Populism out of Globalization:
Drifting Civil Society in South Korea

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Abstract   Today we are witnessing the decline of democracy and the resurgence of authoritarianism worldwide. Undoubtedly, democracy is in retreat, threatening to undermine political rights and civil liberties. I would like to point out two things of importance. First, while citizens throw doubt on electoral votes, they tend to rely on increasing activism on the streets and to show growing resentment online. This politics of distrust endangers representative democracy characterized by participation and contestation. Second, populism makes a comeback to threaten party politics while at the same time widening political and ideological cleavages. From Italy through Turkey to Brazil, populist parties have gained increasing power by resorting to either exclusionary nativism or inclusionary egalitarianism. This paper argues that neoliberal globalization has brought in sovereignty crisis in terms of making national policies on migration, refugees, inequality, polarization, job losses, and so on. I claim that the rise of populism manifests the weakness of today's democratic representation system.

However, populism is dictated by rhetoric and mobilization to remain in power. Propaganda and agitation often outweigh debates and participation. Populist movements or parties try to mobilize mass support to directly link to the people. I examine populist tendencies in South

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Korea that mobilize supporters through new social media characterized by fake news, misinformation, and biased broadcasting. South Korea's civil society, that had expanded its space during candlelight protests in 2016 and 2017, has formed two antagonistic political camps, the pro-Moon group and anti-Moon group. It should be emphasized that civic empowerment would be the best possible solution to save democratic values and institutions in the face of populist challenges. In the midst of antagonistic conflicts between two opposing political camps, civil society has become too divided to play a part in empowering citizens. The future of Korean democracy would be dependent upon whether a strong and sound civil society can be revitalized for civic empowerment. I suggest that civil dialogues between two antagonistic political camps will play a key role.

> *"To globalize democracy while at the same time democratizing globalization"*
> *David Held*

Introduction

Today we are witnessing the decline of democracy and the resurgence of authoritarianism worldwide. Although classic coups d'etat, mass insurrection, and election rigging have declined in frequency, democracy has been in a global decline for the last two decades (Bermeo, 2016; Diamond, 2015). Importantly enough, democracy is gradually toppled by stealth (Przeworski, 2019). The democratic reversals have negatively affected freedom of expression, robustness of civil society, and the rule of law due to state surveillance, manipulation of social media, and curbs on personal autonomy (Puddington, 2015). This is close to what scholars have labeled 'democratic recession', 'democratic backsliding', or 'democratic deconsolidation'.

In their evaluation paper for Freedom House survey, Repucci and Slipowitz (2021: 45) have pointed out that "as a lethal pandemic, economic and physical insecurity, and violent conflict ravaged the world in 2020, democracy's defenders sustained heavy new losses in their struggle against authoritarian foes." Over the past decade, democracy has moved from crisis to retreat and not only in developed but in developing countries; people have put more trust in the executive than in the legislature, in hopes that a strong leader can solve all ills. We can see the emergence of electoral autocracy leading to populism.

In the wake of democratic retreat, I contend that populists gain power not only in advanced but in new democracies. Citizens who have distrust in a representative system are increasingly open to populist appeals to seek an alternative system of government. Populism is in comeback to threaten democratic norms and institutions to the detriment of existing center-right or center-left party politics. In developing democracies in Latin America and Asia, as well as in established democracies in Europe and the United States, populism has become a significant feature of modern politics both in far-left and far-right directions. The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic

in 2020 has intensified such populist trends in the pretense of nationalistic rhetoric.

South Korea (hereafter called Korea) provides an interesting case. Although it has not faced a democratic retreat, between 2013 and 2019, I would like to point out that its civil liberties rating has fallen from a rating of 1 in political rights to a rating of 2, and continues to be locked in that rating (Chu, Huang. Lagos, and Mattes, 2020: 141). According to the Economist Intelligence Unit (2021), Korea's democracy has moved from a flawed to a full democracy where fair election on the basis of a multi-party system works well but the rule of law and the separation of legal, administrative, and judicial powers are still restrained to no small degree. Although Korea has expanded the space of civil society to keep democracy alive since a year-long candlelight protest in 2016 and 2017, the horizontal accountability necessary between the executive, legislature, and judiciary as well as the vertical accountability of government for civil society have not improved in a significant way. In the name of welfare provision, I would like to point out that populist trends have steadily increased to consolidate political support from the populace regardless of whether the government remained conservative or liberal. It is necessary to keep watching over in what ways Korean democracy will change in near future.

The present paper attempts to explore the relationship among globalization, democracy, and populism through a case study of Korea. It is assumed in this paper that the logic of globalization and restructuring have shaped in a significant way the present status of democracy and populist trends in Korea. What follows is, first, the rise of populism in the contemporary world. Then, I will discuss the impacts of globalization and restructuring on the functioning of democracy and the rise of populism in Korea. Finally, I will contend that civic empowerment would be the best solution to get out of the trap of populism on the basis of a Korean case study.

Populism Goes Global

Today the specter of populism hangs around the globe. Populism has become a *Zeitgeist* in a sense (Mudde, 2004). There has appeared even a new political system called populacracy (Fieschi, 2019). Mouffe (2018) has contended that we are living in a 'populist moment'[1] where the central axis of conflict will be between right-wing populism and left-wing populism. Preferring the latter to the former, and in order to make use of the populist moment, she advocates for a construct of 'people' for the sake of equality and social justice. To add, she qualifies right-wing populist parties as extreme-right neofascist ones. She further contends that left-wing populist parties should combat the xenophobic policies promoted by right-wing

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[1] According to her (Mouffe, 2018: 11-12), "This populist moment signals the crisis of the neoliberal hegemonic formation that was progressively implemented in Western Europe through the 1980s. This neoliberal hegemonic formation replaced the social-democratic Keynesian welfare state that, in the thirty years after the end of the Second World War, provided the principal socioeconomic model in the democratic countries in Western Europe. The core of this new hegemonic formation is constituted by a set of political-economic practices aimed at imposing the rule of the market - deregulation, privatization, fiscal austerity - and limiting the role of the state to the protection of private property rights, free markets and free trade. Neoliberalism is the term currently used to refer to this new hegemonic formation which, far from being limited to the economic domain, also connotes a whole conception of society and of the individual grounded on a philosophy of possessive individualism."

populist ones. Since social democracy is succumbed to a neoliberal logic of globalization, it is on the shoulder of center-left populist parties to federate all democratic struggles towards a fully liberated society.

Figure 1: Vote Share of Populist Parties, 2000-2019
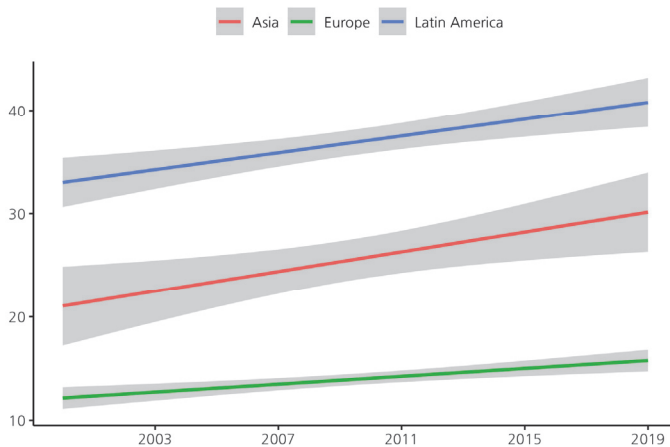
Source: Grzymala-Busse, Anna and McFaul, Michael. Global Populisms Project, Stanford University. 2020. "Votes for Populists" database, https://fsi.stanford.edu/global-populisms/content/vote-populists

Fig. 1 Rise of Populist Parties in Europe, Asia, and Latin America

Populist parties have risen in many European countries in the form of far-right or far-left extremism mostly around the issue dealing with immigrants and religious minorities. <Figure 1> reveals that populist appearance is strongest in Latin America, followed by Asia and Europe. In terms of vote share of populist parties, Europe is located between Latin America and Asia.

In case of Europe, populist parties gained their average voter support of about 20% in 2020. As shown in <Figure 2>, Poland, Hungary, Italy, Greece, and Turkey have had governments formed by populist parties. Even a populist coalition government between right- and left- wing parties existed in Italy. Syriza in Greece and Podemos in Spain are closer to left-wing populism, while FN in France and the FPO in Austria represent right-wing populism.

