

Local Self-Governance and the Citizens' Movement

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Abstract

Against the historic backdrop of sixteen years' practice of electing a mayor and local council, and the resultant heightened politicization of local public administration, this paper intends to introduce perspectives to explain the citizens' movement, examine the characteristics of the local citizens' movement in comparison to its national counterpart, and analyze the governing structure and characteristics of local communities.

This paper first focuses on the underlying structure of local community. In order to activate the citizens' movement, it is natural to emphasize the task of transforming the personalized into associational mobilizations based on civic interests. Secondly, the segmented structure of the local community leads to hostile antagonism among different political groups. Communal factors and a segmented social structure hinder democratic institutionalization, while official procedures appear to be overwhelmed by the influence of the personal ties.

In Korea's democracy, the citizens' movement has been retarded at the local level, due to segmented communication, social relations that foster a selfish worldview, constraints on participation, and the limitations of institutional decentralization, i.e. power-sharing. This paper has attempted to examine the structural contradictions of the local citizens' movement and present solutions to the problem.

Keywords: local self-governance, citizens' movement, personalized mobilization (*yeon-go dongwon*), growth alliance

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The Problem

With the constitutional reforms in 1987 to create direct presidential elections, which had been discontinued after the 1971 election, citizens, in 1991, called for democratization in the realm of local politics and established local councils by popular vote. The heads of local governments began to be elected in 1995. However, many limitations have existed for local self-governance as the national government still has had control over the work responsibilities, finance, organization, and staffing of local governments. Election of local council members and heads of local governments boosted local residents' political interest in the affairs of central government, but it cannot be said that the decision-making power was either decentralized or democratized.

No public discourse on local community existed when people did not have the right to elect public officials of local governments. With the election of local council members in 1991, however, it began to be noted that the central government was overshadowing local communities, when there were no institutional initiatives to decentralize power. This is still true ten years after the heads of local governments began to be elected. In 1996, Hong Duck-Ryul (1997, 154) pointed out that "from the beginning, there was no mechanism to reflect the interests and views of local residents in policy-making at the community level. This was universal throughout the country. The political and administrative elites of local communities were more or less subjugated to the political groups of the center." A paper analyzing the policy-making process surrounding the issue of hosting Samsung Motor Co. in Busan argued that "the vortex in the center is the main stumbling block to the revitalization of local politics. One reverberating theme in the entire course of the controversy over Samsung Motor Co. is that national political powers decide most local issues" (Baek 2001, 143). Even today Ha Seung-u (2005) says that "People leave or join a party in an election season, which shows that a great deal of local politics is still subjugated to national politics even after the implementation of local self-governance." Fifteen years since the local self-governance system was adopted, commentators still point

out the problem of centralized political power. Of course, this may be a result of heightened awareness of self-governance unlike in the past, but it also implies that politicization of local public administration is underway and groups with different interests in local public administration hold each other in check.

Scholars in countries where local self-governance was put in place early on also note its limitations. Their main argument is that local government emerged while the central government suffered a legitimacy crisis from its inability to deal with the contradictions of capitalism. This can be explained in three aspects. First, considering local state as a part of an entire capitalist order they focus on its relationship with the central state. Second, according to the thesis of dual politics or dual state, local government was to address such issues as housing, health, education, and social service, which are difficult for the central state to deal with on the one hand, and for which local state governments have to listen and attend to the opinions of public and pressure groups so as to legitimize the central state. This accentuates the point that central state created local state as a means to resolve its legitimacy crisis. Third, uneven development theory asserts that local state emerged in order to manage the consequences of unevenness.

However, managing the contradictions of capitalism at the local level did not proceed smoothly, because in the conflict between local commercial and manufacturing forces and rent-seeking forces the latter were overwhelmingly stronger than the former. It is important to recognize that local self-governance is not always functional for capitalist development. Local politics began to take on a full-fledged scale after the election of local council members in 1991 and the emergence of elected heads of local governments in 1995. Now, indigenous ruling powers that had been active unofficially and invisibly till then were brought into light. The change in their status from invisible to visible powers touched off heated discussion. In a study in 1996, Hong Duck-Ryul (1997, 140) called them "immoral dominators of local communities," while Baek Du-ju (2001, 144) gave them the name "indigenous local ruling forces." The growth of local powers is

criticized even today. The local power structure began to be analyzed from the standpoints of “grassroots dictatorship,” “growth alliance,” or “misdemeanor of heads of local governments, overly generous allocation of money, and squandering of the budget.” The politicization of local administration was extended to the criticism of existing indigenous powers and the analysis of the structure of domination that enabled it. The research trend in this direction should be understood in the context of the execution of local self-governance and the growing influence of the local citizens’ movement.

