropocentrism, and insist on an eco-centric value system in which human beings try to coexist with nature, transcending the separation

contributed to diffuse the ecological ideology. Second, the BulHwanKyo (Korea Buddhist Academy for Eco-Society) was founded in 1988, to study and educate environmental crisis in terms of the Asian and the Buddhist ecological thoughts.

TABLE 1. STATEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES OF THE MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS

| Group Issues | Alliance for Anti-Pollution Movement (AAM: Kongchuryon) | Seoul YMCA | Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ: Kyongshilyon) | Hansalim Group |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| Causes of Environmental Pollution | "socio-economic inequality, repressive social structure, arms race of the superpowers, environmental destruction of imperialistic monopoly of conglomerates" | "excessive emphasis on technology, industrialization and urbanization, lack of business ethics, lack of government regulation, low level of citizens' consciousness" | "economic injustice, wrongful economic structure that only seeks profits, value system and culture after the industrial Revolution" | "Industrial civilization, oppressive technological civilization" |
| Polluters/ Victims | "The logic that victims themselves are violators is an ideology by which polluters reject to take responsibility" | "I am both the polluters and victims of environmental pollution." | "In environmental pollution in the global scale, every one is polluters and victims at the same time." | "Everything is my fault." |
| Solutions/ Executive Plans | "To assist residents' anti-pollution campaign, To ally with democratic movement forces for joint struggle, To contribute to world peace by international alliance" | "campaign to practice in daily lives, monitoring on environmental pollution, building up of public opinion, institutionalization of environmental protection, construction of citizens' action network" | "To present an alternative for fundamental change through engaging in a cultural movement and study to seek new value system and behavior, To present alternative policy based on environmental management" | Building ecological community. Saengmyong Undong (Ecological movement) Developing ecological thoughts. |
| Major Actors | "people" | "citizens" | "citizens" | "peripheral individuals except corporate individuals" |
| Value Orientations 1) economic growth | no objection | no objection | balance between economic growth and environmental protection | criticize the national policy seeking growth only |

TABLE 1. Cobntinued

| Group Issues | Alliance for Anti-Pollution Movement (AAM: Kongchuryon) | Seoul YMCA | Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice (CCEJ: Kyongshilyon | Hansalim Group |
|----------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| 2) Science and Technology | criticize anti-scientific approach | | "clean technology" | criticize positivistic science |
| 3) nuclear energy | strong anti-nuclear statement, activities | | generally anti-nuclearbut no specific activities | Anti-nuclear statement, but without activities |
| 4) ecocentrism/biocentrism | oppose | | | actively support |
| 5) Model for alternative society | "Society for the people" | | Society where economic justice and peace is realized | society which is organized with small communities |
| major activities | Assist anti-pollution residents movementAnti-nuclear activitiesAssociate with nationalist-democratic movement | Environmental movement in Daily life (Recycling movement) Campaign for Legislative Reform | Recycling movement Policy modification campaign Life Cooperative Union | Movement for cultural transformation.Suppor for organic product direct sale |
| means of mobilization | demonstrations, strikes, seminars, public hearings | seminars, public hearings, auditing the National Assembly meetings | seminars , public hearings | seminars |

of human beings and nature. The alternative society they pursue with this ideology is a society led by small communities transcending industrialism. The statements of the Hansalim Club demonstrate the characteristics of an ecological ideology.

In sum, the ideological configuration during the emerging era of the environmental movement has varied, with organizations inclined toward the citizens' movement and the ecological movement.

Environmental Statements of the Expanding Stage of the New Environmental Movement

After the UNCED, the ideological configuration of the Korean

THE ANTI-POLLUTION MOVEMENT AND THE NEW ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

We have seen the history of the Korean environmental movement and ideologies, and we find that the characteristics of the environmental movement changed between the end of 1980s and the early 1990s. The change began at the end of the 1980s and accelerated in the 1990s. I will examine the differences between the anti-pollution movement and the new environmental movement, in issues, interests and concerns, activists, and resource mobilization methods.

First, how did the issues change? Before 1990, the major issues of the anti-pollution movement were the contamination of agricultural products and sea foods near the industrial sites, and pollution victims such as the farmers poisoned by chemical fertilizer, pesticide, and weed killer. Major examples are the compensation campaign of the Samsan Plain farmers near the Ulsan Industrial Complex (1969-1979), the collective migration of farmers in the Nakpori Yeochunkun (1978-1981), the mercury poisoning of the Mr. Ko's family in Damyang Chunnam (1978), and the Onsan residents' movement (1978-1986).