Established democracies have faced trouble due to aggravating economic anxiety, political frustration, and cultural unease, and developing democracies have confronted worsening political cleavages amid increasing economic inequality and social disparity. Trumpism provides a good case of populism in an established democracy. Trump mobilized supporters via Facebook, supports who have felt deprived of vested economic, political and cultural interests in the process of globalization. This led to a violent occupation of the U. S. Capitol Hill where Congress held a meeting to certify the presidential election results. Americans have displayed empathy across party lines in terms of white supremacy and racial bigotry. Chavezism also offers a typical case of populism in a developing democracy. Chavez consolidated power on a socialist platform by distributing petromoney to the lower class and endorsing nationalization of private companies. His populism was characterized by political repression, electoral manipulation, and usurpation
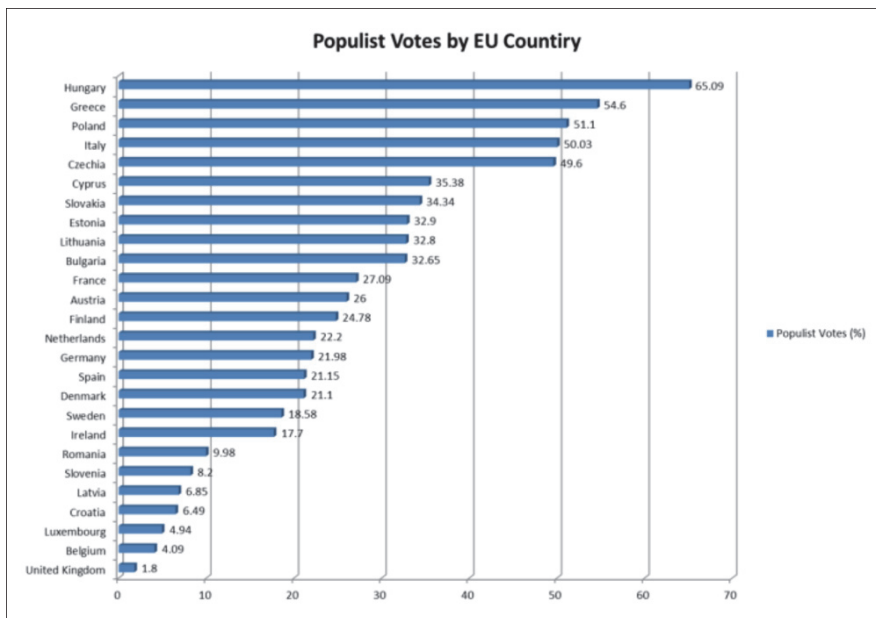
Source: https://www.statista.com/statistics/883893/populism-in-europe/

Fig. 2 The Rise of Populist Parties in Europe

of judiciary. Today, Venezuela experiences hyperinflation, extreme poverty, shortage of basic goods such as food, drinking water and gasoline. About 5 million people, which is about 17% of the country's population, have escaped the country.

There are two things of importance here. First, while citizens carry great doubts regarding electoral votes, there are increasing activism on the streets and growing resentment online. This politics of distrust endangers democracy characterized by participation and contestation. Second, political parties do not play a role as gatekeepers anymore. It is noteworthy to see that elected leaders by the people tend to discard democratic norms and institutions. Mutual toleration and institutional forbearance are gone. Leaders come to power not by coups, rebel insurgency or mass uprising. In this sense, democracies are increasingly deteriorating via power grabs that have a legal facade in slow and incremental process (Frantz and Wright, 2019: 8).

We can see the advent of populist leaders such as Russia's Putin, China's Xi Jinping, Japan's Abe, Turkey's Erdoğan, America's Trump, the Philippines' Duterte, Venezuela's Chavez and Maduro, Brazil's Bolsonaro, and so on. They are worthy of the titles Tsars, Emperors, Shoguns, Sultans, Caudillos, and so on. These populist leaders manifest strong leadership, resulting in kind of populism coupled with authoritarianism. They display what can be understood as a personalist dictatorship (Frantz and Wright, 2019: 9).

In the throes of globalization, citizens feel discomfort and threat that provide soils for the surge of authoritarian populists emphasizing nativist nationalism, that is, "the nation first." The rise of populism is due to a couple of mixed factors. In developing democracies, increasing economic inequality and social disparity are mostly responsible for populist rising: however, in established democracies, it is the cultural unease against ongoing social change towards more

egalitarianism regarding gender, racial and generational equality, and more openness to diversity and LGBTQ rights. It is important to emphasize that regardless of established and developing democracies, citizens are thirsty of participation and representation in the political process. Populist followers in established democracies are those who can be identified as older, whiter, more rural, and less well educated, while populist supporters in developing democracies are those who are represented by poorer and uneducated in urban and rural areas, including even more educated and the young (Gibson, 2020).

Common to the rise of populism is that citizens nowadays tend to view globalization as more of a threat than as an opportunity. In the process of globalization, populist appeals are closely associated with weakening national policy platform. In particular, neoliberal globalization has pushed too far internationalization of finance, international labor migration, and speculative movement of capital. It is well known by now that globalization has created sovereignty crisis in making social and economic policies on trade pacts, immigrants, refugees, polarization, job losses, and so on. Conventional center-left and center-right political parties are unable to properly deal with representing such divided class and ethnic interests.

In Europe, in addition to traditional class conflict along the issue of redistribution policy of welfare state, new social cleavages have emerged between unskilled labor and immigrant workers regarding securing of jobs. Jobs created in the social service sector in the aftermath of post-industrialization have also formed the new middle class who are mostly women. The existing policy platforms of center-left parties that want more redistribution and increasing taxes, and of center-right parties that emphasize market competition and lowering taxes cannot properly deal with the merging issues of multi-culturalism, gender equality, generational rupture, foreign workers, and so on. Populists seek to represent a portion of those fragmented interests by organizing movements or parties, as exemplified in some European and Latin American countries.

According to Mouffe (2018: 2, 22, 68), post-democracy refers to the malfunctioning of democracy. Both old and new democracies are susceptible to the subversion of democracy by illiberal governments. In this sense, populist moment provides an opportunity for the radicalization of democracy. Contrary to right-wing populism, Mouffe hopes that left-wing populism could lead to the construction of 'people' that can reformulate social order. Criticizing 'class essentialism', she contends that we have to understand the multiplicity of struggles against different forms of domination. The elimination of the state is not assumed anymore. Left-wing populism will cure the contradiction of modern politics where the elites replace citizens in the form of oligarchy.

I think that democracy's renewed fragility lies in the fact that in the process of neoliberal globalization, restructuring tends to exacerbate socio-economic base of democracy, namely high unemployment, the shrinking middle class, the disharmony between freedom and equality, and impairing of rule of law. In what follows, a new theoretical framework and empirical findings are discussed in terms of the relationship between globalization, democracy, and populism.

Globalization and Anti-Globalization:

Alt-Globalization

Globalization refers to a process of transformation where the world becomes integrated into a single unit beyond national borders. It has gradually evolved on different dimensions, that is, from internationalization to multinationalization to transnationalization to globalization (Borrego, 1999: 185). It inevitably results in the meltdown of relative autonomy in nation-state as a sovereignty. As Kennedy (1993) clearly mentions, nations come under the pressure of relocation of authority, upward at the global level and downward at the local level.

In the process of globalization, capital, labor, goods, knowledge, and information are exchanged beyond national boundaries. This fosters cross-border relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural sectors. From an economic standpoint, globalization can expand international trade and production while facilitating capital flow. In politics, it increases cooperation and conflict among national governments, international organizations, and NGOs. From a social angle, it promotes the growth of international migration and travel as well as the number of refugees and foreign workers. In a cultural aspect, it encourages the emergence of a global consciousness and the compression of the world (Robertson, 1993).

Today globalization provides us more threats than opportunities. Over the last couple of decades, threats coming from deepening inequality and disparity on a world scale have gradually outweighed opportunities of the compression of world with global consciousness. As shown in < Figure 3 >, between 1980 and 2016, top 10% captured 27% of total growth, while bottom 50% gained only 12%. The fact that the increased income gap between the top 10% and bottom 50% means that the middle class has become thin.
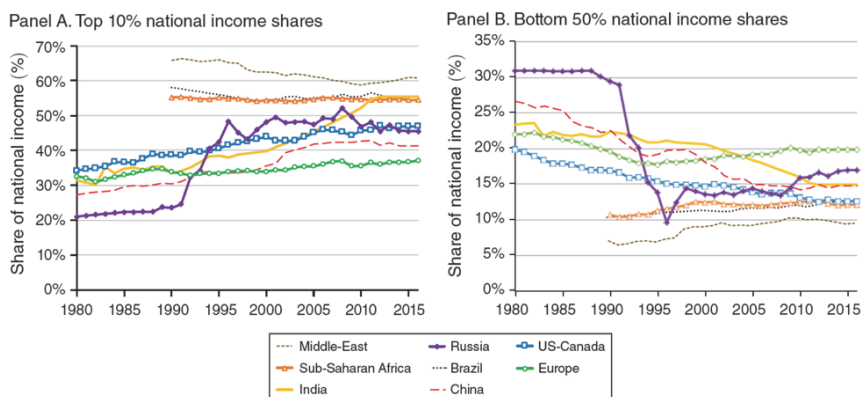
Source: Alvaredo, Facundo, Lucas Chancel, Thomas Piketty, Emmanuel Saez, and Gabriel Zucman. 2018. "The Elephant Curve of Global Inequality and Growth." *AEA Papers and Proceedings* 108, p. 104.