This paper intends to introduce perspectives to explain the citizens’ movement, examine the characteristics of the local citizens’ movement in comparison to its national counterpart, and analyze the governing structure and characteristics of local communities, with an aim of revealing the overall conditions facing the local citizens’ movement.

Explanatory Framework of the Citizens’ Movement

The goal of the citizens’ movement is to demand equal access to public goods. Public goods are characterized by their denial of a monopoly of supply and a lack of exclusiveness in consumption. The citizens’ movement strives to modify the way that public goods are supplied and consumed in the private sphere and its monopolistic benefits (political rents) are appropriated privately. But in reality, the question as to how public goods are defined should be dealt with in the political domain.

In consideration of this, the citizens’ movement may be expressed as a struggle waged for the definition of the public goods, particularly, with a clear opposition to its private appropriation. However, it is not easy to clearly define whether the public goods demanded by citizens are for the interest of a group, individuals, or some factions. This also needs to be drawn into the domain of political debate. Thus, some scholars redefine the citizens’ movement with a focus on the definition and securing of public goods, highlighting its controversial

nature. In this aspect, civil society is defined as the contested terrain of a plurality of interests alleged to be particular, and the nature of public goods is expected to be defined through battle. This is based on the belief that struggle for individual interest will ultimately seek general interest. According to this conception, the citizens’ movement is a movement to secure citizens’ rights, or help form the ground to ensure their claim for rights politically. This is thought to have been accomplished to some extent in the democratization process of state power. It then aims to obtain political rights, that is, to express political opinions equally, have equal voting and campaigning rights, and have fair rights to participate in decision-making processes.

Regarding this second step, political rights are secured through voting rights but many things remain to be resolved in terms of party management, election campaigning, transparent administration and release of information, and political participation. Therefore, it can be argued that civil society is not yet fully developed enough as an institutional mechanism that can seek general interests through the clash of plural interests.

The citizens’ movement does not simply refer to the organization of civic groups but a series of attempts to change the status quo based on the status of citizenry. So, an analysis of the citizens’ movement, unlike that of civil society or civic organizations, should discuss such issues as the recruitment of leaders, organization of potential citizens, mobilization, formation of counter ideologies, and the operation of internal networks. This paper lays special focus on the aspect of organization of social movements. The social circumstances that provide the backdrop for the birth of a citizens’ movement are clearly different between the capital (Seoul Metropolitan Area, SMA) and the provinces. The SMA enjoys a relatively rich pool of leaders, staff, and members required for the citizens’ movement. This is partly because urban residents have partial and anonymous social relations with each other. For the same reason, a personalized approach is difficult to employ in relations with local governments. Relative anonymity promotes the establishment of organizations based on

new social relations. Meanwhile, in the provinces the networks of social relations are narrower and there exists a strong tendency to rely on personalized networks in forming social relations rather than official procedures. The same logic applies to staff as well. In the SMA where the importance of diverse career backgrounds is appreciated, staff members involved in the citizens' movement can change careers relatively easily, and those qualities can work out to their advantage for future careers. In local cities, however, staff members find it difficult to use their experience in this field as a channel for their long-term careers. Besides, local elites often have overlapping social statuses within the narrow networks of social relations, which is a barrier for them to function as counter-elites, and there is a high possibility of conflict of interests between the statuses they hold. Due to these characteristics of social relations, it is difficult to develop civil society at the local level.