Since the end of the 1980s, the issues of the environmental problem have varied. They are tap water contamination (incidents in 1989, 1990, and 1991), garbage disposal (the movement against reclaiming land for garbage dumping in Bansongdong Haewoondaeku: 1988), urban air pollution, contamination in the workplace (the death in the Wonjin Rayon: 1988-1992), and radioactive waste disposal sites (the movement against a radioactive waste disposal sites in Anmyondo: 1990-1992). In sum, environmental contamination has been recognized as a survival concern of the majority of the Korean people, including urban residents, and not limited to residents surrounding the industrial sites.

Since the Rio Environmental Conference in 1992, understanding of the global environmental crisis, as well as the issues directly related to health, has grown. Another important change is that the global environmental problem such as global warming, the preservation of species, the preservation of the natural ecosystem, and forest preservation has emerged as issue of the environmental movement.

Secondly, how have the environmental movement activists concerns changed? The anti-pollution movement in the 1980s concentrated resources on the protection of the people, especially the victims of pollution. Damaged residents have mobilized resources on the understanding of their

right to live, and the anti-pollution movement organizations have ultimately been concerned to contribute to the democratic movement by supporting them.

Since 1990, the environmental movement has tried to capture the attention of potential victims as well as the interest of direct victims.²² The newly-emerged recycle campaign and forest protection campaign are not directly related to class interests or self-interest. These movements are based on agreement with the goals of ecosystem preservation and total society survival, not on direct self-interest. The major concern of the environmental movement has, in time, turned to the welfare and survival of future generations, space, and the survival of the natural as well as human ecosystem.

Thirdly, has the issue of the environmental movement changed? Until 1980, the visible environmental problem was environmental pollution surrounding the industrial sites. Accordingly, farmers and fishermen living near the industrial sites were the major activists of the environmental movement. The general solution was to have them leave that area with compensation money from violator factories as farmers near Ulsan and the Samsan plain and residents of Nakpori did.

Since 1980, democratic movement groups composed of intellectuals and college students have emerged as environmental movement activists. At the Onsan disease incident in 1985, such a group, cooperating with residents, exposed the disease as coming from contamination which resulted in evacuating the residents.

At the end of the 1980s, citizens' movement organizations started to do modest environmental movement to change life-style, such as the garbage selective collection and the recycling campaign. At the same time, the environmental movement expanded from direct victims to include normal citizens. The activists of the environmental movement were no longer limited to the people.

Fourth, how does the environmental movement mobilize resources? Until 1980, most victims organizations had to demonstrate, go on sit-in strikes, and mail letters by themselves because there were no professional environmental organizations which could support them. All society was following an ideology of economic development at that time; such victims' organizations could not expose the pollution problem as a social issue.

Professional environmental movement organizations established after

²²One example is the success of the campaign to forbid sand-gathering from Paldangho which is the origin of drinking water in Seoul.

1980 staged demonstration and sit-in strikes based on a strong solidarity. Because of the closed political opportunity structure, such a protesting method was repressed and recognized as radical action regardless of its intensity. Victims used the method of direct action and negotiation while professional organizations, such as the nationalist-democratic movement, used militant and political slogans and actions.

At the end of 1980s, with progressing democratization, various victims' organizations developed. Through systematic activity, they mobilized resources from the external support groups effectively. Victims' organizations brought their issues to the attention of the public with the support of professional environmental movement organizations.

New to this period, there emerged non-hostile movements such as the life culture movement and the 'everyday life environmental movement (e.g., recycling)' as well as a hostile militant movement. With a new strategy among environmental movement organizations, they have kept loose mass organizations and have recruited members from volunteers; then, they are trying to put pressure on the government and big business and to change citizens' life style with the support of their members.

CONCLUSION

We have seen that the environmental movement in Korea experienced significant changes in its ideology, issues, interests, major actors and the methods of resource mobilization at the end of the 1980s. These changes were caused by two major structural changes. The first is the June Protest of 1987 the second is the collapse of socialism in Eastern Europe. After the June Protest, the movement forces united under democracy lost their power. The statements of the democratic movement organizations which sought for a utopian society gradually lost its eloquence. This loss was greatly influenced by the collapse of socialist countries. After these two structural changes, realism and pragmatism became the general tendency which dominated Korean society. In this circumstances, the environmental movement in Korea succeeded in finding new ideology and supporters.