Fig. 3 Top 10% and Bottom 50% Income Shares Across the World, 1980-2016

<Figure 4> also shows that income distribution is relatively fair in Europe, whereas not so much in Latin America. Asia can be located between Europe and Latin America in terms of income share. North America's performance is better than Asia but worse than Europe.
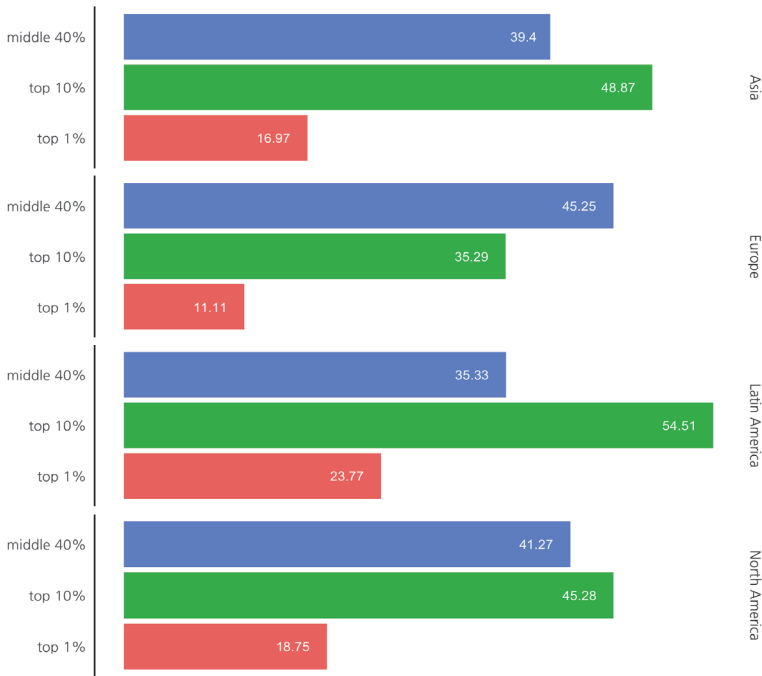
Source: UNU-WIDER, World Income Inequality Database (WIID)

Fig. 4

Globalization is based on the neoliberal assumption that free market economy is the key objective along with a minimal state. Free market could remove the autonomy of a state where unlimited competition leads to the survival of the fittest. Neoliberalism has led globalization to weaken national economies through the establishment of transnational network of production, trade, and finance (Held and McGrew, 2007). In this process of globalization, the grandiose ideal of a global village has become the awful reality of a 'global pillage'. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has had an unintended but inevitable consequence of prohibiting mobility and contacts, and contraction of global value chains in the process of globalization. Although full democracies had increased, authoritarian regimes had expanded: there is certainly rollback of democracy worldwide (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2021). <Table 1> summarizes the ups and downs of democracy between 2016 and 2020 in terms of full, flawed, hybrid to authoritarian form. In today's world, there is a small number of countries that enjoy full democracy. Globalization tends to disintegrate rather than integrate the world according to the weakened but diverged interests of nation, state, race, ethnicity, and religion. It no more plays a centripetal role, as disintegrative de-globalization and integrative re-globalization forces are in conflict.

Table 1 Global Democracy

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Full democracies	No. of countries	19	19	20	22	23
	% of countries	11.4	11.4	12.0	13.2	13.8
	% of world population	4.5	4.5	4.5	5.7	8.4
Flawed democracies	No. of countries	57	57	55	54	52
	% of countries	34.1	34.1	32.9	32.3	31.1
	% of world population	44.8	44.8	43.2	42.7	41.0
Hybrid regimes	No. of countries	40	39	39	37	35
	% of countries	24.0	23.4	23.4	22.2	21.0
	% of world population	18.0	16.7	16.7	16.0	15.0
Authoritarian regimes	No. of countries	51	52	53	54	57
	% of countries	30.5	31.1	31.7	32.3	34.1
	% of world population	32.7	34.0	35.6	35.6	35.6

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, <Democracy Index> 2016-2020.

It is against this backdrop that anti-globalization has emerged to negate existing globalization. Anti-globalization pursues a break-away from the existing capitalist economic system. Recently, however, 'alt-globalization' has emerged as part of the efforts to address both the bright and dark sides of globalization. Supporters believe that globalization can expand global wealth through free trade and transaction, thereby leading developing nations to shake off the yoke of backwardness. However, inequality becomes pervasive among individuals, groups, sectors, and classes at both interstate and domestic levels. Opponents criticize that globalization led by transitional capital creates a "two nation" of 20 to 80 between the poor and the rich. 'Occupy Wall Street' would be a good example of such polarization. Departing from a simple refutation of globalization, some raise the necessity of hindering global expansion of imperialism as a fundamental source of globalization, while others insist that globalization should be controlled through a regional enhancement of economic and social rights or the collective acquisition of property rights.[2] Followers of alt- globalization do not emphatically deny globalization itself, but they argue against economic inconsistencies inherent in globalization. They highlight the revitalization of civil society on grass roots and government's proper intervention to resolve these inconsistencies under the banner of humanistic globalization (Evans, 2012).

Globalization can be seen both as a form of domination and as a spur to resistance. In response to "globalization-from-above" dominated by transnational actors such as international economic institutions and TNCs, "globalization-from-below" has emerged to reclaim the power that transnational actors have usurped. Figuratively speaking, globalization is becoming "a brakeless train wreaking havoc" that should be checked by a new set of rules (Mittelman, 2000:

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[2] Among opponents of globalization, the former group may fall into the category of the reversal of globalization - rolling back globalization, while the latter group may belong to another category of the reversal of globalization - global backlash.

235). Globalization-from-below finds its best hope for success in the development of what may be termed 'global consciousness', with an advent of international civil society thanks to the growing activities of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) (Falk, 1993; Boli & Thomas, 1999). But INGOs, unfortunately, are not strong enough to reverse the disruptive trends of globalization and their global impact is weakened even further by the fact that social movements are restrained by the web of national, social, political, and economic ties they are enmeshed in (Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

Restructuring and Democracy

Globalization requires restructuring in accordance with free market ideals. Such restructuring is based on a neoliberal ideology which insists on liberalization, privatization, and deregulation. Korea, in fact, has been forced to open up its economy more and more in adjusting itself to global standards. It should be mentioned that this economic restructuring has entailed to a significant degree social realignment and political change. Due to restructuring in response to the demands of globalization, Korea has gradually experienced growing social conflicts and widening political cleavages. Of particular importance here is that such globalization and restructuring have had a tremendous impact on the functioning of democracy in Korea, since increased social conflicts and widening political cleavages have hindered the full blossoming of democracy.

Democracy, needless to say, cannot grow under broken social cohesion and shallow political participation. Korea is well known for its transition to and consolidation of democracy since the early 1990s. However, democracy has not been fully institutionalized in that inclusion and contestation have not led to representation and accountability.[3]

Although a classic conflict between democracy and capitalism is much debated in the existing literature (cf. de Schweinitz, 1964; Lipset, 1959; O'Donnell, 1979; Hirschman, 1971; Kurth, 1979; Halperin, 1997), no systematic attempt has been made to link democracy with restructuring. In many developing countries, globalization has very mixed results in terms of democratic achievement and economic progress (e.g., Haggard, 2000; Wade, 1990; Lele & Ofori-Yeboah, 1996; Smith, Acuna, & Gamarra, 1994; Tardanico & Larin, 1997; Smith & Korzeniewicz, 1997). It is widely recognized that globalization generates both international and domestic disparities in which there is a minority of winners and a majority of losers. Among the (former) Third World countries, there are not many that have benefited from globalization. Except for a few countries, consolidation has not been able to complete the transition from authoritarianism in the midst of growing inequality and disparity. Globalization has brought about the expansion of democratic ideals, without the institutionalization of democratic practices. What it really promotes is a type of democracy that allows for the free flows of capital, goods and services across borders to generate accumulation on a world scale. It also replaces class politics with identity politics, resulting in more diverse space for political struggles (Wood, 1997). Democracy functions only in a procedural manner, without enlarging social and economic citizenship. Even economic progress is often emasculated because of increasing social conflicts

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[3] Dahl (1998) emphasizes inclusion and contestation as key elements of democracy. To this, I add representation and accountability.

and political struggles. These social conflicts and political struggles over the long run are detrimental to the sustainability of democracy. In Held's view,

> "Liberal, representative, democracy, as a model of democracy, made perfect sense in the age of state-formation; in an age in which 'national communities' of fate were being forged, alongside the centralization of political decision-making in newly bounded communities⋯. But today, this is far from the sole political formation of our time⋯. globalization has reshaped our world⋯. The model of liberal, representative democracy is a democracy for silos, for nation-states—and not for a world of routinized interconnectedness and externalities that do not recognize boundaries" (Held, 2019: 125-126).

Undoubtedly, globalization is oriented to the integration of the capitalist world system that is promoted worldwide by restructuring. Restructuring refers to structural reform aimed at a comprehensive overhaul of the institutional framework of an economy.[4] Its standard form, recommended by the IMF and the World Bank, is a set of structural adjustment programs.[5] These structural adjustment programs can be divided into those calling for one or two years of short-run stabilization (a reduction of aggregate demand through macroeconomic management such as devaluing currency, slowing down inflation, reducing balance-of-payment deficits) and those calling for three to five years of medium-term structural change (encouraging earnings or savings through trade liberalization, price deregulation, and tax reform) (Nelson, 1990: 3-4). It should be noted that neoliberal restructuring is an operational set of policies to enhance the proper working of globalization. Indeed, the IMF's neoliberal structural adjustment packages are designed to seek close integration of an economy of a developing country into the capitalist world system through trade liberalization and the removal of barriers to the international flow of capital, goods, and services, through an extended role for the market combined with the reduced role of the state. It is in this context that we can see a direct relationship between democracy and restructuring. While free markets and liberal democracy taken together are considered the best option for developing countries, the experience these countries have had with development reveals that neoliberal restructuring has brought about a contradiction between the logic of democratization geared to increased participation and distribution, on the one hand, and the free market rationale of competition and efficiency, on the other. Even worse is that neoliberal market-oriented restructuring does not necessarily generate conditions for economic growth, which is indispensable for providing a minimum social safety-net, resulting in continuing resistance from various social classes and groups. Technocrats in particular favor "guided democracy from above" for the effective implementation of restructuring favorable to international investors, whereas the popular sector wants "participatory democracy from the below" for the representation of their interests in the making of national policy (Gamarra, 1994: 2-3; Pereira, Maravall, & Przeworski, 1994: 182).

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[4] Interestingly enough, structural reform was a term used by the 1960s left-groups who advocated redistribution of income, land, salary reduction, and cuts in public spending for projects which did not directly benefit the market (Veltmeyer, Petras, & Vieux 1997: 93-94).

