

# Transnational Nationalism and the Rise of the Transnational State Apparatus in South Korea\*

Kyonghwan Park\*\*

## 초국적 민족주의와 초국적 국가 기구의 부상 -한국의 사례-\*

박경환\*\*

**Abstract** : Recent studies on development are increasingly focusing on analyzing development discourse and deconstructing its institutionalization process in the nation-state. By pushing up the limit of the research on development, these studies particularly emphasize how development is articulated with the nation-state, its governmentality, and various representations. These studies overall consider development a powerful discourse, which invents under-development, mobilizes resources for changing particular space, and institutionalizes modern systems of socio-spatial control at a local scale. In this sense, it is particularly interesting to look at how the nation-state, faced with the deterritorialization of labor and capital, reterritorializes overseas resources and networks for the purpose of development. By problematizing the Overseas Koreans Foundation as a transnational state apparatus, this paper interrogates the way in which its institutionalized practices conjure up the national imagination, ethnic solidarity, and collective allegiance to the homeland in diaspora communities. This paper conclusively reports that the state apparatus circulates the discourse of transnational nationalism in Korean diaspora so as to appropriate their resources and networks for securing foreign currencies and investment in the homeland.

**Key Words** : transnationalism, development discourse, transnational state apparatus, nationalism, Overseas Koreans Foundation, diaspora

**요약** : 최근 개발(발전)에 관한 인류학적, 지리학적 연구는 특정 민족국가 내의 개발 담론과 이의 제도화 과정을 분석하는 데에 관심을 두고, 개발이 민족국가, 통치성, 재현과 어떻게 접합되어 있는지에 초점을 둔다. 특히, 이러한 연구는 개발 담론이 저개발과 빈곤을 창조하고 고안하는 과정, 과학과 전문 용어를 동원하여 개발이라는 미명 하에 특정 지역에서의 폭력적인 공간적 실천을 정당화하는 과정, 그리고 이러한 과정에서 개발 기구를 제도화하여 국가적 통치 역량을 제고하는 과정을 비판적으로 검토한다. 이러한 연구의 연장선상에서, 본 연구는 한국을 사례로 하여 초국가주의 및 글로벌화와 같은 탈영역화에 따른 국가적 축적의 위기를 초국적 민족주의를 기반으로 하는 재영역화의 전략을 통해 어떻게 극복하는가를 분석한다. 특히, 한국의 재외동포재단을 초국적 국가 기구로 문제 설정한 후, 이 기구가 어떠한 맥락에서 제도화되기 시작했는지, 이 기구가 어떻게 이질적인 디아스포라 주체를 '재외동포'라는 하나의 동질적 집단으로 상상, 생산해 내는지, 그리고 어떠한 프로그램을 통해 그들의 자원과 네트워크를 모국의 기회로 전유하는지에 초점을 둔다.

**주요어** : 초국가주의, 개발 담론, 초국적 국가 기구, 민족주의, 재외동포재단, 디아스포라

\* This work was supported by the Korea Research Foundation Grant funded by the Korean Government (MEST) (KRF-2008-362-A00001).

\*\* Assistant Professor, Department of Geography Education, Chonnam National University, kpark3@gmail.com

## 1. Introduction

In recent decades, anthropological and geographic studies are focusing on analyzing development discourse and its institutionalization process.<sup>1)</sup> Instead of confining development within the realm of economy, these studies have attempted to deconstruct development discourse and to re-articulate development with such notions as governmentality, institutional panopticism, and representation, knowledge and practices (Escobar, 1995). From the poststructuralist perspective, these studies consider development a powerful discourse, which invents under-development, mobilizes resources for changing particular space, and institutionalizes modern systems of socio-spatial control at local scale (Ferguson, 1990).

Development is a pre-condition for successfully institutionalizing state apparatus in the nation-state. According to Escobar (1995, 105), this process is accomplished by 'institutionalization' and 'bureaucratization': "Institutional practices are crucial not so much because they account for most of what is earmarked as development, but mostly because they contribute to producing and formalizing social relations, divisions of labor, and cultural forms." This is through a set of techniques, strategies, and disciplinary practices that generate, validate, and diffuse development knowledge. They usually include academic disciplines, methods of research and teaching, criteria of expertise, and manifold professional practices. Hence, it is deeply related with 'professionalization' of development discourse. All of these processes justify and reinforce the existence of nation-state as well as development institutions and practices. In regard to bureaucratization, "it depoliticizes pressures of the development apparatus, so that it can open spaces of struggle within which people might

defend not only their economic systems but their way of life" (Escobar, 1995, 151; Jessop, 1999; Choi, 2007). The subsequent result includes systematic governmental organizations, local or urban governments, and policy planning and practicing functions. Bureaucratic and professional institutions ultimately provide the instrumental rationality which lacks the 'purposive rationality'.

Although deconstructive studies on development have contributed to un-making the relationship between the nation-state and development, they internalize two crux. The first is what I call as 'unilateralism', which considers power not a circulative and productive force, but a unilateral oppression.<sup>2)</sup> The second is what I call as 'aspatialism', in which people's space is conceptualized as abstract, passive, and homogeneous container. The former, which emphasizes the notion of 'power', easily fails in finding how people's desire is associated with the deployment of a particular development project (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983). Although development is implemented by the dominant power, it cannot justify itself without the consent of powerless people. Thus, it is limited in highlighting other's voice and alternative forms of development.