Now, let us review the theories of the eco-Marxists and the New Social Movements based on the results of the above study. The eco-Marxists define the environmental movement as anti-capitalist or a class movement. However, my analysis shows that the major actors of the movement are not people from a specific class but the victims of environmental pollution or citizens working for the common good. Neither group of people represents the interests of a certain class or social strata, nor do they demonstrate an

anti-capitalist ideology or identity. Accordingly, it is hard to view the environmental movement as a class movement, or as an elitist or middle-class movement.

O'Connor and Byung Doo Choi argues that, even though the ideology of the environmental movement does not have an anti-capitalist character, it unintentionally impairs capital accumulation, and therefore it is a class struggle. (O'Connor 1988, 33-38) His arguments can be reduced to this erroneous logic; since capitalism is the fundamental cause of social conflicts, the environmental movement is ultimately an anti-capitalist class struggle, regardless of who comprises its major actors, regardless of what kind of ideology or interests its participants profess. Nevertheless, in reality, the major actors of the Korean environmental movement do not act as representatives of a certain class; nor do they actively support anti-capitalist ideology. Therefore, it is not appropriate to define the environmental movement as a class struggle or anti-capitalist movement, based on the interpretation that capitalism is the main source of the environmental crisis. Rather, we have to analyze the complicated reason for the environmental crisis, and find a solution to the crisis after completing an empirical analysis of the environmental movement. In brief, the eco-Marxist interpretation is proven inappropriate to explain the characteristics of the environmental movement in Korea.

Then, can the theory of the New Social Movements provide an alternative explanation for the Korean environmental movement? Experts in the New Social Movement in Western Europe point out that the movements are too diverse to be recognized as a single movement, and, further, they share more continuous characteristics with social movements in the past. (Scott 1990)

The advocates of the New Social Movements find the cause of the movements in the colonization of the life world (Habermas), the growth of a new middle class, the crisis of neo-corporatism (Offe) and the advance of post-industrial society (Touraine) and post-materialism (Inglehart). In spite of the difference in theories, it has been argued that the New Social Movements were formed in an effort to solve new conflicts and issues of society, and were different from the preceding institutionalized labor movement. The supporters of the New Social Movements applaud its progressive nature which expresses doubts about the universal characteristics of the proletariat that Marx defined as a universal class.

The new environmental movement in Korea demonstrates issues, ideologies, major actors, methods of resource mobilization, and interests which are different from those revealed in the nationalist-democratic

movements. It shares all these characteristics with the New Social Movements in Europe, except, however, the methods of resource mobilization. In Korea, the new environmental movement does not protest to legal and institutionalized means,²³ but organizes lobbying activities and exercises pressure on institutionalized politics.

The above difference resulted from the fact that the background of the social structure of the Western New Social Movements was different from that of the Korean New Environmental Movement. In Europe, after the period of unprecedented economic prosperity following World War II, a working class alliance based on neo-corporatism was firmly established. Women, young men, and students who had grievances with this alliance pursued new protests and a new identity and initiated the new movements. They sought a new politics in order to cope with the limitations in representative politics. In Korea, as the radical nationalist-democratic movement relatively declined, the environmental movement began to form in a situation where moderate and realistic political forces were gaining more influence. Neo-corporatism which embraces labor unions has not been established in the existing political system in Korea. The environmental movement in Korea, born as part of the nationalist-democratic movement, was united with the new citizens' movements.

Therefore, the ideal type of the new social movement which resorts to anti-institutional politics—political methods outside the existing institution not based on lobbying or political negotiation—cannot be applied to the Korean case. Today, the environmental movement in Korea actively participates in institutionalized politics in order to put pressure on the government to modify its policies. However, this phenomenon can also be observed in Europe in the case of the Green Party in Germany: the Green Party in some regions made an alliance with the Social Democratic Party and the alliance in reality works for Green politics. In the United States, practical lobbying activities constitute the main stream of the environmental movement. Consequently, radical democratic anti-institutional politics cannot be viewed as a necessary element of the New Social Movements. As European new social movements adopt more realistic methods, the New Environmental Movement in Korea also implements realistic strategies with a change of political opportunity structure.

The issues, major actors, interests, and ideologies employed by the New Environmental Movement in Korea are new. Considering this, the methods

²³Offe (1985) conceptualizes the New Social Movements as new protest politics against institutionalized politics.

of resource mobilization or the protest against institutionalized politics can be viewed as only one of the various characteristics of the new social movements. In conclusion, the New Environmental Movement in Korea is developing into a more realistic and active new social movement. By this study we can find that the change of Korean environmental movement is structural and closely related to the structural change of our society.

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