[5] Theoretical and empirical studies abound on structural adjustment programs. Please refer to Kahler, 1986, 1990; Nelson, 1989, 1990; Haggard & Kaufman, 1992; Williamson, 1990, 1994.

In Korea, globalization emerged as a primary national goal of the Kim Young Sam regime (February 1993 - February 1998), the first civilian government since the early 1960s (see Lim, 2009: 144-148). Nowhere else can such an attempt be matched with an explicit government policy. After coming into power, President Kim Young Sam articulated the bold idea of constructing a "New Korea" to take care of the so-called "Korean Diseases" inherited from the authoritarianism of the past. His globalization drive was a product of this New Korea policy. For President Kim, *segyehwa* signified a new vision of Korea for the 21st century, with an upgraded status and role in the international hierarchy of nations. It was, in fact, a self-claimed hallmark for his regime. In the name of *segyehwa*, President Kim launched a series of reforms in almost every area: the military, politics, the economy, finance, labor, education, law, welfare, and so on. He must have thought that *saegyehwa* was a panacea to cure all the irregularities and malpractices of the past. In order to achieve such a thoroughgoing reform, he made use of a top-down approach that was not effective in healing mistaken policies and wrong practices. Without recognizing the potential dangers inherent in globalization, he approached globalization as a viable national development strategy.

Not surprisingly, President Kim Young Sam's *saegyewha* drive turned out to be a dismal failure. As a Korean American scholar aptly commented (Kim, 2000: 3), "the *saegyewha* drive started with a bang but ended with a whimper." What President Kim envisaged as a mark of first-class country was to become a member of OECD. Yet Korea was not able to anticipate profound changes in the rules of the game in international political economy, much less prepare for them. The national development strategy of *segyehwa* was a rosy picture on the drawing board that was rich with rhetoric but poor in substance. Kim Young Sam's rosy picture of an advanced nation turned into the humiliating degradation of the country going through restructuring under the IMF's supervision.

The Kim Young Sam regime was apparently aware of the danger that globalization could weaken national sovereignty in the making of industrial and financial policies. In reality, he did not hesitate to push financial liberalization and capital market opening, along with a series of deregulations for international capital flows. In hindsight, it appeared that the regime was keen enough to prepare a balance sheet of the advantages and disadvantages of external opening in an era of globalization. Without any thoughtful safeguards for national economy, however, *segyehwa* drive paved the way for the financial meltdown in 1997. At the end of his single five-year presidency, President Kim was put into a position to ask for a $58 billion emergency bail-out from the IMF[6] to protect against national default, recorded as the largest rescue package in its history.

The next civilian administration, the Kim Dae Jung regime (February 1998 - February 2003) from its inception, faced the urgent task of coping with the economic crisis which it had inherited from the previous government. When President Kim took office, the country was on the brink of default, with a shortage of foreign reserves and the overall economy in serious trouble. His solution to the economic crisis was to follow, without any reservation, the

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[6] The IMF initially demanded government budget cuts, higher interest rates, and reduced growth demands that were later withdrawn. The basic rescue package included termination of bank loans to financially distressed firms, shutdown of bankrupt financial institutions, accelerated liberalization of trade and investment, introduction of a flexible labor market, and improvement in transparency and the debt-equity ratio in the corporate sector.

neoliberal reforms pushed by the IMF. President Kim became an outspoken champion of the IMF for developing countries, retreating from his original stance in which he was very critical of the IMF policies. He even pushed globalization a step further to propose "universal globalism" through "freedom, human rights, justice, peace and equity" for the whole world.

President Kim Dae Jung went on take the position that in today's world there existed no such thing as national economies, GNP, and national enterprises. He no longer became a harsh critic of foreign loans and investments or saw them as harming the nation during the authoritarian developmental state era. Even though he identified one cause of the economic crisis as Kim Young Sam's misleading *segyehwa* drive, he intensified globalization to accommodate the IMF's neoliberal prescription of liberalization, privatization, and deregulation. He became a vocal advocate of the neoliberal free market ideology.

The so-called "simultaneous development of democracy and a market economy" has been a self-styled trademark of President Kim Dae Jung.[7] It is not clear, however, how he thought he could deal with the inherent conflicts between the democratic ideal of equality and the market mechanism of competition. This golden rule of his was clear evidence that, for him, that rhetoric overshadowed substance. In fact, his vision of "a mass-participatory economy" is void of specific policy tools needed to achieve growth, efficacy, equity, and welfare at the same time.[8] The internal disparity and external dependence associated with globalization are ignored in his vision of democracy and market economy as two wheels of the same cart.

The Kim Dae Jung regime's restructuring is characterized as more of a crisis management than of systematic overhaul. In restructuring, short-term stabilization had outweighed long-term structural change. The country had attempted to achieve structural adjustment in a relatively short period of time, with the audacious goal of achieving growth and distribution simultaneously. Accordingly, the restructuring was geared more to revising macroeconomic coordination than to initiating an overall rebuilding of the institutional basis of the inefficient economy itself.

In Korea, Kim Young Sam's mistaken *saegyehwa* drive was followed by wholesale neoliberal reforms during the Kim Dae Jung regime. The neoliberal, market-oriented reforms consisted of orthodox structural adjustment programs aimed at liberalization, privatization, and deregulation, with an emphasis on financial recapitalization, corporate reorganization, labor market flexibilization, and public sector downsizing[9] (Lim, 2012: 172-174). Basically, restructuring was designed to strengthen national competitiveness by extending transnational linkages within the capitalist world system. Nevertheless, Korea's restructuring was somewhat distinctive in that the neoliberal market reform package included a neocorporatist ideology of social partnership among labor, management, and government. The Kim Dae Jung regime had also taken a somewhat unorthodox approach, pursuing investment and welfare at the same time by strengthening the social safety net. The emphasis on a social safety net differed in a significant way from the experience of most Latin American countries where distribution and welfare had

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[7] To this, "productive welfare" was added later. It aimed at improving living standards by incorporating the unemployed into the labor market through reeducation and retraining.

[8] In his revised edition, Kim Dae Jung (1993: 234) claimed that "I am convinced that the policy alternatives that I have presented will transform Korea into another West Germany" and that Korea "will emerge as the eighth economic power of the world by the end of century."

[9] It should be mentioned that the origin of neoliberal reform dates back to partial efforts of stabilization in the late 1980s and liberalization in the early 1980s.

been generally neglected in restructuring. In Korea, however, neocorporatist partnerships have not taken root. The Labor-Management-Government Tripartite Commission has been ineffective due to labor's dissatisfaction with the downsizing and layoffs required by the government's restructuring program. Moreover, the expansion of welfare has proven to be ineffective in reducing unemployment and inequality.

Democracy and Populism

Democracy is a political system that is based on inclusion, participation and contestation with equality on voting and access to information (Dahl, 1998: 38). It could be a good mechanism to solve social conflicts and political cleavages in modern politics. However, the contradiction between equality of all and majority rule is central to democracy. The unity of the people based on the principle of equality of all is impossible. Majority rule unless protecting the interests of minority gives rise to ceaseless antagonism.

As a prototype of democracy, liberal democracy has inherent tension between political liberalism and democratic ideals: political liberalism emphasizes the rule of law, the separation of powers, and the defense of freedom, while democratic ideals are presupposed on equality and popular sovereignty. History tells us that the joint struggle of the liberals and the democrats in the 19th century opened a way for liberal democracy against absolute regimes (Mouffe, 2018: 3)

In the process of capitalist development, liberal democracy has revealed a contradiction between the political principle of one person-one vote and the market logic of one dollar-one vote. Without proper government intervention and regulation, as Dahl (1998) aptly points out, the market logic of one dollar-one vote disrupts the equality of all under majority rule. To cope with the contraction, social democracy emphasizes equal distribution with the ideal of welfare state, and people's democracy stresses democratic centralism to achieve popular sovereignty. While social democracy in Nordic countries provides a solution to the contradiction coming from liberal democracy, people's democracy remains as an ideal that could not be found in the former "really existing socialism'.

In history, Plato inspired us by stating that democracy is something that we can neither give up or take up. Democratic representation that assumes majority rule can never live up to its promise of equality of all. Plato's expectation of the appearance of Philosopher King can be assumed to overcome democracy as a political system that is not perfect. There have been age-old debates between what is better between direct and representative democracies. While Rousseau (1983) claimed that representative democracy tends to block political participation of masses, Mill (1983) refuted that direct democracy brings in the tyranny of masses manipulated by the powered minority. With a larger population, representative democracy can be seen as a practical option but is supposed to intensify deliberation and publicization for the benefit of masses.

I think that populism is integral to the imperfectness of liberal democracy, that is, the weakness of representative political system (Muller, 2016: 101). It is neither the authentic part of modern democratic politics nor a kind of pathology caused by irrational citizens. I understand populism as a deviance that occurs from the distrust of a modern representative democracy.

In Athens, Greece, known to be the first democratic city, demagoguery, or act of appealing

to emotions of the people, existed but not populism. Populism uses strategies within party politics or movements outside of the party system. Rather than being based on firm ideological beliefs, it is rooted in thin ideology mixed with political rhetoric and claims (Bonikowski & Gidron, 2015). Populism usually destructs representative democracy via semi-competitive elections leading to power concentration of leadership (Muller, 2016).