Subject and object give a poor approximation of thought. Thinking is neither a line drawn between subject and object nor a revolving of one around the other. Rather, thinking takes place in the relationship of territory and the earth.

(Deleuze and Guattari, 1991, 85)

Grounded on the problematic of the 'relative autonomy of space' (Sayer, 1985; Urry, 1985), the latter emphasizes the importance of particular geographies where specific geographic characteristics of space make critical variations in

the institutionalization of development discourse. Ironically, as Ferguson (1990) correctly suggested, development can be justified and reinforced only by its failure in accomplishing the original objectives of development, unexpected results of development projects, and subsequent introduction of new projects. As development and state institutions in the nation-state are genealogically in the relationship of inter-constitution, inter-justification, and inter-reinforcement (Esteva, 1987; Esteva and Prakash, 1998), the analysis of development discourse discloses how it nationalizes people and space for the purpose of maintaining nation-state.

In this sense, it is particularly important to note how the nation-state in the face of the deterritorialization of labor and capital reterritorializes overseas resources and networks for developmental purposes (see for example, Lee, 2007; Lee and You, 2008). This paper focuses on the institutional discourse of the Overseas Koreans Foundation founded after the 1997 financial crisis. By problematizing the OKF as a transnational state apparatus, this paper interrogates how its institutionalized practices conjure up national imagination, ethnic solidarity, and collective allegiance to the homeland in diaspora communities. Also, this paper elucidates how the OKF circulates the discourse of transnational nationalism in Korean diaspora and how it appropriates their resources and networks for securing foreign currencies and investment in the homeland.

The first section of this paper analyzes how the South Korean government has employed nationalism and development discourse for institutionalizing state institutions since 1960s. The second section explores the political and economic context in which the South Korean transnational nationalism has emerged after the government witnessed a sheer outflux of capital and people. The third section analyzes the

organizational objectives, legal foundation, programs and projects, and other discursive aspects of the OKF. Finally, I suggest that although the institution claims that it networks diaspora Korean communities for assisting their economic and cultural interests, the discourse of transnational nationalism, which grounds its legal foundation and objectives, reveals that such networking is a reterritorializing strategy of the government to secure its ungrounded capitalist space over Korean diaspora.

## 2. Development and nationalism in the nation-state of South Korea

In tracking down the social construction of nation, Anderson (1991) investigated how the discursive circulation of cultural consciousness engendered the so-called 'imagined community' and constructed national identity. However, the postcolonial history of South Korea as a capitalist nation-state highlights how capitalism has played a central role in the emergence of the modern nation-state. Like other newly independent countries, South Korea experienced a gradual transition from the import substitution economy (ISE) in 1960s to export-oriented economy (EOE) in 1970s and 1980s. Since the early 1970s, the country also succeeded in transforming its leading sector from light industries to infrastructure-based heavy industries, including shipbuilding, steel, and petrochemical. The rapid growth was also a direct result of the country's authoritarian government and its close relationship with large conglomerates. Both the government and large conglomerates (or *jae-bol* in Korean) propagandized strong development discourse to produce a low-wage, overtime-working, and non-unionized work force in export-oriented industries.

In this earlier stage of capitalism, the Jung-Hee Park Administration implemented strong nationalist and anti-communist policies alongside of modernization and development practices. For the same reason, his dictatorship was partly able to block up a series of democratization movements in 1960s and 1970s. The ideological themes of “*min-jok*” (meaning nation in Korean), “*ja-ju*” (meaning self-reliance in Korean), “*ban-gong*” (meaning anti-communism in Korean) that the Park Administration propagated are not unique but shared by many elites and politicians in the Third World countries. However, what was crucial to the nationalist ideology linking these two tropes was the government’s aggressive economic policies based on development and modernization discourse, which viewed economic growth as a path to catch up with the West (Jin, 2004).

Thus, under the ruling of the Park Administration, nationalism had double effects. The first was to facilitate the anti-colonial and anti-communist process of nation-state building project. The second was to learn from the former colonial powers and to westernize the nation-state. The postcolonial nationalist contradiction between being anti-colonial/western and becoming modernized/ westernized was exactly embodied in the post-1965 Korean emigrants seeking opportunities in the US. As Korean emigrants to the US were often criticized as non-patriotic opportunists who deserted their mother country, many earlier Korean immigrants in the US were forced to share certain nationalist consciousness. The consciousness often implied that they must expiate their ‘original sin’ of abandoning from their home country. Such penitent practices included overseas Koreans’ anti-communist movements, fund-raising activities for Korean politicians, and, most importantly, everyday self-conscious efforts to be hard-working, thrifty, and model immigrants so as not

to defile the honor of their mother country. In this sense, studies of immigration focusing on Korean American small business entrepreneurship and its relationship to the ‘model minority’ did not pay attention to analyzing nationalist discourse and its transnational articulation to Korean immigrants’ collective subjectivity in the US (Lee and Park, 2008).