Other factors include lower organizational density based on secondary social relations, a meager pool of intellectuals capable of presenting a coherent set of policy alternatives, and insufficient institutional apparatuses needed to form an arena of public debate. Groups based on personal ties are still quite strong in local communities; indigenous groups, alumnae associations, and more recently, professional groups, are growing in force, although the importance of family links and regional background is decreasing. Ties based on the former have come to replace the inherited social relations of the past, but has not yet reached the stage of addressing the interests and concerns of citizens. Civil society can strengthen itself by providing information on, discussing, and evaluating government policy systematically and openly. In the provinces, however, the press is in the hands of people who seek their own interests from local development, local intellectuals are not well positioned to raise issues concerning the public goods as they are linked to universities and local organizations through personal ties, and people are reluctant to discuss things openly and are intolerant of diverse opinions. All these factors make it difficult to create an arena of public debate.

Finally, this paper notes that the cultural characteristics of social

relations work in political power relations, for example, traditional grammar operates in the citizen mobilization system and management of organization by leaders. Tensions, clashes and acculturation occur between the unique characteristics of Korean society and institutions from the outside, such as those found in areas of local self-governance and civil society. The traditional grammar of culture is at work and institutions are not actually transplanted in their pure form. While local self-governance, civil society, citizens, and the citizens' movement belong to the institutional sphere, individuals adopt secondary social relations based on a local interpretation of individuals' interest relations.

It is not surprising to find out that residents who are accustomed to the life world formed on hereditary and communal similarities respond to institutional pressures from the outside with forms of resistance and discomfort. In order to understand the characteristics of the citizens' movement in Korea, the rules inherent in the social structure that regulate politics and civil society should be investigated. The expression "discomfort" emphasizes both inexperience and imposition from the outside, which points out the fact, in turn, that something that was not wanted or demanded was nevertheless given.

Birth of the Local Citizens' Movement

Democratization of local politics can be summarized as self-governance by local residents and their representatives by curbing the forces trying to possess local real estate and exercise oligopoly by seeking their interests in terms of political rents, and furthermore, to restrict the residents' right to vote based on property ownership and taxation (Ahn 1998). Even in Western Europe, as in Korea, democratization of local politics was only achieved after that of national politics. In the West, the property-based proportionate voting system continued in local elections for a while even after the introduction of the nationwide referendum. In Germany, the upper bourgeoisie and the powerful used people's voting rights for local self-governance as

a tool of domination until 1891 by requiring various qualifications, such as property, housing ownership, and taxable income. Such limited self-governance continued up to 1918 by limiting voting rights, despite the emergence of political parties and interest groups by then. In Korea, it appears that even though local self-governance has been allowed officially, oligopoly by the few seeking dominant interests still exists in reality.

In terms of measurable indicators, the differences in the citizens' movement between the SMA and the provinces are mainly due to the predominant distribution of non-profit civic organizations in the former. This shows that, assuming that non-profit civic organizations in the SMA collect information on, monitor, and evaluate central government policies, their activities mostly target the central state. The number of non-profit organizations in the SMA and the non-SMA, which was recently released by the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs, provides evidence. In 2005, 593 non-profit civic organizations were registered in the SMA, while the comparable figure for the non-SMA was 237 (MOGAHA 2005, 16).

Secondly, there tends to be a high turnout for central government elections and a low voting participation for local government posts. Table 1 compares electoral turnout rates for National Assembly members and local council members. According to the table, the turnout rate for the elections of local council members is always lower than that of National Assembly members in each time span, although both have decreased over time.

Then, why is the electoral participation rate of local council members lower? It is attributable to two things: insufficient incentives for electoral participation among potential citizens (a structural factor), and exclusion of citizens from social mobilization networks. For example, in the 2002 local government elections, those with only a middle school education (mostly, village leaders and the elderly) were more likely to urge others to vote (Park and Kang 2005, 290), whereas many highly-educated people did not show up at the election booth (Jang 2003).

Other barriers to the development of local civil society are the

Table 1. Electoral Turnout Rates (percent)

	National Assembly Members	Metropolitan City/Provincial Council Members	City/County/ Ward Council
1988	75.8		
1991		58.9	55.0
1992	71.9		
1995		68.4	68.6
1996	63.9		
1998		52.3	53.2
2000	57.2		
2002		48.8	48.8
2004	60.6		

Source: National Election Commission (www.nec.go.kr)

weak institutional power of local governments and the many legal restrictions in the realms that local residents can affect. Many policies that affect the lives of local people are decided by the central government. Policy-makers in the central government wield strong power in local policy-making. Kim Byong-joon (1997) notes, "The establishment, including national politicians, central government officials, and businesses associated with the central government, has a broad power base. They try to maintain their dominant position relying on their strong administrative and regulatory power and political and economic resources." That is, national politicians strive to sustain their power in the provinces. According to a research report on Chuncheon city, "The Chuncheon community is not governed and managed by the elites from Chuncheon, but by those from other areas" (cited from a report prepared by Hallym University). A study of the power structure of Chungcheongbuk-do province from 1990-1992 reports that "the core power holders of the local communities are actually people who are nationally powerful, and they exercise power locally by relying on their clout at the national level" (Min et al.