What populists emphasize is that the people are a moral, homogeneous entity whose will cannot make errors. Elites who are corrupt with vested interests separate the people with an integrated will. Populists insist that they alone represent the common good willed by the people. Considering that Rousseau's general will requires actual participation by citizens, they assert that can represent the proper will of the people on the basis of what it means. What matters is that this is not the product of a genuine process of will-formation. Pretending as only legitimate representatives, populists enjoy setting people up against elected representatives. They do not take consideration of all the people; only some of the people are really the people, that is, real people. In this sense, populists are anti-elitist and anti-pluralist (Muller, 2016: 101-102). As Muller argues,

"Populists can write constitutions that will be partisan or exclusive ones designed to keep them in power in the name of perpetuating some supposed and authentic popular will⋯. Populism is not a corrective to liberal democracy in the sense of bringing politics 'closer to the people' or reasserting popular sovereignty⋯. parts of population are not represented in identity or interests⋯ Populism, then, should force defenders of liberal democracy to think harder about what current failures of representation might be" (Muller, 2016: 102-13).

Populism tends to undermine the possibility of democratic contestation and compromise in the name of race, ethnicity, and nationality. By setting the "good people" against the "corrupt elites," it negates pluralism as an expression of different interests in civil society, thus raising a tug-of-war between them. Advanced, as well as developing countries, encounter not only identity politics but also class politics along the line of nation, ethnicity, and race. Conventional center-left and center-right political parties are unable to properly deal with representing such divided class and ethnic interests. The new political actors seek to represent a portion of those fragmented interests by organizing movements or parties, as exemplified in some European and Latin American countries. Even in Italy, for example, we saw the coalition between far-left and far-right populist parties. Populism proposes a different version of democracy. It offers an alternative for disillusioned voters that had given up on the existing system. In the name of representing people's general will, populist government tends to regard those who do not support it as enemies of people.

When Roh Moo-Hyun was elected as president in December 2002, his supporters hoped for the development of democracy for people, the people who had suffered from negative socio-economic outcomes resulting from the neoliberal reforms in Korean society since the 1997 financial crisis. Supporters' expectation of candidate Roh Moo-Hyun in the 2002 presidential election was based on an array of complex factors: Roh's political career as a non-conformist, as well as his commoner background, and his populist posture during the election campaign. He unexpectedly won the election against the candidate from the then conservative and influential oppositional party ("Grand National Party"), a former prime minister during the

Kim Young-Sam presidency. Roh Moo-Hyun's centrist liberal political position was contrasted with that of the conservative candidate from the GNP which had its roots in the "Three Party Merger" of 1990 and was considered to be responsible for the 1997 crisis. Above all, the young voters largely supported Roh, and the 2002 election was also interestingly and decisively influenced by information and telecommunication technologies, where these developments were strongly emphasized and promoted by the former Kim Dae-Jung government. Near the election day, many young voters sent e-mail, messenger, and mobile-phone messages to one another to stimulate higher vote counts for Roh.

The Roh Moo-Hyun regime (February 2003 - February 2008) was characterized by its progressive ruling style, which was quite set apart from the former authoritarian predecessors. The massive participation by the younger generation of politicians ("386 generation"[10]) in the power-elite circle of the government and the ruling party also contributed to such marked political style. Many of these 386 student generation politicians were former student activists who had participated in the pro-democracy movements against military rule, some of whom had been imprisoned during the 1980s when the new military regimes were in rule. The democratic expectations held by supporters of the Roh government came not only from Roh Moo-Hyun's down-to-earth and commoner characteristics as discussed earlier, but also from the rise of such a young and new political power group. The Roh government was left to develop and deepen democratic goals and realize them, where the key objective was to lessen negative socio-economic outcomes resulting from both neoliberal reforms and deeper global integration of the domestic market. Improvement in social welfare (and reduction of poverty levels and socio-economic gaps in terms of incomes, assets, and opportunities) could be a critical way to meet the democratic expectations and goals. However, the government also had to satisfy the goal of economic growth anticipated by the people who had considered that high growth would produce more jobs, higher income and better lives. The two expectations had to be satisfied harmoniously, but the desired goal might have been a mission deemed impossible due to the formation of power relations and dynamics during the Roh Moo-Hyun presidency, which did not prefer the first option (Lim & Chnag, 2012: 174-175).

In 2007, the conservative Grand National Party became the ruling party again after ten years since it had lost power in 1997, and Lee Myung-Bak, a candidate of GNP, became president of Korea in February 2008. Then, Park Geun-Hae from GNP but name-changed *Saenuri Party,* won presidency in 2013. Candle-light protests formed against the constitutional marginalization caused by president Park. Subsequently, Moon Jae-In, supported by the opposition including "386," was newly elected as Korea's president in 2017.

According to Huntington's standard of formally measuring democracy (Huntington, 1991), these somewhat peaceful ruling party shifts backed by free and regular elections make sufficient case for Korea to have entered a democratic consolidation following the Third Wave democratization of Greece, Spain and Portugal. However, even though there have been more than three occurrences where horizontal transfer of power happened between liberal and conservative parties through regular presidential elections, the rule of law and the participation of citizens under constitutionalism have not yet been fully established with representativeness,

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[10]   The 386 generation refers to those who were born in 1960s, went to college in the 1980s, and were in the age of 30s. Now they are called 586 in that they are now in their 50s.

inclusion, and accountability. In this sense, what Korea enjoys at present is 'electoral democracy' rather than 'liberal democracy'.

It has been generally assumed that the mode of transition determines the type of democracy to a significant degree (Karl & Schmitter, 1991). Importantly enough, in Korea, swift democratic transition has caused a delay in consolidating democracy. From a comparative perspective, Korea belongs to a "transition by transaction" in that it was quite successful in achieving a democratic transition through a political pact between the ruling elites and the opposition groups (Mainwaring, 1992: 320). This kind of 'transition through transaction' prevented a complete disintegration of the old establishment, since the old elites held on to a certain share of political power in the newly formed democratic government. What is more significant is that the political pact was not followed by a social pact in the process of democratization. The democratic breakthrough was achieved by citizens, students, and workers, yet they were excluded from the negotiations which resulted in the political pact. It has been inevitably incomplete, because its support by various social classes and groups is somewhat tentative. The political pact should have been followed by the social pact.

The democratic transition from quasi-civilianized military rule began when Kim Young Sam won presidential election in 1992. His electoral victory was made possible by a regional coalition on the basis of a 'grand conservative alliance' among the three parties. Two years earlier, faced with 'the small governing party and the great opposition parties,' the then President Roh Tae Woo initiated a merger of his governing Democratic Justice Party (DJP) where two opposition parties, the Reunification and Democratic Party (RDP), led by Kim Young Sam, and the New Democratic Republican Party (NDRP), led by Kim Jong Pil, were made into a newly formed Democratic Liberal Party (DLP). In the1997 presidential election, Kim Dae Jung used a similar strategy to beat the ruling party's candidate Lee Hoe Chang by building an electoral coalition between two opposition parties, his NCNP and Kim Jong Pil's ULD. In fact, the Kim Dae Jung regime was an outgrowth of the so-called DJP coalition between the liberal NCPP and the conservative ULD. The DJP coalition was nothing but an illicit union of two ideologically conflicting political forces based in different regions drawn together with the unfulfilled promise of a constitutional amendment which would create a parliamentary cabinet system.

Imitating the U.S., Korea has adopted a presidential system in which the executive, legislative and judiciary branches of government theoretically share equal power. Unlike the American prototype, however, the Korean version is characterized by a weak check and balance system between the three branches. The judiciary branch does not maintain autonomy, since the president intervenes in its jurisdiction, and the legislative branch does not exercise law-making power on its own, since the governing party is dominated by the president's office. Surprisingly enough, the ideal of sharing power among the three branches has not been resolved even under the civilian governments: even in the present Moon Jae-In regime, the dominance of the executive branch led by president's office as 'deep state' over the other two branches is the present state of democracy. Policies are shaped mainly through president's office-controlled channels, without sufficient input from political parties.

In Korea, a strong presidential system tends to produce a somewhat authoritarian leader by undermining party politics. Recently, the country's president does not serve anymore as the president of the ruling party. However, the president can dominate the parliament, which depends on execution of parliamentary activities. As ex-President Park Geun-Hye did, current President

Moon also marginalizes the entire national assembly, especially after the 21st general election in 2020. The so-called super ruling party with seats far more than half of the total 299 rule in lawmaking without proper procedure and discussion. Political parties are unable to function as the central articulator of diverse interests in civil society. Considering the fluid and unarticulated party system, it is difficult to expect democracy to work properly. Even electoral participation has become a political game.

In Korea, the political parties are leader-oriented rather than program-oriented (Kim, 1998: 138). It is not unusual to disband or create parties at a leader's disposal. The average life span of parties is about five years. The lack of policy orientation, combined with opportunism, has brought about 'transformism' that hinders a development of a stable party system. Party politics are doomed to be volatile, fluid and unstable. Political parties do not function to mediate conflicting interests among social classes and groups, much less to direct national policies. As a conduit of democracy, they do not have solid class and group base in a civil society. Based on regional support mediated by personal ties, they are rather the tools for regional leaders to use in their pursuit of winning presidency.

It is ironic that in Korea, the presidency becomes stronger under a civilian president's democratic rule than under military president's authoritarian rule. One might say with certainty that a strong presidency is essential for carrying out reforms to eradicate the past authoritarian irregularities. Yet behind the phenomenon of the so-called "imperial president" (Schlesinger Jr., 1973) are civilian presidents who used to be undemocratic during their struggle against authoritarianism. They are more familiar with authority, hierarchy, and obedience. Under a political culture in which personalized authority outweighs institutional power, they have tended to enjoy supreme power as executive leaders. A strong presidency is an outcome of the personalization of power embedded in the Confucian hierarchical political culture.