South Korea’s economy, based on low-wage labor on the one hand and authoritarian nationalism on the other, grew weakened since the mid-1980s. Some studies pointed out that Korean wages increased faster than productivity and companies paid high interest due to the country’s premature and relatively small capital market. The government and hegemonic mass-media often appropriated such discussion for producing and justifying powerful ideologies to victimize workers’ unionization and their strikes for better working condition and higher wages. By blaming workers’ requests for better working condition and increase in wage, they argued that such claims from below would undermine the national competitiveness in an increasingly globalizing market. Other scholars emphasized the rapid economic growth of Southeast Asian countries which propelled their national economies through low-wage labor (Shin *et al.*, 2002; Kim, 2004). However, the nation’s trade balance of commodities and services since the mid 1980s was not a critical factor to the 1997 economic crisis. Actually, the growth rate of the nation’s total export since the mid 1980s was even higher than previous years. Rather, the crisis stemmed from the country’s structural problems having been formed and gradually accumulated since the late 1960s.

First, a large number of domestic manufacturing corporations, predominantly having been solely dependent on cheap labor, did not invest in the R&D sector and subsequently failed in enhancing overall productivity. Also many

companies focused on speculating in real estate and stock markets, reinforcing economies of scale by aggressive M&A activities, generating black, underground markets for lobbying government officials, and constructing their own financial subsidiaries such as banks and stock/insurance companies. Eventually, these economic conditions in tandem with the rapid outflow of foreign currency devastated the South Korean economy with 8 percent GDP contraction and 6.8 percent unemployment during the 1997 Asian financial crisis.

One of the most serious concerns for South Korean developmentalists in 1990s was an exodus of Korean domestic capital. It was in parallel with the increasing relocation of factories and direct investment to China and Southeast Asia. The amount of South Korea's overseas capital investment began to significantly increase in the early 1990s. Many Korean companies began to launch overseas businesses in developing economies with low-wage labor. Southeast Asia and China were the principal target that attracted South Korean transnational capital. While South Korea's investment to China and Southeast Asia has focused on the manufacturing sector, the country's investment in the US has more focused on purchasing properties including retail stores, office buildings, and land (Export-Import Bank of Korea, 2005).

In comparison to the outflow of South Korean capital, foreign direct investment into the nation began to significantly increase only after the 1997 economic crisis. In this sense, the crisis was not necessarily an economic but more precisely a financial crisis caused by the contradiction between the highly volatile global financial market and South Korea's overall negligence of financial probity.

The foreign currency reserves of South Korea, mostly consisting of US dollars, had been less than the total amount of foreign liabilities in 1998.

In this context, while focusing on raising the total foreign currency reserves to enhance financial flexibility, former President *Dae-Jung Kim* implemented a nation-wide 'and' nationalist movement to transform the financial outflows of "bye Korea" capital into the influx of foreign investment to 'buy Korea' (Choi, 2001). Under the supervision of the IMF, the Kim Administration implemented a series of restructuring programs, including radical rationalization of less competitive firms, deregulation of governmental economic policies, decentralization of large conglomerates, and strategic facilitation of high-tech venture businesses (Shin *et al.*, 2002). However, what made the Kim Administration become more concerned about was the overseas exodus of South Korea's domestic capital. After the South Korean government's deregulation policies on capital transfer since the late 1980s, the outflows of domestic capital far exceeded the total credit and, currently, amount to 1.8 billion US dollars.

Let alone the capital transfer, the total amount of transnational capital donation (or transnational remittance between families and relatives) is far more surprising. Until the late 1980s, overseas capital influx had far exceeded the outflow, reaching 200~900 million dollar credits for South Korea. However, outward capital remittances grew increasing in 1990s, and it currently reaches around 8 billion dollars of remittance flows into foreign countries (Bank of Korea, 2006).

Interestingly, there had been a significant increase of capital influx to South Korea between 1997 and 1999. The statistics has two meanings. First, there were a significant number of overseas Koreans who remit their money into South Korea to earn financial profits from currency exchange. One US dollar, having been equivalent to about 850 Korean won before 1997, was worth around 1,500 Korean won from 1997 to 1999. It means that, ideally speaking, the net financial profits that

these overseas Korean earned amount to about 38-92 percent of their original capital. Such currency devaluation benefited to those who had possessed foreign currencies.

Yet, resurrected nationalism and patriotism among overseas Korean diaspora led them to remit their money to families and relatives in the homeland. *Dae-Jung Kim* visited Los Angeles in June 1998, and asserted that all Koreans over the world must stand together so that their mother country can overcome current unprecedented national crisis. Kim suggested that overseas Koreans should bring back their dollars to South Korea, appealing to overseas Koreans patriotism. Many Korean Americans organized fund-raising events for either changing their foreign currencies, mostly US dollars, into Korean won, or to remit money to South Korea. Such campaign was based on developmentalist and nationalist discourse, often evoked and promoted by the national government and mass media. At the same time, accentuating the government's global strategy in overseas areas, the Kim administration re-examined the previous president *Young-Sam Kim's* foreign policies on overseas Koreans and proposed the construction of a governmental agency to network overseas Korean resources, which I conceptualize as the 'transnational nation-state apparatus'.