1996, 216). In summary, the power structure of local communities has a dual form illustrated by “strong national power vs. weak local power” and “strong administrative and political power vs. weak economic power” (Min et al. 1996, 223).

That said, exclusion of the influence of the central state may be a sufficient condition for local self-governance. One lesson to learn from the past experiences of Western countries as well as Korea is that local self-governance as an ideal terrain of political participation is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for the democratization of local politics. This is because local politics is influenced not only by the local community and local civil society (the origins of political participation) but also by the centralized nation-state, which exercises power from above.

In keeping with weak local politics, civil society is underdeveloped at the local level. Local civil society comments more frequently on the central government than on the local government. Hong Duck-Ryul (1997, 155) states: “The local residents rarely express their opinions on pressing local issues or put pressure on policy-making through organized action. There are dissident groups and labor organizations in every city, but they are more interested in national power blocs and national politics than local issues. Having little interest in local issues and local politics, they are subsidiaries of nationwide dissident groups that intervene in national politics. Activities of local civic organizations working for local social movement are not very visible.” This reveals that local civic organizations target the central government in their activities, responding to the power of the central government.

In addition, it should be noted that the general discourse has not reached the level of raising local issues yet. Some scholars argue that the women’s movement and discourse on feminism are not active at the local level. Lee Hyesook (2002, 217) claims that “most local women regard the women’s movement and feminism as concerning only a few, select women and do not feel comfortable with it. This also has roots in the general gaps between the capital and the provinces, and it should be viewed as a reflection of the gap in the

local women’s movement.” So far, I have argued that central power dominates local communities, that the activities of local civil society are focused on the center, and that it has failed to spread awareness of the problem to the local level.

Organization and Actors of Citizens’ Movement

Potential Citizens

Potential citizens are those whose main source of income is employment or self-employment with their own businesses and who do not rely on rental income such as interest from land (Lee E. 2004b, 99). If citizens emerge, they will be those who earn no interests from land and thus can counter the landed wealthy. Unlike the landed wealthy who were unofficial rulers of locales, citizens engage in politics based on earned income. This means the emergence of politics focusing on quality of life such as tax and social welfare rather than ownership. Potential citizens are those who cultivated ideologies regarding the need for a citizens’ movement during the struggle for democratization and have sufficient human resources who support them morally (Kim Y. 2001, 274-275). They are represented by highly-educated housewives, university students, freelance professionals in various fields, and workers (Park and Kang 2005, 293).

While they are highly aware of themselves as citizens and are able to recognize citizen’s will, they are unorganized in reality. Nor have they developed to present their interests systematically or form alliances with the local state based on those interests (Park Chong-Min 2000). When there is no organized social interest effective enough to counter the local state, the one-man march of the mayor, its official representative, is only to be expected.

In reality, autonomous organizations are less active than government-led, government-funded organizations engaged in politics, or professional organizations seeking private collective economic interests. Government-funded organizations are not civic organizations as

they are mobilized for campaigns directed at the national populace; nor are professional ones for their pursuit of private interests for their profession and assumption of some government-delegated functions (Park Chong-Min 2000). According to a study of five cities (Cheongju, Jinju, Bucheon, Pyeongtaek, and Seongnam), local branches of government-funded and professional organizations are well developed in the provinces (Park Chong-Min 2000). Although they are not autonomous, their role as a go-between for local community and local politics has gained importance in the era of local politics. Lacking autonomy, they provide a reserve of would-be local politicians and, sometimes, a support base for the mayor (Lee E. 2004a; Min et al. 1996, 221). Government-funded organizations have an appeal as an instrument to mobilize people on the one hand and as a procurer of political interest seekers on the other hand. They have become apparatuses that perform unofficial functions readily in the name of official organizations, with the narrowing of official channels under the local self-governance system. This is more or less the same with local branches of professional organizations. Unable to position themselves as the policy target groups of the local government, they rarely deploy organized activities to represent their interests; rather, they are used as a channel to procure local politicians or a chain connecting various parts of the local political system, playing a similar role for government-funded organizations with regard to local governance.