As O'Donnell warned long time ago in his observation on new democracies in developing countries, delegative rule is prevalent under civilian leaders in Korea. Korea even now is close to delegative democracy. Particularism in the form of clientalism and nepotism coexists with the formal rules and institutions of polyarchy. Democracy, to borrow his words, is 'informally institutionalized' (O'Donnell, 2001: 114). In contrast to institutionalized political systems, delegative democracy is non-institutionalized. It refers to the practice of executive authority doing whatever it sees fit for the country while pretending to be deputized to do so by the populace. It is thus hostile to the strengthening of political institutions, resulting in weak horizontal and vertical accountability. A big gap exists between the president and citizens, together with a concentration of power in the executive. Democracy cannot become institutionalized. This breed of deformed polyarchy is characterized by a concentration of power in executive hands and a populist leadership style of the elected president.

It would be somewhat presumptuous to argue that both the Kim Young Sam administration and the Kim Dae Jung administration were strong in appearance but remained weak in substance. Because of the delegative nature of political power, these administrations were similar to each other in their inability to bring about consensus in civil society, along with a low degree of infrastructural ability to enforce the law. They were indeed incapable of managing various social conflicts and political cleavages which emerged in the process of reforms, since a democratic mechanism for conflict management could not be utilized due to the weakened infrastructural power to enforce the law.

In Korea today, elections are losing importance in the midst of a democracy that has dual characteristics in power and distribution. This kind of democracy is good for global capitalism that seeks to expand accumulation through competition and efficiency without due concern for social provision and economic justice. As Putnam (1997: 59) observed earlier, "while democracy is spreading globally, it is also eroding locally." Globalization and restructuring have worked to provide a soil for procedural democracy with delayed consolidation of democracy.

Democracy has lost confidence: citizens do not want to go to the ballot box, because of rising economic anxiety, political frustration, and cultural unease. They go on the Internet and rely on street activism. Presidents do not hesitate to discard democratic norms and institutions, initiating direct contact with citizens via social media. This tends to weaken liberal democracy that in result brings in distrust in a representative political system. Populism rises in the increasing thin space of representative democracy (Rosanvallon, 2008).

Divided Civil Society: A South Korea in a Comparative Perspective

Populism has become a salient feature of modern politics not only in advanced democracies in Europe and the United States but also in developing democracies in Latin America and Asia. It can be characterized by a lack of coherent ideology with strong rhetoric. Its political orientation could be either left-wing or right-wing oriented, with an element of inclusion or exclusion. It would be misleading to dichotomize populism between the good and the bad. Rather it would be wise to evaluate the outcomes of populist politics. Contemporary cases in Europe, Asia, and Latin America show us that they have not turned out attractively. Venezuela is a typical case in point: the country has almost fallen in default. There is a growing worry that one generation would be lost. Most people are living under the pressure of skyrocketing inflation, severe poverty, scare foods, rundown dwelling, devastated medical facilities, and so on.

I agree with Mouffe (2018: 22-25) in her view that neoliberal globalization has led to a variety of anti-establishment movements, both from the right and from the left. They fight to bring back sovereignty but differ in that the right-wing populism focuses on "national sovereignty" and the left-wing on "popular sovereignty". Right-wing populists do not concern themselves much with the irregularities of inequality, and exclude immigrants and refugees from the people, seen them as a threat to the ethnic identity of the people and the prosperity of the nation. In contrast, left-wing populists emphasize the collective will of the workers, the middle class, the immigrants, the refugees, and even the LGBT community for the cause of equality.

According Mouffe (2018: 17-18), there exists a confrontation between the principle of the popular sovereignty and the principle of technocratic guardianship. Right-wing populists side with the latter, whereas the left-wing populists with the former. Regarding popular sovereignty as the essence of democracy, she claims that right-wing populists could succumb to nationalistic authoritarian forms of neoliberal globalization under the principle of technocratic guardianship. On the contrary, she maintains that left-wing populists could revive the plural and radical democracy by sticking to the principle of popular sovereignty. She wants to resuscitate the participatory, substantial democracy to make use of the 'populist moment'. To the best of my knowledge, however, there has never appeared to be something close to a full participatory and substantial democracy in the present world.

The Inclusive State by Moon Jae-In Regime. It is to my understanding that the Moon Jae-In regime (April 2017 - March 2022) is showing effort to maximize participatory and substantial democracy geared to the principle of popular sovereignty. Moon regime has presented the idea of "an inclusive state," with a vision of the nation, "a country for all - an inclusive state for everybody to live well together." In fact, "inclusion" becomes an important value of his administration and is closely associated with his main economic policy of "income-led growth," an important part of "inclusive growth" (Seong et al., 2017).

The Moon regime has examined major political-economic systems in the world and identified four distinct models: the developmental state model (Korea and other East Asian countries), the free market model (The U. S. and the U. K.), the European Continental model of social market economy (Germany, France, etc.), and the Nordic model of social welfare economy (Sweden, Norway, Finland, etc.). From comparative analysis, the regime found that the European social market economy model is the only model that has succeeded social cohesion and economic growth at the same time. It then identified three core principles that are responsible for the success of the European model. They are inclusiveness, innovation, and flexibility.

Inclusiveness refers to expanding participation and protection to minorities and underprivileged as well as to the general public in the areas of economy, employment, welfare and so on. Innovation denotes increasing creativity and enhancing theoretical and technological innovation capability in the areas of education, and science and technology. Flexibility can cope with impacts arising from world economic change through cooperative politics and social dialogue. It also means enhancement of labor flexibility through sufficient income guarantee and active labor market policy within enterprises (Seong et al., 2017).

Inclusiveness is emphasized by Acemoglu and Robinson (2012) as the determining factor for a nation's success or failure. According to them, the inclusive political and economic institutions that allow people to have enough opportunities for political participation and market competition would lead citizens to actively check exploitive behavior of political power and to find economic prosperity through technological innovation and utilization of human capital. In a later paper (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2017), they argue that an inclusive state emerges when state and civil society are more evenly matched, because each party will have a greater incentive to invest to keep up with the other party.

In order to put this vision and strategy into practice, the Moon regime has implemented three sets of policies including ones to strengthen the social safety net, ones to create and consolidate jobs, and ones to expand social overhead capital. For a solid safety net for all, policies include expanding coverage of health insurance, increase of basic pension, subsidy for childcare, support of dementia patients, and expansion of public-support recipients. Policies regarding jobs set importance on economic growth, reducing polarization and enhancing welfare. Building a solid infrastructure for jobs, creating as many public as well as civilian jobs as possible, improving quality of jobs, and supporting special jobs made for specific workers are among the many policies promoted by the government. In 2018, the Moon regime introduced the concept of region-specific social overhead capital and began to invest in infrastructures for clean, healthy and safe living. Some of the examples of this include building of cultural facilities such as libraries, sports complex and community center, and tourist facilities including museums, public parks, exhibition centers and so on.

Social welfare was first introduced some twenty years ago by the Kim Dae Jung regime in

order to ensure a basic standard of living for people but have not been developed further during the successive governments. Now, the Moon regime has been making efforts to change the paradigm following his political philosophy "a people-centric, fair and equitable society". He is committed to greatly expand social services and welfare provisions, believing that Korea had advanced sufficiently to warrant a higher and more comprehensive level of welfare. The regime declared that year 2019 is the first year for an "innovative, inclusive state" and greatly expanded the nation's social welfare budget. For example, job-related budgets increased by 22% compared to last year, while budgets for social safety net and household income increased almost three-fold, and those for roads, ports, transformation and so on by 50%. The 2019 budget for the Ministry of Health and Welfare as a whole, which takes care of income, health and care safety nets, was up by 14.6% from that of 2018. The outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has also pushed the Moon regime to introduce emergency relief grants of $6 billion increasing the total government debt.

President Moon Jae-In has emphasized many times that "inclusion" is not only a national vision but also a value that a society should strive for. In his vision, when the philosophy of inclusion without exclusion is promoted, such as an "inclusive society", "inclusive growth", "inclusive prosperity", and "inclusive democracy", the nation as a whole can all live together in harmony. For this, minimalist social welfare representative of the industrialization era would need to be eliminated and instead, an active role of social policy in making an inclusive welfare system and an innovative society, from which all the people can benefit from throughout their whole life span, would need to be envisioned.

It is too early to assess the Moon Jae-In regime's social policy, especially the policy advocating for an "innovative, inclusive state". But it seems to be true that the Moon regime has tried hard to shift the paradigm from the neoliberal developmental state to what they call an "innovative, inclusive state", with substantial public supports and greater possibilities.

Social policy is inevitably connected to economic policy because a substantial amount of financial input is necessary for social services and welfare programs, which in turn affects national economy. The Moon regime has proposed the "people-centric economy," instead of the previous *chaebol*-centered, export-oriented economy that failed to make trickle-down effects and sustainable growth, and to improve the quality of life for the people. The income-led and inclusive growth policy is also adopted by the Moon regime in place of the previous mercantilist and neoliberal growth policy. These economic policies are geared to build a people-centric economy and a fair and equitable society, which are also backed by economic policies such as minimum wage increase, shorter working hours, regularization of irregular workers, welfare budget expansion, stabilization of real estate prices, job creation, improvement of income distribution, expansion of household income and consumption. But the recent poor performance shown by Korea's national economy has often stirred up blame for these policies. Criticisms claiming that the Moon regime has so far failed in managing macro-economic affairs, in revitalizing the economy through social policies, and in strengthening fair economy are mounting (Cho, 2018).