### 3. The Overseas Korean Foundation and discourse of trans/nationalism

Taking globalization as one of the nation's developmental 'strategies', the South Korean government began aggressively implementing foreign policies to integrate overseas resources into its national wealth. In December 1995, the '*se-gae-wba*, meaning internationalization in Korean, Promotion Committee (SPC)' of the

Young-Sam Kim Administration decided to establish the 'Overseas Koreans Policy Committee (OKPC)' as one of its subcommittees. In tandem with the SPC, the plan to establish the OKPC was a signal of the government's ambition to actively manage overseas Korean's social and economic resources. The OKPC especially emphasized that the number of overseas Koreans amounts to 6 million and their assets amount to about 20-25 percent of South Korea's 900-billion-dollar GDP. One of the committee's principal goals was to establish a governmental organization to 'manage and control' overseas Koreans and their resources (Overseas Koreans Foundation, 1998).

However, before the Young-Sam Kim Administration, the government had never been interested in the 'lives' of Koreans living outside of its national territory.<sup>3)</sup> In this sense, the establishment of the OKPC under the direct supervision of the president meant a paradigmatic change in the government's view on its overseas 'compatriots'. It reflected a transition from a nation-bounded developing economy during the Cold War era to a scope-oriented unbounded economy actively facilitating its transnational networks of global 'resources'.

In November 1996, the OKPC introduced a bill, titled as the Overseas Koreans Foundation Legislation, to the National Assembly. The legislation was to establish the Overseas Koreans Foundation (OKF) "to assist overseas Koreans to have the sense of national unity and live the exemplary (or model) life in the host country" (Overseas Koreans Policy Committee, 1996, 1). Based on this legislation, the OKF developed and implemented four broad programs (Overseas Koreans Policy Committee, 1996).

1. Programs that support the development of overseas Korean diaspora communities.
2. Programs and funds that help diaporic Koreans restore and maintain national

culture and identity.

3. DB-constructing projects which network ethnic Koreans at the global scale.
4. Projects that facilitate research projects on overseas Koreans.

The gist of the bill consisted of two principal articles. First, an 'overseas Korean' is defined as "a person of South Korean citizenship who resides in a foreign country or a person of Korean '*hyul-tong*' (meaning descent in Korean) regardless of his/her citizenship, denizenship, or the right of permanent residence" (Overseas Koreans Policy Committee, 1996, 1-2). Second, the areas of OKF programs should include (1) cooperation and exchange with overseas Koreans, (2) investigation and study of overseas Korean societies, and (3) education and information-provision for overseas Koreans (Overseas Koreans Policy Committee, 1996).

However, the Committee of National Reunification and Foreign Affairs in the National Assembly, which was in charge of examining the bill, questioned several issues in the legislation (Committee of National Reunification and Foreign Affairs, 1996). First, *Jun-Kyu Park*, an assemblyman and member of this committee, interrogated the term 'Korean *hyul-tong*' (descent), and expressed anxieties in judging some people such person both of whose parents are not all Korean '*hyul-tong*'. He also addressed such cases as Korean adoptees and descendent generations whose culture, language, and appearance are not Korean. Second, *Hung-Soo Yoo*, another member of the committee, questioned the essential nature of the legislation. She asked whether the aim of the proposed legislation was to assist overseas Koreans so as to well adapt to their hosting countries, or it was to make them remain permanently as 'Korean' and enforce them to live as a minority in host countries.

These questions disclosed that the legislation was based on what I refer to as 'transnational nationalism', an incongruent political discourse in which logical contradictions were inherently embedded. The committee's efforts to make the term '*hyul-tong*' more clear ironically proved that it is not a nationally given or biologically objective category, but a socio-culturally constructed term which is in constant change. The committee's questions also disclosed the political, social, and cultural in-betweenness in which the everyday lives of overseas Koreans were grounded.

Responding to these questions, Minister of Foreign Affairs *Jong-Ha Yu* answered to the committee that the term '*hyul-tong*' was employed to 'flexibly' set up the range in which that the OKF would operate (Committee of National Reunification and Foreign Affairs, 1996). His response explicitly shows that this proposed legislation was not to assist overseas Koreans 'who exist already there', but to enable OKF's transnational practices to mobilize overseas Koreans, 'who would be existing later only after the OKF was established', for the institution's (and national) specific ends. The minister mentioned that this legislation was a result of strong and long standing requests from overseas Korean communities who maintain quite independent activities, such as Korean churches and newspaper companies, and demand home country's support.