Participant Citizens

Unorganized, citizens cannot become social actors (Jeong 1999, 48). Only through organization and organized activity can they express their opinions effectively and have their demands reflected in policy. Political development for democracy cannot be achieved unless organized citizens participate in politics, serve as a watchdog group, and lead politics in the direction they want (Choi 1996, 9-46). If citizens who identify themselves as such participate in social activism systematically and continuously, campaigning for their rights and bene-

fits through organized groups, that constitutes a citizens' movement. Citizens' movement by civic organizations defends their status as the sovereign from state power and contributes to democratizing an authoritarian political system (You and Kim 2001, 318). The citizens' movement targets local self-governance, namely, to assess and decide local issues under local power and responsibility (Jeong 1999, 51). Local self-governance cannot succeed without the active participation and concern of citizens, and such concern and participation is more effective if it is organized and put forth systematically than made individually. Participation can take various forms, such as participation in committees, petitioning for legislation, attending hearings, and evaluating, monitoring and criticizing local administrative and legislative bodies.

The formation of leadership is an important agenda for the organization of citizens. It is thought that mobilization fails because residents are suspicious of the political lines and morality of the people trying to organize them. It has been noted that they have withdrawn support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) because they have become power groups and hold on to incompatible ideologies. Many NGOs have fallen into advocacy groups or government-funded groups and enjoy power, while some activist NGOs stick to radical ideologies and overlook the local reality, losing popular support in the end (Kim Y. 2001, 275). In a case study of Daegu, Gwangju, and Incheon, all of them turned out to be weak in citizen-based leadership, defined by whether that leadership is accepted by civil society (Hong 1997, 167-168). In all three, leadership was under formation or efforts were being made to form leadership, but its prospect was quite uncertain. Especially, in Gwangju and Daegu, where the residents are captured by rampant regionalism on the part of the political groups controlling it, it is a formidable task to move beyond that control and create citizen-based leadership. Incheon has a higher potential to form citizen-based leadership because localism is weak and political groups representing the city are almost absent, and the differences between the cities are already manifest in the outcomes of the citizens' movement in respective cities (Hong 1997, 168). Citizens

have high expectations for the local self-governance system and civic activist groups, which are not met in actuality. Also, they feel the need for more participation but have not done so, and they are aware of this gap (You and Kim 2001).

The leaders of the citizens' movement tend to depend on personal networks (*yeonjulumang*) preexisting in Korean society. While dependence on personal networks based on association is helpful for mobilization, their exclusive nature can pose a serious barrier to organizational management. School ties work as a favorable mechanism in forming and developing citizen-based leadership at the community level, but they pose a critical limitation to the future state of leadership, warranting concern and caution (Hong 1997, 163). Lastly, potential citizens become present citizens through the process of the state bringing into its jurisdiction affairs of the market and turning them into public affairs, which increases stakeholders' awareness. For example, in 1995 Western and Oriental medicine doctor and dentist groups in Masan and Changwon joined the Voters' Association for Clean Elections. Until then, their business rights were secured by the state; they became interested in politics when their rights were being shaken by the state due to social controversies over medical insurance and the division of labor between doctors and pharmacists and between Western and Oriental medicine doctors.

Organization of Citizens

NGOs became active with the election of public posts of local governments beginning in 1991. This is found in the analysis of a paper on "the establishment of organizations associated with local self-governance according to time period" (Kim Y. 2001, 165). A study on Chuncheon also notes that it was "since 1993, that is, after the introduction of the local self-governance system under the Kim Young-sam administration" that civic organizations began to be active. Many existing non-profit organizations were transformed into civic organizations. Newly emerged NGOs and existing non-profit organizations competed and cooperated with each other. According to the

Chuncheon study, "The YMCA Chuncheon acquired its activist character from competition and cooperation with the newly formed Chuncheon office of the Citizens' Coalition for Economic Justice" (You and Kim 2001, 327).