Changing Relationship between the State and Civil Society. Korea used to be characterized by a strong state and a weak civil society, with the underdeveloped latter repressed by the overdeveloped former. Political society have had limited space for building bridges between the state and civil society, since political parties have not functioned well enough to mediate

diverse interests among social groups and classes. It is since the late 1980s that civil society has begun to grow on a full scale. Yet social movement organizations are not yet sufficiently developed to mediate those conflicting interests and divided severely between progressive and conservative forces to reproduce antagonism. The state is still a dominant actor in organizing society from top down. Its vertical accountability over the people by public policy formation is not sufficiently established. There is no small political space for populist leaders to emerge to manipulate civil society.

It was only on the ruins of past authoritarian regimes that Korean civil society began to grow in terms of advocacy, campaign, and movements. In Korea, civil society had been suppressed for decades under military dictatorship through a combination of political oppression, state mobilization, and, most importantly, media control. Following political liberalization and the retreat of the state from media censorship in the 1990s, however, the increased media window enabled by the Internet and broadband network led to the emergence of alternative, grassroots online journalism (Chang, 2005; Hauben, 2008; Song, 2007). The first news media of this kind, *OhMyNews*, was established in 2000 and attracted a great deal of attention at home and abroad for its pioneering experiment of "*simin kija*"(citizen reporters), whereby the majority of its news articles were voluntarily contributed by ordinary citizens (Kang & Dyson, 2007; Kim & Hamilton, 2006). Its unexpected success soon drew similar attempts - initially by the progress-minded but followed by the conservative (Chang 2008) - and led to the rapid growth of independent online news media. It challenged the longstanding dominance of mainstream print and TV news media, which was also hit by the rapid rise of Internet portals as a major channel for news consumption (Lee & Lee, 2009), and reshaped the structure of producing and exchanging public discourses (see Lee & Lim, 2018: 259-260).

Not only the liberal Kim Dae Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun regimes but the conservative Lee Myung-Bak and Park Geun-Hye regime had utilized a political strategy of alliance with social movement organizations by coopting selectively the core members of the organizations; they did not allow the social movement organizations to become an independent political force.

There are two types of social movement organizations. While citizens' groups represent a new social movement orientation without particular class interests, people's groups manifest old social movements orientation with clear class interests. The former, mainly composed of white-collar workers, professionals, and intellectuals, put emphasis on incremental institutional reform. The latter, largely consisting of blue-collar workers, peasants, and farmers, paid much more attention to fundamental structural reform.
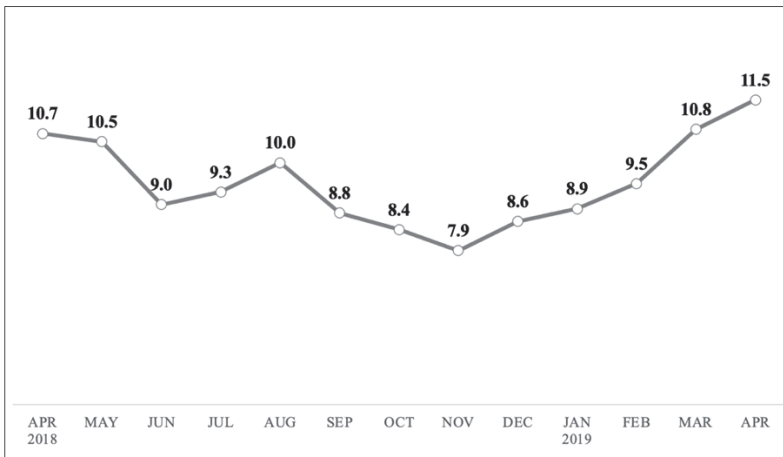
Successive governments have tried to coopt social movements organizations for their political purpose; the Kim Dae-Jung and Roh Moo-Hyun regimes tended to ally with progressive social movement organizations, like People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy, while the Park Geun-Hye and Lee Myung-Bak regimes favored to work with conservative social movement organizations like Citizens United for Better Society. Some social movement groups have tried to exercise influence over the formulation of government policy measures, and have even intervened in various disputes and feuds arising from interest conflicts related to them. Not all but some portion of social movement organizations have been politicized.

Populist Mobilization

It can be argued that President Roh Moohyun could be regarded as a populist (Suh, 2008). In order to regiment his base of support, he frequently enjoyed using "rude language and talk" usually not expected from a president, to stimulate the general public. He criticized rather sharply the privileged and the foul play of elites. He also suggested some policy measures to heavily tax the "haves" to appease the discontents of the general public.

In the presidential election of 2012, a conservative candidate Park Guen-Hye tried to receive support using a slogan of "welfare without increasing tax." In contrast, the liberal party candidate Chung Dongyoung responded with his message "welfare by increasing tax for the rich." In subsequent presidential campaigns, all party candidates had made public social welfare as key election pledges. Korean government has since then increased to a large measure welfare spending geared to universal scheme.

It would be important to emphasize that the Moon Jae-In regime has not been successful in living up to its original promise to increase economic growth, improve income distribution, and expand jobs. Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, rapid increase in minimum wage paired with a compulsory '52 working hours per week' had rather resulted in a largescale bankruptcy of small industries and self-employment. As <Figure 5> shows, unemployment rate has gone up to 10% especially for the younger generation.
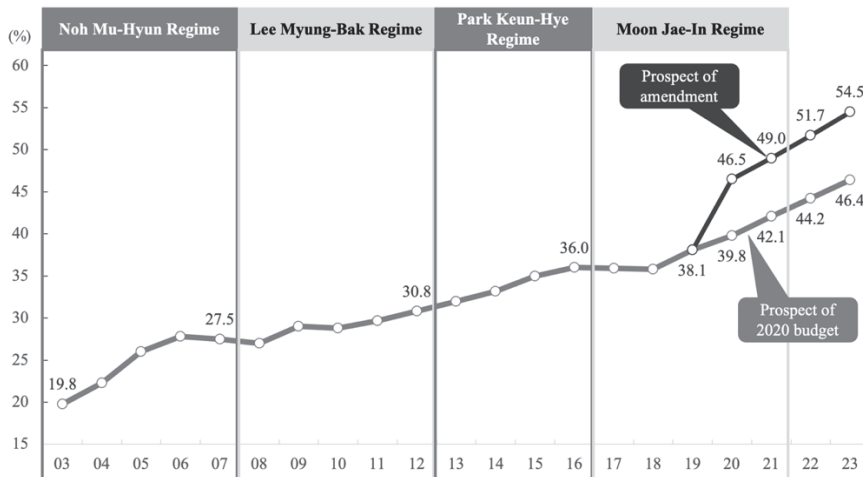

Source: KOSTAT

Fig. 5 Youth Unemployment Rate

Government debt, business debt, and household debt have grown larger, reaching up to $130 billion respectively. Among them, government debt has sharply increased due to the four times revised supplementary budgets of $6 billion to undo the negative outcomes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in such a way to maintain jobs and to conserve income for the self-employed. <Figure 6> reveals a sharp increase in government debt, especially during the Moon regime. The Korean government debt of about $130 billion was close to reaching the

internationally accepted danger ratio of 60%, threatening fiscal sustainability in the aftermath of the pandemic.

Source: The Ministry of Economy and Finance, 2021.
Note: Numbers for 2022-2023 are estimates.

Fig. 6 Increase in Government Debt

Although the Moon Jae-In regime has tried to change class coalition from developmental alliance between the state and business to a post-developmental one between the state and working class, it has retained business to survive facing harsh international economic competition. More importantly, it has made wide use of populist rhetoric and appeal to mobilize mass support by connecting directly to the people. In the name of direct and participatory democracy, agitation and mobilization have often outweighed debates and participation. In particular, Moon regime does not hesitate to make use of populist mobilization in the name of getting rid of a deep-rooted evil.

In addition to the citizens groups and people's ones, there have emerged two extremely opposing political camps that are divided being for and against Moon's foreign and domestic policies. One of these groups is the pro-Moon group who unconditionally supports the Moon regime, and the other is the anti-Moon group who absolutely opposes the regime.[11] Not only anti-Moon group but pro-Moon group enjoy making use of fake news, disinformation, and biased broadcasting as means of propaganda. The two groups have been confronting each other more in terms of political interests more than of ideological orientation. They tend to formulate confirmation bias leading to 'post-truth'.

Populism is usually led by a maverick who seeks to maintain power on the basis of mass

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[11] During the candlelight protests against Park Geunhye regime in the years of 2016-2017, the so-called *chotbull* were a mainstream of social movements, while the so-called *taekeukki* organized rallies against *chotbull*. It would be my understanding that the pro-Moon group grew out of *chotbull* and the anti-Moon group almost succeeded to *taekeukki*.

support. The Korean case is somewhat distinctive in that the new political power group, including the "586 politicians" act as mavericks instead of President Moon Jae-In. They exploit nationalist populism[12] by constantly reimagining countries that are acceptable versus not; China is reinvented as a friendly nation, while Japan is framed as an enemy nation. Nationalism creates open doors for China, whereas closed doors for Japan. The United States, regarded as the most amiable country for the longest time, is looked upon as an imperial power responsible for the division of two Koreas. In particular, some political leaders from the 586 generation are not reluctant to name *Tochak-waegu* (autogenous pro-Japanese group) as old evils that include the present right-wing politicians. In this way, they try to agitate and mobilize the citizens to join the pro-Moon group to share a strong sense of cohesion and aggression.