But, simultaneously, the minister did not explain what he meant by the 'overseas Korean communities' and who were exactly the community actors/leaders requesting the South Korean government's support (Committee of National Reunification and Foreign Affairs, 1996). More importantly, he did not mention that those communities he addressed are principally located in the US. After all this debate, with minimal revision, the bill was passed on March 27, 1997

(Law No. 5313), and the OKF was established on October 30, 1997. *Kwang-Kyu Lee*, the Chairman of OKF Board of Directors, clearly reiterates in his message the problematic discourse of transnational nationalism on which the institution is founded. According to the chairman:

Today, we stand tall as the 12th biggest trading power in the world. Inception, they call Korea a country of miracles in the 20th century. While these miracles are attributed to the capability of the Korean race, which displayed its great potential at the height of prosperity, it is also true that our fellow Koreans spread out all over the world rendered distinguished contributions. During the period of the New Community Movement of the 1960s when Korea was struggling to reconstruct itself, the foundation of rapid growth was laid down through the generous economic contributions of Koreans in Japan. Likewise, the leap to the massive industrialization in the 1970s may not have been possible in such a short period of time if not for the brains of the Koreans in the USA. Finally, the sustained rapid growth in the 1990s would not have been readily attainable without the labor support of the Koreans in China. . . . It is once again time for all Koreans at home and abroad to unite and consolidate their energies to take another great stride. If we accomplish these 'national tasks', what can stop us from leaping forward? The Overseas Koreans Foundation is committed to carrying out its assignment of helping fulfill national tasks faithfully by bringing together Koreans at home and abroad.

(Overseas Koreans Foundation, 2005)

Narrating succinctly the modern development history of South Korea, the chairperson here

addresses how the capability of the Korean 'race' created the economic 'miracle' and how overseas members of the 'race' contributed to it. His narration clearly reiterates problematic discourses of biological racism and ethnocentrism. He also shows his anachronistic nationalist/racial desire for healing the 'ugly scar' by becoming one of Western colonial powers. Also, the narration relocates the significance of diasporic subjects in the context of the 21st century, without bringing light on how the national government had instrumentally manipulated Korean emigrants in the past and how much the government had marginalized overseas Koreans by implementing discriminatory and often contemptuous policies on their diasporic societies. After all, employing the term 'Korean race' instead of 'Korean nation' or 'Korean people' explicitly reflects an OKF's institutional political strategy to essentialize, deculturalize, and deterritorialize diasporic Koreans embodying different social and cultural histories in their place of residence. Thus, the political strategy embedded in his message also aims at evoking an essential Korean collective subjectivity and subsequently demanding people's 'racial' allegiance to their home in the age of globalization.

However, Lee's astonishing political rhetoric discloses its own discursive contradictions. While Lee propagandizes that 'the 21st century is ... the period wherein *races*, rather than nations, matter', he simultaneously suggests that the Korean race must be unified and cooperate to accomplish its *national* task to leap forward. Of course, what he means by 'nation' refers to South Korea as a nation-state. It is the explicit dualism between transnational Korean racial space and national territory, which engenders the narrator's contradiction based on the essentialist conception of race and nation. His political rhetoric grounds the discourse of 'transnational nation-state' in which the irreconcilable contradiction between



race and nation is founded.<sup>4)</sup>

The discourse of transnational nationalism in the narration employs patriarchal paternalism. For example, *Byong-Hyun Kwon*, the former Chairman of the OKF Board of Directors, quoted one of French artist Marie Laurencin's poems when he strongly asserted the OKF's given duty to take care of diasporic Koreans during his address at the OKF's third conference held at San Jose in 2001<sup>5)</sup>: "More pathetic than a homeless woman is a battered woman; more pathetic than a battered woman is a dead woman; more pathetic than a dead woman is a forgotten woman." (Ministry of Planning and Budget of the Republic of Korea, 2003, 40)

By comparing overseas Korean subjects to a 'forgotten woman', he accentuated that the South Korean government should and will 'embrace' them. I suggest such metaphoric comparison reveals the gendered way in which Lee viewed diasporic Korean subjects as the women in danger of being forgotten by the home country. In this address, nation-state was conceived as a masculine, paternal subject to remember as well as protect those feminized overseas Koreans.

Transnational nationalism as a nation-state's global strategy is more explicitly represented in the "Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans" (Act No. 6015), which was announced by the *Dae-Jung Kim* government in December 1999 (Legislation and Judiciary Committee, 2000). The Act was to provide a wide range of benefits to 'ethnic' Koreans with foreign citizenship living abroad. If an ethnic Korean without South Korean citizenship files an application and is registered as an overseas Korean, he/she can not only legitimately stay in South Korea, but also enjoy the same rights as Korean citizens, including banking, investing, employment, real property transactions, doing businesses, and medical insurance coverage (Legislation and Judiciary Committee, 2000).

However, the notion of 'ethnic Koreans' in the Act does not include all Koreans outside of its national territory. The Article 2 defines the term 'overseas Korean' as 'a person prescribed by presidential decree, among those who once held the nationality of the Republic of Korea or their lineal descendants, but who now has the nationality of a foreign country.' And, the Article 3 states that such a person falls under one of the following categories:

1. A person or lineal descendant of a person who emigrated after the establishment of the Korean Government and who lost the Korean nationality; and
2. A person or lineal descendant of a person who emigrated after the establishment of the Korean Government and who was explicitly recognized as a Korean national before obtaining the nationality of a foreign country.