The influence of civic organizations, which were established from their own initiative in the local governance process, has spread to various other fields, including policy-making. Especially, the transformation of activists to civic organizations is noticeable in cities with a strong history of activism in labor, poverty, and resistance, and the formation and activities of local civic organizations have proliferated under the influence of New Social Movements such as the environmental movement, the anti-nuclear movement, the consumer's movement, and the women's movement. Civic organizations are particularly active in the areas of civil society, social service and environmental protection" (Kim Y. 2001, 265).

Civic organizations curb and put pressure on the executive body of local governments and local councils with regard to the main issues facing local communities, having a presence that can no longer be ignored. They organize and mobilize counter-opinions to boycott certain policy initiatives, but such efforts rarely result in tangible outcomes. Yet local governments must be aware of civic organizations' voice, which implies a gradual increase of citizens' control in local politics (Park Chong-Min 2000, 358).

The rate of organization of local civil society is low in the overall sense, but it varies across cities. In cities with active civic organizations, colleges with activist students and professors, who voice their participation and activism, and a critical-minded local press (e.g., Jinju), civic organizations are more visible, equipped with political know-how and resources for organizing civil society. This can be manifest in the form of political participation, for instance, young people partaking in a signature campaign to oppose a certain policy of the local government (Park and Kang 2005, 288). In places with a long history of homogeneity, people tend to have a high sense of their roots and emotional solidarity, which makes them voice-oriented rather than exit-minded and promotes the formation of civic orga-

nizations for collective action. In those places, civil society can put in check the mayor's overriding march, though only in part.

Of special note among NGOs are social organizations or groups based on blood ties, regional ties, and school ties. Clan associations based on family ties, which are hereditary status groups often found in older cities, act as mobilization centers for residents during elections. The alumnae associations of prestigious high schools in local cities provide private networks and operate as a channel to form groups of political, economic, and social elites. Groups of people from the same region—especially powerful are those from Jeolla, Gyeongsang, and Chungcheong regions—offer private networks and exert strong power in electoral politics. Interest in politics usually rises with age, and the increased interest among elderly people is found in the high turnouts of elderly people in pre-election candidate campaigns and hearings on controversial issues, which may be interpreted as examples of mobilization based on personal association (Park and Kang 2005, 287). While clan associations still exert influence on the political process in old cities, the influence of regional associations is more visible in planned cities around the capital (such as Seongnam city), which have a small number of original residents (Park Chong-Min 2000, 359).

Structural Foundation of Local Community

The structural foundation of local community affects the formation, transformation, and development of the citizens' movement surrounding local self-governance. Among the major factors that exercise influence, the economic basis, social relations, and cultural characteristics are examined in this section.

Economic Relations

Two forces with fundamentally confronting economic interests exist in local communities according to a general classification: one is that

the people seeking rental interests from land and the other people trying to improve and advance the community they live in. These two separate interests coexist even within individuals, producing contradicting behaviors. Therefore, "residents become revolutionaries if their interest relations correspond with public ones and become reactionaries with equal passion if the former contradict the latter" (Cheon 2005). Local self-governance has raised interest in the community they live. It can be seen as the result of increasing efforts to defend the community, faced with politicization by rent seekers of the land they live on and forced development of the land in pursuit of rents. It cannot be denied that for whatever reason, the movement to improve and advance the community emerged full-scale after the introduction of a local self-governance system. This is why it is sometimes dubbed the local self-governance movement. The residents' self-governance movement signifies a movement to improve the environment they live in and foster sustainable development of the local community. The local citizens' movement strives to influence local government and represent their political opinion in local politics.

Monopoly of local politics by forces seeking land ownership and exclusive rent interests has worsened. These local politicians attempt to increase their own interests from development and appropriate them privately instead of making them available as public funds. In this condition, those who secure the most interests by taking advantage of local government can control the local council and emerge as the main players of local politics (Lee E. 1999, 32). Hopes for grassroots democracy have evaporated, despite the implementation of the local self-governance system, as people despair that political power relations at the national level are reproduced at the local level (Lee E. 1999). It has become clearer with the passage of time that local self-governance operates as a mechanism by powerful local groups to maintain their privileges and protect their interests based on them. Landowners have taken over the power of local government to a large extent in the form of local self-governance. Gone are the days when the central government controlled local politics, and now the indigenous powerful groups are guaranteed of their political partic-

ipation as even administrative affairs of minor importance are politicized informally (Lee E. 1999, 9).