Civic Engagement

In light of the Indonesian experience, Mitzner (2018: 263-267) has suggested three approaches to beat populist challenges which are: (1) militant democracy, (2) accommodation of non-democratic actors, and (3) the containment of political extremism. Militant democracy uses the full extent of state authority to neutralize populist actors. It thus carries the risk of devaluing and damaging the value of democracy by utilizing authoritarian measures. The only way to prevent erosion of democracy is to give authority of penalizing anti-democratic populists to democracy's strongest institutions: the independent judiciary. The case of German neo-Nazi party reveals that it lost votes in the local elections following court ruling declining the state's request to outlaw.

The second approach is the accommodation of nondemocratic actors. This approach lies on the belief that democracy's accommodation and institutional engagement of radicals will moderate actors over time. In Indonesia, however, the accommodation option has not succeeded less in moderating radicals than in bringing the mass mobilization of moderates. The recent Turkish case of 'Radical Love' provides an interesting story of this accommodation approach. Confronted by a populist government that fuels polarization, the Republican People's Party (CHP) has been wise enough to manage the confrontation from the ruling Justice and Development Party(AKP) by adopting a message of inclusiveness toward AKP supporters (Wuthrich & Ingleby, 2020).

The third approach is the "concentric containment of political extremism", an approach that prevents citizens from drifting off to nondemocratic alternatives. It advocates a non-inclusionary and, if necessary, repressive approach towards populist actors, but an inclusivist and accommodative strategy vis-à-vis their voters. The Indonesian case shows that this dual approach cannot be easily adopted into the democratic policy making process.

All three approaches have their own respective advantages and disadvantages as well. Considering those strengths and weaknesses, my contention is that civic empowerment would be the best possible solution to save democratic values and institutions in the face of populist challenges. Enlightened citizens could join together to form civic organizations based on mutual trust. The Korean case provides a new angle to this contemplation. It is the Moon regime that

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[12] This kind of neo-nationalism can be found either on the left the Scottish socialist Party Dutch Socialist Party or on the right Jean-Marie Le Pen's FN in France Jorg Haaider's FPO in Austria.

showed active populist mobilization. An examination of the Korean case shows that unless enlightened citizens join together, civil society cannot survive to exercise leverage towards two extremely antagonized political camps.

To activate civil society, Korea needs to strengthen interest politics among citizens. Unless social movement organizations aggregate complex interests among various social classes and groups, civil society is not capable of channeling them into the state to formulate them into a public policy. It is thus a good sign that businessmen, workers, farmers, the urban poor, teachers, pharmacists, doctors, and public servants have formed civil associations for promoting their respective interests. Yet civil associations have not been successful in developing institutional channels for mediating differences among them. Interest politics are still unarticulated, hyperbolic and unruly (Im, 2000: 23). For democracy to deepen, a robust civil society is required. Capitalism is possible in the absence of civil society, but democracy is not possible without civil society (Fish, 1994: 41). The existence of civil society is a prerequisite not for the transition to but the deepening of democracy (Schmitter, 1995).

It would be interesting to look at how democracy in Korea has transformed since the regime change after the so-called "candlelight citizens' revolution." As the space of civil society has shrunk in the rest of the world, Korea's did the opposite. One could call the candlelight protests a people's revolution, oriented towards an empowered democracy. Looking back, the student revolution on April 19, 1960, contained the aspirations for freedom and equality, the June People's Struggle of 1987 signified the overturning of authoritarianism for democracy, and the candlelight protests could be seen as a continuation of such protests; it was indeed the people's revolution which carried Korea from a democracy to a completed republic. The candlelight protests held a particular significance for democracy; beyond a simple procedural democracy attained in the old democratization process in which leaders are elected by a vote, citizens called for political participation and civil engagement.

In the five months following October 2016, nearly fourteen million Korean citizens participated in voluntary struggles dotted across the nation and demonstrated that the power of the people is growing. The notion that such a large-scale protest, incomparable to the recent 'Sunflower Student Movement' in Taiwan or 'Rainbow Revolution' in Hong Kong, could go on to be non-violent, peaceful, and without causing a single casualty, is grounds for positivity. The candlelight protests have special significance in this era in where civil society is atrophying globally, regardless of a country's status as developed or underdeveloped. By carrying not rocks and Molotov cocktails but 'paper stones' and opening a street parliament, citizens decried the president's infringement of the constitution and state monopoly and called out for the exposure and cessation of the epidemic evils and abuses holding up the privileged classes.

In this explosion of civil society where citizens gathered in public squares, presenting and discussing in the name of sharing, sympathy, and coexistence, citizens illustrated the possibility of a type of heterarchy which combines representative democracy and direct democracy, participatory democracy, and deliberative democracy. By questioning what a country is from the perspective of the citizens, Korea's civil society was able to ruminate on the meaning of a democratic republic. Together, they contemplated the second clause of the first article of the Korean constitution: "The sovereignty of the Republic of Korea shall reside in the people, and all state authority shall emanate from the people." It became a catalyst for socially problematizing the numerous political challenges that Korea faced. Citizens were more than scattered grains of

sand that coalesced on social networking services, where they exchanged thoughts and gathered public opinion, but they were a multitude, comprised of distinct collectives of varied identities. In the candlelight protests, this concentration of citizens regardless of generation, class, gender, or region, expressed a latent resistance to globalization abroad, and to polarization within. The candlelight protests awakened us to the importance of an empowered democracy, that is, civic engagement, where the practical institutionalization of democracy ensures sovereignty that is vested in the people. The ideals of freedom and equality are realized through the expansion of social rights (civil rights) and economic provisions (welfare). We must now consider an alternative that can overcome a representative democracy. But if we do not begin the process of institutionalizing the direct, participatory democracy that we saw gathering in public squares, it might end up heading towards a dinocracy (Kim & Lim, 2019: 27-28).

Concluding Remarks

Globalization has given Korea a chance to upgrade its position in the international political and economic system. It has joined the so-called 30-50 club as the seventh member, following the USA, Germany, Japan, England, France, and Italy. In the process of globalization, however, it has not been an easy task for Korea to achieve economic advancement and political development, simultaneously. Korea has continued to face how to make democratic coalition among different classes and groups to extend the social and economic citizenship in addition to political citizenship. Its experience shows the possibilities and difficulties of democratic progress in the process of globalization. I contend that not only popular sovereignty is a thorny ideal to achieve, but also national sovereignty is an unavoidable reality to maintain.

Almost everywhere in the world, politics now have less to do with the left and right than the top and bottom. I would like to emphasize the increasing chasm between the minority of elite and the majority of people. Korea is not an exception: it has experienced the polarization of life, consciousness, and culture as a result of growing economic inequality and social disparity. It is a hurdle that will be difficult to overcome through the one-dimensional consideration of conservatism and progressivism. Elections centered on political parties are fading away. Armed with sites like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, active citizens form public opinion centered on candidates they support through social media and wield influence in the public sphere far exceeding that of party organizations.

The reason that Korean democracy has not matured enough to reach liberal democracy over the 20 years since democratization may be found in the dearth of culture of social dialogue, comprised of discussion, bargaining, and concertation. I would say that the introduction of governance based on civic participation through deliberation is strongly needed, not only because the agora democracy supplemented the lack of accountability of a representative democracy and brought us closer to direct democracy than before, but also because it can end in Bakanized dinocracy that appeals to emotions rather than concentrating on distinguishing what is right and wrong.

Populism as a 'thin-centered ideology' (Mudde, 2004) tends to make use of polarization strategy of dividing the good people and the bad elite. It provokes culture war as a result of political polarization. Populist leaders both promote and benefit from polarization strategy,

before and after they rise to power. This polarization strategy they manufacture is less of an 'ideological polarization' than intense political interests based on moral dichotomy. Regardless of the ruling or opposing political forces, populist leaders accuse the established elite of impoverishing the people in the name of the 'general will'.

In Korea, there has been a great division of civil society between the supporters of the Moon Jae-In regime and those who miss the former Park Guen-Hye regime. This division is more than ideological, it is also generational. The younger generation tends to support the Moon regime's social and economic policies while the older generation stands opposed. However, in the 2021 April Majors' by-election in Seoul and Pusan, young women continued to support the ruling party candidates, while young men stopped backing them. A severe rift among the younger generation has appeared regarding Moon regime's social and economic policies.

Despite which side wins, however, Korea will not go back to the old authoritarian era. We are now living in the new era of the 4th industrial revolution coupled with post-modernism. As the candlelight revolution has proven, people's power has become decisive in that more participation and inclusion are urged. Korea is now at the critical turning point, probably for the most important time in its modern history. The choice is up to enlightened citizens themselves where civic empowerment would make all the difference.

There are four politico-economic paths based on the past Latin American experience of neoliberal globalization: the first is "organic crisis" characterized by unleashing of a tug of war among social classes and groups amid increasing sociopolitical tensions as a result of failed restructuring; the second is "fragmented and exclusionary democracy" that manifests the fragmentation of social classes and groups, and the exclusionary design of social and economic policies in order to achieve neoliberal reform; the third is "inclusionary democracy" that discloses the incorporation of social classes and groups in the process of policy design based on sociopolitical pacts; and the fourth is "double democracy" which is promoted by a dual logic of state power (respect for the allied minority and disarticulation of the rest) and the unequal distribution of resources (benefits are extended only to the allied sectors of business and organized labor) (Acuna & Smith, 1994: 41-49). From this observation, the Moon Jae-In regime might have trod double democracy rather than an inclusionary democratic path. It is my contention that civil society has been severely divided up between two different antagonistic camps due to populist politics of splitting the people between the right and wrong one.

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