By distinguishing ethnic Koreans who emigrated before and after the establishment of the Republic of Korea, the Act excludes those ethnic Koreans in the former case. Many of those who emigrated before 1945 are the Koreans in China (*cho-sun-jok* in Korean) and the former Soviet Union (*ko-ryo-in* in Korean), who were forced to migrate into Manchuria by Japanese colonial policy or joined independent movement in the early twentieth century. But, those emigrated after the establishment of Korean government are Koreans in the US who are relatively well-off in comparison to Koreans in post-socialist countries. Despite recently increasing investment by South Korean companies in China, the US remains the most attractive country for individual South Koreans who are investing in real estate. The provisions, in this context, were to attract overseas Koreans' financial capital and at the same time prevent a probable massive influx of Korean Chinese labor

into the national territory.

About two years later, supported by progressive Korean activist groups working for the human rights of transnational migrant workers in South Korea, a couple of Korean Chinese residing in South Korea brought the Act to the Constitutional Court of Korea. They insisted that these provisions violate the National Constitution. The Court in November 2001 decided that the Act violated the Constitution Article 11, Section 1, which prohibits discrimination based on gender, religion or social status, and any actions constituting discrimination.

Based on the Court's judgment, the National Assembly revised and effectuated the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans in January 2004, which included overseas Koreans mostly in China who emigrated before 1945. After all, the establishment of the Overseas Koreans Foundation and benefits-bestowing legislation for overseas Koreans show a South Korean government's ambitious effort to extend its transnational scope of governance to integrate diasporic Koreans' economic resources by discursively including/excluding specific overseas Korean subjects.

#### 4. Transnational nationalist programs of the Overseas Koreans Foundation

Since its establishment in 1997, the OKF as a transnational nation-state apparatus has implemented a series of ambitious projects in accordance with its organizational goals. The organizational structure of the OKF consists of six departments. It includes:

- Economic Affairs Department (EAD)
  - Education Department (ED)
  - Cultural Affairs Department (CAD)
  - Information System Operation Department (ISOD)
- The IED is aimed primarily at promoting cultural exchange between and within Korean communities and supporting their interests. It focuses on constructing the Overseas Koreans Center planned to house various information on Korean diaspora communities. Each department has implemented separate but inter-connected programs, mainly aiming at networking overseas Korean resources centered to South Korea. The ED and the CAD concern 'helping' overseas Korean communities, second generation of Korean immigrants, and adopted Koreans by providing a variety of opportunities to learn Korean language and traditions. Such efforts are understood to discursively produce Korean subjects, create national imaginations, and ethnic solidarity. The ISOD is to construct electronic infrastructure and database to network overseas Koreans. The EAD plays the most active and critical role (Overseas Koreans Foundation, 2004).
- Among various programs that the EAD operates, the annual World Korean Business Convention has emerged as the most active and successful program since 2002. The convention is to "develop Korea into the 'Economic Hub of Northeast Asia' and facilitate information exchange among members of the global '*han-sang*, meaning 'Korean traders', Network" (Overseas Koreans Foundation, 2004, 2). The EAD operates its web-service platform, containing the database of Korean-owned businesses around the world, and provides consulting services for connecting both domestic and overseas Korean businesses. The EAD annually holds the *Han-Sang* World Business Convention, and the total number of participants grows steeply increasing

up to around five thousands. The convention was successful in attracting overseas Korean capital into South Korea, which amounted to over 22 million dollars in 2005. Major sponsors of this convention include various governmental institutions such as the Ministry of Finance and Economy, economic organizations such as the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry, economic development agencies such as the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, and public mass-media such as the Korean Broadcasting System. Even large Korean conglomerates, mostly organized in the name of the Federation of Korean Industries, financially supported the convention.

As one of the principal objectives of the convention is to 'attract' overseas Korean capital, it is not unusual that Korean Americans have a superior position to other overseas Koreans. For instance, out of thirty-six committee members for the convention, nineteen members were from the US, including the Chairs of the Federation of Korean American Grocers' Associations and the Federation of Korean American Chambers of Commerce. The convention committee is powerful, for example, in making decisions on the convention agenda, inviting guest speakers, and offering financial support to participants. While these political dimensions show that the OKF and its relation to overseas Koreans are problematic in terms of unequal power relations, they also show how hegemonic actor-networks can operate in the transnational articulation of the nation-state and diasporic Koreans.

While the EAD focuses on pulling overseas Korean resources to South Korea, other OKF departments implement various outreach programs to produce Korean subjects and generate their potential socio-economic resources. The ED has supported many Korean language schools in the US and Japan, providing scholarships for overseas Korean students, and

also invited overseas Koreans to domestic education programs. For example, considering that over 200,000 Korean children have been adopted by Americans during the past fifty years, the OKF has been providing financial support for overseas adopted Korean organizations and post-adoption service centers. According to the OKF, it especially supports programs as follows.

- Activities that promote the maintenance of overseas Korean adoptees with Korean identity, such as Korean traditional cultural programs and camps for learning about Korea.
- Sharing information with other adoptees organizations and constructing of networks.
- Programs that promote strengthening of ties with Korean diaspora and the OKF.