Personalized Mobilizing Power

Citizens do not exist as isolated individuals but attach new meanings to the information they get from interaction with other people and develop the foundation to form a worldview and action based on it. Citizens, the objects of organization, foster consciousness via communication and experience in everyday interaction in gatherings with organizers. Here, tactics and strategies are devised and the citizens respond to or lead change. Thus, it is important to have occasions when people can meet each other. Those occasions can be divided into two: those based on primary social relations and those based on secondary. Here the former means social relations based on personal ties.

Personalized social relations produce a worldview grounded in a personalized framework. Analysis based on personal ties or association, rather than objective interest relations or one's condition, takes precedence over others. So, themes concerning public good are highly likely to be neglected. In a personalized framework, the local residents are caught in a trap that restricts the issue of public goods. They passively receive patches of information regarding sociopolitical issues of public goods and process them within a personalized framework. They learn about political issues concerning the local community via mass media such as newspapers and television, and make their views known to other people via the same media, reinforcing passivity in information gathering and transmission (Park and Kang 2005, 227). In addition to passivity in gathering information on politics, communication is made in a manner that emphasizes personal network, instead of taking the form of discussion (Park and Kang 2005, 227). Even so, they are not satisfied with the topic of public goods and may want to have an arena where they can discuss them. Their isolation from the local political process and high expectations for the local government show that they feel the need for political

discussion of public goods, and at the same time, they are dissatisfied that the need is not met in reality (Park and Kang 2005, 280-281).

Individuals gather information and form the framework of their worldview through social encounters. Participation in organizations provides them with important opportunities to cultivate consciousness of public goods. Social encounters and communications with a wide range of people help form universal values, whereas those based on personalized social relations cultivate particular values. This is echoed in the findings of social surveys. People who are members of various social organizations show a high level of political participation, while those who do not belong to any show low political participation (Park and Kang 2005, 295). According to the findings of a study on participation in social organizations among people in nine medium to large cities in 2003, "Participation in social organizations was highly concentrated in volunteer social service organizations, clan, and alumnae associations. However, 45 percent of the respon-

Table 2. Participation Rate of Local Residents in Social Organizations

	1999	2003
Socialization groups	53.1	67.3
Religious organizations	19.8	14.0
Sports and leisure groups	16.2	11.8
Voluntary social service groups	7.2	4.1
Academic groups	1.0	1.4
Interest groups	1.6	1.0
Political organizations	0.6	0.2
Others	0.4	0.1
Participate	23.8	44.7
Do not participate	76.2	55.5

Note: The survey results cover urban areas (*dong*) only, excluding rural areas (*eup* and *myeon*).

Source: Korea National Statistical Office, *Report on the Social Statistics Survey*, each year.

dents did not participate in any social organization, revealing low participation in organizational activities among the local residents" (Park and Kang 2005, 275). Similar results are found in the *Report on the Social Statistics Survey* published by the Korea National Statistical Office (see Table 2). According to the report, about half of the respondents did not participate in social organizations, and among those who participated, socialization groups were the main category of participation. This implies that people have limited contacts with various walks of life, which results in having a narrow worldview.

Participation in political organizations is nearly negligible and very low compared to the five percent level in advanced countries. The decrease in the participation rate over a four-year period (between 1999 and 2003) seems to show the difficulty of having a worldview based on universal values in the near future. Moreover, even among participants in political organizations, very few identify themselves with a political party. In a survey, more than half (66 percent) of the respondents did not identify themselves with a party, selecting "no party orientation" in the response category (Park and Kang 2005, 275). Their lack of a clear party preference can be partly attributed to the average life span of parties being only six months, too short to even make party names known to people. It may also reflect the fact that parties lack clear policy direction, so it is difficult for people to establish a clear party identity. Generally speaking, people who identify themselves with opposition parties show high political participation, while those who have no party identity show low political participation (Park and Kang 2005, 296). In sum, the instability of the party system seems to strengthen people's indifference to politics.