The ED also emphasizes 'Korean' identity and ethnic network development in choosing their beneficiaries. In order to facilitate national identity education, the ED has also held a week-long summer cultural program, which invites overseas Korean adoptees or descendents of Korean emigrants so that it could introduce them Korean society and culture. These summer programs were later connected to encourage them to participate in local Korean community organizations' activities in the US, such as the Korean American Coalition. The IED and the CAD is more focused on overseas activities. These departments have been supporting overseas Korean community organizations and their programs. For instance, in order to celebrate and support the 100th anniversary of Korean immigration to the US, they supported to organize the Centennial Committee of Korean Immigration to the US in 2002.

Furthermore, the IED has implemented a program to invite overseas Korean community leaders. This program is to discuss with the so-

called 'leaders' how the South Korean government could assist critical issues or activities in Korean diaspora community organizations. South Korean President *Moo-Hyun Roh* has attended the annual World Korean Community Leaders Convention, and praised these leaders as 'the most critical human resources for accomplishing the nation's global ambition'. However, many community leaders were Korean entrepreneurs and traders, owning transnational businesses and trading companies. Also these community leaders kept closer relationship with Korean politicians. Let alone the problematic over-representation of Korean American organizations, many of these community leaders were ungrounded wealthy business owners or locally powerful subjects.

In sum, based on the discursive contradiction between nationalism and globalism, the OKF has been operating as a transnational nation-state apparatus at a global scale, aimed at networking overseas Koreans and their resources for accomplishing the nation-state's global survival strategy. Thus, since its establishment, the organization has implemented various projects to contribute to the overall South Korean economy but also facilitate socio-economic networks among overseas diasporic communities. In this context, the US overseas Korean community has emerged as one of the most strategically critical places for South Korean government.

## 5. Conclusion

Without development there is no nation-state, not because it brings economic and social progress in a specific nation-state, but because it creates people's collective desire for nationalism, appropriates the desire for mobilizing development resources, and institutionalizes state

apparatus in its geographic territory. Hence, the historical geography of development is the historical geography of the nation-state. Yet, in the first section of this paper, I highlighted that people and space are not passively awaiting for the institutional power of the national government. Rather, I suggested that geographic properties in which people and space are located are significant in bringing out variations and changes in the institutionalization of development discourse.

By drawing on transnational nationalism in an age of globalization, I particularly focused on analyzing development discourse and its relation to the nation-state in the case of South Korea. Since its radical deployment of modernization projects, South Korean nationalism was one of the fundamental political ideologies on which the authoritarian government strengthened its development discourse and modernization projects. By demanding sacrifice, national allegiance, and diligence from people, the national government has implemented massive development projects from 1960s to 1980s. In such process, the nation-state not only equipped the fundamental structure of national capital accumulation, but also elevated the scope and scale of social and geographic governmentality in its territory.

Since the 1997 financial crisis, the South Korean government once again evoked strong nationalism to restore its growth-oriented developmentalist national economy. This time was, yet, different from the previous forms of nationalism, in the sense that the discourse of nationalism is not confined in its national territory but aims at incorporating overseas Korean diaspora. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, international capital transfer between South Korean and foreign countries had been maintaining deficit in capital transfer balance. At the same time, the higher level of risks and

uncertainties in domestic economy led foreign direct and indirect investment to get out of the national economy.

In this context, the foundation of the OKF signifies the emergence of transnational nation-state, which reterritorializes its 'deterritorialized' national territory beyond its geographic, physical limits. The institution has three areas of transnational projects: the cooperation and exchange with overseas Koreans, the investigation of overseas Korean societies, and the educational support for overseas Koreans. The objectives of these programs are variant, but fundamentally converge on producing diaspora Koreans into Korean compatriots, appropriating their social, cultural, economic resources into the territorial national economy of the mother land. Although the OKF claims that it networks overseas Koreans for their own social, economic, and cultural interests, however, the development discourse that grounds the legal foundation and objectives of the institution reveals that such networking does not mean decentralized grass-root connections but emphasizes its grounding on and contribution to the nation-state.

**Acknowledgement:** I appreciate three anonymous reviewers for giving thoughtful comments and detailed suggestions.

### Notes

1) Sometimes entitled as 'post-development studies', these researches challenge naturalized, universalized, and professionalized notion of 'development'. Post-development studies contribute to disillusion state-led, large-scale, construction-oriented development projects, and instead highlight alternative, grass-root forms of development in conjunction with NGOs and local communities (see, for instance, Esteva and Prakash, 1997;

1998).

- 2) In different aspect, Watts (2000, 170-1, emphasis added) insists that "conducting ethnographies of development institutions ... is singularly helpful in understanding how particular places and problems are constructed and legitimated by experts and managers. But *a singular focus on the discursive aspects of knowledge/power, on popular senses of empowerment and resistance, and on cultural diversity and differences carries its own freight ...* Some of these new critical approaches to development ironically have similarities with earlier forms of radical development thinking ... *a perspective largely discredited on the grounds of its simplistic theory of power and crude sense of political economy.*"
- 3) During the 1970s and 1980s one of the main focuses of South Korea's foreign and migration policies had been to facilitate people's emigration to Latin America, Middle East, Europe and the US so that the country could lower unemployment rates and secure more foreign currencies in its national territory.
- 4) The contradiction is resolved by putting nation in the first place, and urging overseas Korean subjects to dedicate to their 'mother' land.
- 5) Kwon was recognized by the national government of South Korea as one of the seventeen 'change leaders' who led the government's organizational innovations in 2002.