Personalized mobilization occurs even in civic organizations pursuing public good. This is found in the analysis of the Yeoseong Minuhoe (Korean Womenlink), a locally active women's organization (Lee H. 2002, 216). Because personalized mobilization works as a principle of group formation, it calls for more in-depth examination. Some people argue that the importance of association in forming social relations plays a positive role in integrating Korean society.

They believe that in Korea social integration is not based on liberalism but on informal and traditional relations focusing on family and personal ties (Park M. 1998, 74). Association works as a universal principle of social organization, which can regulate the pursuit of individual interests and strengthen public good (Kim S. 1992, 160). Further, they claim that if those groups surpass mere socialization and work for public good, personal ties will be functional as a source of solidarity and integration of citizens, instead of being dysfunctional as the origin of social division and conflict. Even at that stage, however, it is anticipated that it will foster particular values.

Tradition of Resistance

The development level of the citizens' movement differs not only between the capital and local cities but also between local cities. This is largely because local conditions and circumstances vary widely. As for the gaps between local cities, the level and degree of the local citizens' movement is determined by its class structure and provincial tradition (Lee E. 2004b, 184). Jeolla region is generally viewed as having a strong citizens' movement. Kim Young-Jeong (2001, 265) points out that "the high concentration in Jeolla region of social organizations associated with local self-governance and civic groups is very exceptional, considering the gaps in industry, economy, demography, and labor force between Jeolla and Gyeongsan regions." The strong activities of NGOs in Jeolla region seem to be closely related with "the histories of regional economic growth, regional political development, and local democratization movement" (Kim Y. 2001, 266). Similarly, the tradition of resistance in Seongnam City has made its political orientation and power structure more democratic and more dynamic (Han 1999, 185). In addition to this, solidarity among various local organizations is another contributing factor to the vitalization of the local citizens' movement.

The citizens' movement is also active in places where the influence of the center was relatively weaker historically. For instance, mid-level organizations are more active in Jinju, which is geopoliti-

cally distant from the center and has had a strong communal identity, compared to Cheongju, which is close to the capital.

Discussion

As long as the local community operates while relying on communal factors, the mobilization of residents and communication amongst them in civil society and local politics have no choice but to rely on such factors. Even if the citizens' movement appears active, it tends to heavily depend on communal or personalized mobilization within this structure. Therefore, the task remains to transform the personalized into associational mobilizations based on interest relations of civic interests.

It is highly likely that a hostile citizens' movement develops because of segmented relations between the local and central state and between different local social groups. This results from the institutionally contradictory arrangement of allowing self-governance of local residents under the strong power of the central state. Personalized social relations are very important not only for individuals and groups but also between the administrative body and social organizations. This is a very distinct characteristic found in local cities. However, for people outside the network, the personalized relations between the administrative body and citizens effectively means the latter's exclusion from administrative decision-making and a denial of access to administrative resources. The current situation, wherein neither the local councils nor the press fulfils this function, makes them internalize discontent, raising the possibility of an occasional outburst. Due to the nature of the personalized way of networking, differentiation and segmentation continues in the local community while competition intensifies, making for only a small number of people remain in the network.

The cultural foundation of civil society remains weak in local cities. A wall exists between various economic interest relations and traditional social groups. Objective interest relations and segmented

social relations point to the need to increase communication in the arena of public discourse. This requires the expansion of the institutional framework of participation and the strengthening of the deliberative or pluralist democracy model to reinforce democracy in a practical sense. That model has been devised as a remedy for the segmented communication structure. It is believed that if, even in the presence of diverse networks, persuasive superior arguments are respected and fair negotiation procedures are observed, various conflicts can be resolved in the political field within the public realm through appeals to justice, i.e., public good and compromise. Local community has the characteristic, among others, of enforcing conformity according to pressures from the communal society rather than limiting citizen's liberty with political constraints or state apparatuses.

In Korea's democracy, the progress of the citizens' movement has been retarded at the local level, due to segmented communications, social relations that force a selfish worldview, constraints on participation, and the limitations of institutional decentralization, i.e. power-sharing. This paper has attempted to examine the structural contradictions of the local citizens' movement and present solutions to the problem.

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