### References

- Anderson, B., 1991, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso.
- Bank of Korea, 2006, *Statistics on International Capital Remittance*, Economic Statistics System.
- Choi, B., 2001, Financial reform in Korea, in Cho, L. J. (ed.), *Restructuring the National Economy*, Seoul, Korea Development Institute, 237-268.
- Choi, B. D., 2007, Beyond developmentalism and neoliberalism: development process and alternative visions for Korean geography, *Journal of the Korean Geographical Society*, 42(2), 218-242.
- Committee of National Reunification and Foreign Affairs,

- 1996, *Record of the Proceedings of the Overseas Koreans Foundation Legislation*, National Assembly of Korea.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F., 1983, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F., 1991, *What is Philosophy?*, Verson, London.
- Escobar, A., 1995, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Esteve, G., 1987, Regenerating people's space, in Mendlovitz, S. and Walker, R. (eds.), *Towards a Just World Peace*, Butterworths, London, 271-298.
- Esteve, G. and Prakash, M., 1997, *Hope at the Margins : Beyond Human Rights and Development*, St. Martin's Press, New York.
- Esteve, G. and Prakash, M., 1998, *Grassroots Post-modernism?: Remaking the Soil of Cultures*, Zed Books, New Jersey.
- Export-Import Bank of Korea, 2007, *Annual Statistics on Investment Inflow/Outflow of Korea*.
- Ferguson, J., 1990, *The Anti-Politics Machine: "Development", Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- Jessop, B., 1999, Globalization and the national state, in Aronowitz, S. and Bratsis, P. (eds.), *Rethinking the State: Miliband, Poulantzas, and State Theory*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.
- Jin, J. H., 2004, *The Role of Symbolic Landscape in the Construction of National Identity in Modern Korea*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles.
- Kim, T., 2004, Economy size and economic structure of Korean-American society, *Korean Journal of Regional Development and Research*, 36(1), 1-22.
- Lee, Y. G., 2007, A study on the characteristics of socio-cultural networks of female marriage migrant: the case of Boeun and Yangpyeong, *Journal of the Korean Urban Geographical Society*, 10(2), 35-51.
- Lee, Y. M. and Park, K., 2008, Negotiating hybridity: transnational reconstruction of migrant subjectivity in Koreatown, Los Angeles, *Journal of Cultural Geography*, 25(3), 245-262.
- Lee, Y. M. and You, H. Y., 2008, A study on transnational networks of Korean educational migration as symbolic capital, *Journal of the Korean Urban Geographical Society*, 11(2), 75-89.
- Legislation and Judiciary Committee, 2000, *Investigation Report of the Act on the Immigration and Legal Status of Overseas Koreans*, National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, Seoul.
- Ministry of Planning and Budget of the Republic of Korea, 2003, *The Change Leader*, Seoul.
- Overseas Koreans Foundation, 1996, 1998, *Establishment of the Overseas Koreans Foundation*.
- Overseas Koreans Foundation, 2002, 2004, 2005, *Han-Sang World Business Convention Brochure: Global Koreans Network*, Overseas Koreans Foundation.
- Overseas Koreans Foundation, 2005, 2006, *Annals of the Overseas Koreans Foundation*.
- Overseas Koreans Foundation, 2005, *Introduction to the Overseas Koreans Foundation: Goals and Prospects*.
- Overseas Koreans Policy Committee, 1996, *Report on the Establishment of the Ministry of Overseas Koreans Affairs*, Se-gae-wha Promotion Committee of Korea.
- Poulantzas, N., 1978, *State, Power, Socialism*, Verso, London.
- Sayer, A., 1985, The difference that space makes, in Gregory, D. and Urry, J. (eds.), *Social Relations and Spatial Structures*, Macmillan, New York, 49-66.
- Shin, J. S., Chang, H. J., and Belsey, K., 2002, *Restructuring 'Korea Inc.': Financial Crisis, Corporate Reform, and Institutional Transition*, Routledge, London.
- Urry, J., 1985, Social relations, space and time, in Gregory, D. and Urry, J. (eds.), *Social Relations and Spatial Structures*, Macmillan, New York, 20-48.
- Watts, M., 2000, Development, in Johnston, R., Gregory, D., Pratt, G., and Watts, M. (eds.), *The*

Kyonghwan Park

*Dictionary of Human Geography: 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*,  
Blackwell, Oxford, 166-173.

교신: 박경환, 500-757, 광주광역시 북구 용봉로 77 전남대학교  
사범대학 지리교육과 (이메일: kpark3@gmail.com, 전  
화: 062-530-2385)

Correspondence: Kyonghwan Park, Department of  
Geography Education, Chonnam National University,  
77 Yongbong Rd., Gwangju 500-757, Republic of  
Korea (e-mail: kpark3@gmail.com, phone: +82-62-  
530-2385)

*Received May 11, 2009*

*Revised May 20, 2009*

*Accepted May 25, 2009*